

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION  
OF GRAND TRAVERSE**

6726 Center Road  
Traverse City, MI 49686

**ANNUAL REPORTS  
2016 - 2017**

## **UUCGT Annual Reports 2016-2017**

Rabbi / Senior Spiritual Leader.....	3
Director of Lifespan Experience.....	10
Arts & Exhibitions.....	13
Committee on Ministry.....	15
Community Lunch.....	16
Community Needs.....	17
Congregational Care Team.....	19
Endowment.....	20
Facilities.....	24
Finance Committee.....	25
Green Sanctuary.....	26
Leadership Development.....	27
Library.....	28
Membership Committee.....	29
Memorial Garden.....	32
Music Committee.....	34
Pledge Drive Task Force.....	35
Policy Committee.....	36
Program Council.....	37
Safe Harbor.....	38
Social Justice Action Committee.....	39
Social Justice Witness Committee.....	40
Sunday Services Committee.....	41

**Rabbi / Senior Spiritual Leader  
Annual Report to UUCGT  
2016 – 2017**

**In Memoriam**

Ron Yatich  
John Ort  
Mercedes Kimling  
Gene Rundell  
Bill Wells

**In Celebration**

Linda Fletcher and Lynnette Rhodes  
Debbie Rettke and Melinda Duhoski  
Eileen Montgomery-Richards

**Reflection On Last Year's Goals**

One year ago I set out four goals for our program year:

1. **Preaching** – (Sunday services committee, Sunday services and inspiration). This year working with the Sunday Services team has been a joy. We welcomed several new members and also a new co-chair, Amanda Mangiardi, who along with co-chair Hal Gurian, leads us with happiness and direction. Thanks to each and every member of our Sunday Services Committee for your hard work, vision and dedication to creating meaningful experiences for our members, friends and guests.

Our Sundays explored the six sources of Unitarian Universalism. This gave us a chance to touch more deeply into those sources: Humanism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Pagan and Wiccan, Buddhist and Shinto holidays, among others. While this was an interesting approach (who doesn't love catching beans?), it did feel a little disjointed, so we plan to **return to the more monthly thematic focus** from the prior year. Our themes are chosen through June, 2017, but we welcome input and ideas any time.

The **feedback forms** have been helpful in listening to the voices of our members and visitors about what “works” and what does not. We have adapted some practices accordingly. I encourage people sign their feedback forms, based on this article from Harvard Business Review: <http://bit.ly/AnonyFeedback> **Signing our names is a form of direct, honest communication.**

This year we had 5,395 total attendants (not including Christmas Eve), which is down slightly from the previous year. To address this, the Operations Team in concert with Sunday Services will create **an advertising plan** to ensure the community is consistently aware of our Sunday programming.

2. **Reaching** – (congregational in-reach, community outreach, social witness and denominational affairs). I am delighted that we welcomed 24 new members since the last annual meeting. I thank our Membership Team for its exceptional work in creating a

smooth process for becoming part of UUCGT. Each and every week, they are here with welcoming hearts.

One concern I have is the question raised by the UUA for congregations: “Why do members leave and what can we do about it? There's no single reason, of course, but it often has to do with a lack of connection.” As you will see below, **nurturing an environment of connection for our members** will be a high priority this coming year.

I have provided hundreds of pastoral care, including hospital and home visits, and pastoral guidance one on one and couples and families. My deep thanks to the Congregational Care Team for its constancy in caring for our members.

In community outreach and social witness, we have offered a variety of creative programs (for example, hosting #ADayWithoutAWoman and Christmas Eve at the State Theatre). I have given speeches and sat on panels for the Area Council on Religious Diversity, the Ann Marie Filkin Memorial Lecture at the national American Medical Directors Association, Blessing of the Blossoms for Cherry Festival, hosted a 2 day Bowen training, Northwestern Michigan College, and Old St. Patricks in Chicago. I also co-convoked a monthly local clergy group called Clergy and Pie. We have had the opportunity to connect on several important issues.

**Denominational affairs** were a larger part of my year this year. I attended the General Assembly in Columbus last June, and found the ministry days preceding it be of great value. As you know UUCGT made history this year – the UU Ministers Association (UUMA) changed its bylaws to reflect membership as “clergy,” rather than only “ministers.” This was an important moment! I find the Regional Assembly of more value professionally, but strongly recommend that every member have at least one GA experience.

**Connecting with colleagues** (I was re-elected to the Board of OHALAH: Association of Rabbis for Jewish Renewal) has been important this year. A new group of Jewish-identified UU clergy has formed, I remain active in my monthly Deep Ecumenism group, and had a fruitful time with my regional colleagues at the Regional Assembly. The ministry days were most valuable, and I find the regional gathering more relevant to my denominational leadership and learning needs than the GA.

As you are likely aware, there has been a major “shake up” from the very top of the UUA through the local congregations, regarding equity in hiring practices and the white privilege that is ubiquitous in our Association. This process will take some years to sort through; in the mean time I am proud that we participated in the call from Black Lives UU’s call to offer a service on the topic this Spring. In the coming year we will offer more programs to raise awareness and help our Association live up to its potential for racial equality.

3. **Teaching** – offering small group ministry experiences and learning experiences for members and potential members. We offered 9 AM learning experiences several Sundays this year with good success. We were challenged by the busyness in the

building of Sunday mornings here at the UU, and I stopped offering the programs in the Spring. I remain open to use of that time for learning and reflective programming, but strongly prefer not to have meetings prior to services.

Our small group ministries are growing: we launched a Women's New Moon monthly gathering, using the UU book *Soul to Soul*. This group continues under the leadership of Carolyn Kelly. Member Lee Rivers launched an InterPlay which meets month, the Little Spiritual Book Club is going strong, as the Men's Group, the Social Justice Book group lead by Emmy Lou Cholak, the LGBT Support group lead by Rebeka Fuller, Wednesday suppers, and the Vocal Ensemble. With thanks to John Bailey, I am delighted that the VE will be with us on more Sundays each month – the music is a blessing I also highlight the birth of our Social Witness Committee, co-chaired by Paula Jo Kemler and Lynnette Rhodes, as well as a great example of member-generated connection by Chris Innes through the Shanti Deva Fan Club.

4. Self-care – This has been an area that continues to demand improvement, so I am continuing this goal for the new program year, starting with a micro-Sabbatical in July.

### **Nurturing Capacities Forward**

Crafting and Leading Worship – continue to grow in my own capacity as a spiritual leader and work with the SSC not only in management of monthly services, but building worship leadership capacity

Denominational Activities - Continue to be engaged in our region and up to date on national UU events. Paying attention to white privilege in our institutions and supporting the UUA

Member to Member (Small group ministries) – create opportunities for both ongoing small groups but also allowing time and space to offer “pop up” ministry. I offered this following our service on Mother's Day, for example, and following the U.S. election.

Supporting Leadership Teams – explore with our ministry/mission committees how I can offer support in new ways.

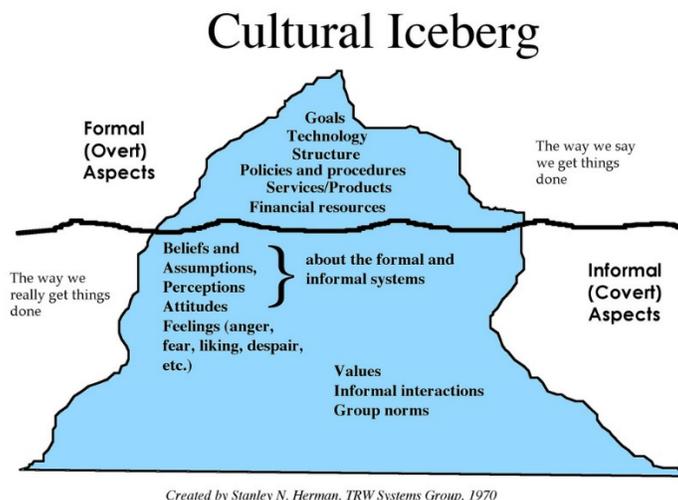
Community Outreach – Continue to make myself available for public witness and community outreach. I will, however, be working on developing better discernment for which opportunities should get a “yes” and which are not on target for our organizational mission.

Our incredible staff – our amazing staff continues to work hard, work well together and keep UUCGT up and running. I am honored to work with each and every staff member.

Congregational Safety means not only “child safety” but ensuring that the UUCGT environment is emotionally and physically safe and just for every member. The Safe Congregational Response Team exists not only to keep our youngers safe, but to work for a healthy and just environment for everyone. I am grateful to the Safe Congregation Response Team for its dedication and hard work this past year.

## Deep Culture

As I look ahead to leading in the next several years, I see that we are called to be realistic and honest about our “deep culture,” the ways we operate that are often unspoken and assumed. Consider this common image from the world of organizational development:



I believe UUCGT will benefit from continued exploration of both the formal (overt) aspects of what we have done so well in past and our history, and what aspects of the informal (covert) aspects of culture bear exploration. How do we do this?

### **Trends to Which We Need to Attend: From *How We Gather*<sup>1</sup> - Information from Harvard Divinity School Presented at the 2016 General Assembly of the UUA**

Millennials are less religiously affiliated than ever before. Churches are just one of many institutional casualties of the internet age in which young people are both more globally connected and more locally isolated than ever before. Against this bleak backdrop, a hopeful landscape is emerging. Millennials are flocking to a host of new organizations that deepen community in ways that are powerful, surprising, and perhaps even religious.

The lack of deep community is indeed keenly felt. Rates of isolation, loneliness and depression continue to rise. As traditional religion struggles to attract young people, millennials are looking elsewhere with increasing urgency. And in some cases, they are creating what they don't find.

**Six Themes** - They are found in mission statements, in manifestos, and on the lips of leaders and participants. We highlight these themes not because there are no others, but

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<sup>1</sup> <https://caspertk.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/how-we-gather.pdf>

because they best reveal the cultural DNA of these diverse initiatives, from which more can grow.

**Community** - Valuing and fostering deep relationships that center on service to others

**Personal transformation** - Making a conscious and dedicated effort to develop one's own body, mind, and spirit

**Social transformation** - Pursuing justice and beauty in the world through the creation of networks for good

**Purpose finding** - clarifying, articulating, and acting on one's personal mission in life

**Creativity** -- Allowing time and space to activate the imagination and engage in play

**Accountability** -- Holding oneself and others responsible for working toward defined goals

***How does UUCGT take into account the most up to date information on “How We Gather,” honoring our historic DNA and grafting it to some of the best emerging information?***

### **The Year Ahead: Senior Spiritual Leader's Interconnected Dreams**

I have three main areas of work on which I would like to focus in the year ahead to take into account not only the history, culture and strengths of UUCGT, but also learning from carefully studied trends in my field:

#### **1) Growing as a Dialogic Culture that builds community, offers opportunity for personal transformation and calls for covenantal accountability**

One major piece of learning I had from this past year is that honest conversation, whether the topic is development of our congregation or an interpersonal challenge, is the most direct route to building the future we wish to see as beloved community. Learning to sit together, to share honestly and listen deeply is a simple piece of covenantal living that can help us find the best in each other. I foresee this happening in two ways: 1) I will do my best to model being a good dialoger and listener and 2) we can build capacity in dialogic process as a community through education and informal interaction. (Yes, I would love to see us do more that is purely social to build this capacity.) I am delighted that a large segment of my doctoral studies will support this

exploration of dialogue and deep culture work. I also see that the UUA offers an array of programs for Unitarian Universalist leadership development that I encourage our members and leaders to explore more deeply.

**2) Member to Member – Creative opportunities to help each of us find purpose individually and collectively**

In keeping with the first goal I would like to help the congregation grow in ways where members connect with members through programming and informal interaction. How can we help our newer members get to know our long time members? How can we help our long time members connect with the emerging culture of UUCGT? What role does our new social witness work play in this process? Again interacting in smaller groups, in addition to shared Sunday morning experience, will help us grow in these connections. To this end I plan to offer at least once a month Sunday 9 AM programs that are more interactive. What can individual members (you!) organize to build a more dialogic culture around the most important issues in our lives? Do you work out regularly, and can you create a time to share this with others? Have you read something you found transformation that would make a powerful teaching on a Sunday? Would you meet some place for dinner with 5 other UUs you don't know well?

**3) Stewardship in Its Broadest Sense – Social Transformation done in new, creative ways through Social Witness, Education and Fiscal Accountability**

What does it mean to be a steward of UUCGT? The term is usually associated with financial well-being, but it means much more than that: how do we care for the legacy this congregation and Unitarian Universalism have bequeathed us? How do we carry forward what we have been given? What are the best parts of our congregation's past that can inform our future? On a personal level, how can we be good stewards of ourselves (i.e., self-care) so that we have the bandwidth to do all the wonderful things we wish to do: social justice, programming, sharing, caring? How do we ensure that all members who are able contribute their fair share so that we in turn can return to being a Fair Share Congregation with the UUA and MidAmerica Region? Stewardship is also a spiritual stance of Social Witness.

These are just a few of the questions and ideas that emerge from exploring of our deep culture and the important trends to which we must attend to thrive in the year ahead. I am honored and excited to be part of it and to take some risks in the year ahead as I lead.

In blessing and with my commitment to you –

Rabbi Chava

## **Director of Lifespan Experience Annual Report 2016-2017**

### **❖ Lifespan Experience Highlights for 2016-2017**

Main goals for this past year have been to strengthen and expand the Lifespan Experience program in terms of congregational support and participation, and to create a program that meets the wants and needs of members and friends of all ages.

Along with Rabbi Chava Bahle, I have continued to strive to help the congregation to be aware of children and families, not only in terms of what's going on in Sunday Programming for Children and Youth, but also in terms of the full spectrum of congregational life, including providing child care for congregational events, and helping to make more programs available for children, youth, and families. Our Sunday 10:30am format for children/youth for the 2016-2017 programmatic year has been as follows:

~ Children (preK-5th grade) and Youth (6th-12th grade, 12-18yrs) are invited to join their families in the service through the Story Wisdom. Following Story Wisdom, Children (preK-5th grade) follow their teachers to the large classroom space. Youth (6th-12th grade, 12-18yrs) join their teacher in the Office. Following the service, parents of Children (preK-5th grade) make their way to the classroom/program wing of the building to sign their child(ren) out of programming.

This will be our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Specialty Class Summer – our summer program for Sunday mornings which runs June 1<sup>st</sup>-Resumption Sunday in September. This consists of fun, informative lessons led by congregants and special guests.

The congregation has continued its efforts to move toward a Lifespan model not only in the sphere of children's programming, but programming for adults and families as well. In addition to regular programs, it should also be noted that we frequently have special programs, classes or events. When considering the overall reach of our programs, we have had the opportunity to engage with approximately 42 children and youth this year. In this regard it is important to continue to be mindful of the fact that we reach families in ways other than Sunday mornings. Indeed, we need to be aware that attending Sunday Services is increasingly more difficult for most families.

### **❖ Lifespan Goals for 2017-2018**

My primary goal as Director of Lifespan Experience for the coming year is to continue to strive to strengthen the Lifespan program in terms of building up enrollment and continued congregational support and participation, as well as increasing the number and variety of offerings of programs, classes, and social events.

We often talk about visionary and strategic goals for our Lifespan Experience program at meetings of the LE Committee, which has consisted of the following during the 2016-2017 programmatic year:

- Laura Matchett (Co-chair)
- Amanda Sparks (co-chair)

- Mary Cheney
- Marco Cabrera
- John Hoffmann (adult programming liaison)

As a group, this committee works tirelessly to support and promote Lifespan programming for the congregation.

### ❖ **DLE Professional Development**

Due to a reduced budget, I was unable to travel the distance for many of the training opportunities that are offered for religious educators. I have maintained my professional memberships, such as LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association), and stay in regular contact with my colleagues. I also subscribe to several list serves and newsletters for religious education professionals. My greatest professional development accomplishment this year has been the completion of a Masters of Arts degree in Interfaith Action from Claremont Lincoln University.

### ❖ **Communication & Scope**

- I highlight Lifespan activities in my weekly “Flash” column as well as offer further perspective in my monthly “Beacon” column.
- I update the “chalkboard wall” weekly with descriptions of activities/lessons.
- I use email, texting, phone, and Facebook to keep everyone up to date on the happenings here at UUCGT.
- I make myself available for meetings, functions/events, and services, as well as work in the office/UUCGT building.
- It warrants noting that the role of Director of Lifespan Experience involves a fair amount of “outside of office hours” communication, contact, planning and participation. As noted in the UUA Fair Compensation Guidelines, “Ministers and other religious professionals often work irregular hours, so expectation of a typical 9 AM to 5 PM workday is unrealistic”.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, The Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) states that “Because program planning, study, and reflection require uninterrupted periods of time, provision should be made for the religious educator to work, as needed, at home or in some other suitable place”.<sup>3</sup>

### ❖ **Worship**

- I created or co-created and lead or co-lead Multi-Generational worship services throughout the year. I also lead or co-lead several traditional-format services in which the children/youth leave the sanctuary. We are striving for the balance required to provide a Sunday morning experience that meets the spiritual needs of all ages of people who attend.

### ❖ **Challenges & Hopes for the Future**

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<sup>2</sup> “UUA Fair Compensation Guidelines for Congregations April 2009”. UUA. Accessed 04.26.2017. [http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/mpl/finances/comp\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/mpl/finances/comp_guidelines.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> “Guidelines for Professional Religious Educators”. LREDA. Accessed 04.26.2017. <http://www.lreda.org/guidelines-for-professional-religious-educators>

- Although a lack of volunteers is a challenge faced by many committees and groups within our congregation, we have reached a near critical or critical level at several points this year. We will require more volunteers if we are to move away from over-burdening those individuals who are already assisting. We will not be in a position to expand our programming, or realize many goals for the program without more assistance. I am extremely grateful for those who currently volunteer, and we could not conduct our Lifespan program without their help.
- We continue to need to find more ways to be truly multi-generational on Sunday mornings. Work could be done to more deeply engage children in our Sunday Services, as well as include them more frequently in the service. It will be difficult for children and youth to find their place as engaged adults within our UU congregations (if they choose to take part) if we do not teach/model for them what it is like to be a regular part of the entirety of Sunday Services.
- We also need to continue to look for, and create opportunities to intentionally reach out to and include young families and young adults. Once again, many of these efforts will require more volunteers.
- We need to increase our presence and participation in community events/projects, and continue to help support the Interfaith community – this will not only result in more exposure for the congregation, but in deeper, meaningful connections.
- I hope to grow our Lifespan program, so that we serve more individuals of all ages. This includes more youth (teen) events/activities.
- I hope to involve more adults in Sunday Morning Programming for children and youth.
- I hope to be able to continue to engage in Professional Development, attending educational opportunities and denomination-wide events, as time and budget permit.



We understand Religious Exploration as interwoven and inherent within the congregation. As such, we view the congregation as the primary curriculum. Our collective charge and responsibility is to facilitate Lifespan Learning grounded in ongoing reflection and realized through experiences and actions that seek to transform.

*~ Vision from UUA Philosophy of Religious Education Renaissance Module, 2015*

**In Peace,**

Sarah E. Montgomery-Richards

Director of Lifespan Experience

## **Arts and Exhibition Committee 2016-2017**

### January 13, 2016

1. First meeting at 4:00 pm
  - a. Attending: Ellie Smith, Charles Brackett, MaryAnn Force, Bonnie Mathias, Barb McClellan
2. Challenges
  - a. Mission Statement
  - b. The meeting of the Visual Arts (also known as the Art Group) serves the Unitarian Universalist community by creating educational opportunities and community enrichment through excellence in arts and arts related experiences.
3. Arts Exhibition committee established January 21, 2016
4. Kathy Silvernagle – 914-610-6904. Contact for show on Cuba.
5. January 15 – Calls to Tom Worthington and Cynthia Brzak.
6. January 7 – Hanging of MaryAnn Force paintings
  - a. Contact with Kathy Silvernagle – set up meeting for Monday, January 25 at 11:00 am – phone 513-550-9998.

### February 4, 2016

1. Contact with Cal Boulter – he will help hang photos, they are 20 x 20 square.
2. Arts Committee Meeting – elect officers:
  - a. Barb McClelland, President
  - b. Cynthia Brzak, Vice President
  - c. Lynda Prior, Secretary
3. We hope to hang 3 works by Arline Howe in the entrance way, hopefully Feb. 11, Beryl to help
4. Stewardship Committee with children's program –
  - a. March 3 – 27 – Kids art work
  - b. March 16 – reception
5. Cuban Exhibit? Tie down dates, for hanging and talk
6. Feb 11 – Bonnie, Cynthia and Barbara hang 3 pieces by Arline Howe in entryway

### March 28, 2016

Cynthia and Barbara take down MaryAnn's paintings. Craig picks up works and takes them to MaryAnn's home.

### March 29, 2016

Kathy Silvernagle and Duke (husband), Cal Boulter and Barb McClellan hang Cuban exhibit in corridor gallery.

### April 15, 2016

Take down Cuban exhibit.

April 28, 2016

Arts Committee meeting

Decision to mount shows – State Hospital photos by Lynda Prior

May 6, 2016

Lynda Prior and Barb McClellan hang photos in Corridor gallery.

July 23, 2016

Ellie Smith and Charles Brackett hang Ellie's paintings in Corridor gallery.

September 18, 2016

Ellie Smith, Charles Brackett and Barb McClellan meet with Martha McDougall to choose works by Martha's daughter for hanging.

February 16, 2017

Meeting to organize "PROTEST" hanging

Charles Brackett, Cynthia Brzak, Bonnie Mathias, Barb McClellan, Ellie Smith, Nan Worthington. Chuck had made a presentation to the board explaining the project on Sunday.

February 23, 2017

Meeting to follow up to prepare for "PROTEST" hanging on March 2. Cynthia, Bonnie, Nan, Chuck and Barbara.

March 9, 2017

Chuck, Bonnie, Cynthia, Nan and Barb

Meeting to firm up details for forum "PROTEST". Chuck made posters (great!) and distributed them. Spread the word – Interlochen Radio, Library poster, Express paper, Ticker, Beacon & Flash, small flyer in program.

March 22, 2017

Successful supper and discussion for PROTEST photos. Chuck Brackett and Ellie Smith lead a group of volunteers and the event went off without a hitch.

April 12, 2017

Chuck, Ellie, Cynthia and Barb. Meeting to determine paintings (Sally Mitchell) for hanging.

May 4, 2017

Meeting to hang Sally Mitchell's paintings. Cynthia, Nan and Barbara. Cynthia had labels ready to place. We got them all up and on the walls!

Barb McClellan

## **Committee on Ministry Annual Report 2016 – 2017**

The members of the Committee on Ministry (CoM) in 2016 -2017 were:

Chris Innes serving as chair; Rick Walter as secretary, Joan Sheard, Jane Watts, Anne Hughes, Solveig Gustafson, and Jim Linsell, as well as Paul Ward before he went on travel and Kay Sturgeon until she became a Board member. Linda Fletcher has served as our liaison with the Board. Rabbi Bahle attends CoM meetings whenever possible. The CoM meets at least monthly, either at a member's home or at UUCGT.

The committee has used an ongoing Dialogue to assist us in articulating a vision of our individual and collective ministries for the Congregation and by the Congregation to the community. The CoM views our primary role as providing advice and support to Rabbi Bahle as she seeks to provide for the spiritual needs of the Congregation as a whole, to individual members and friends, and to our community and the world beyond.

The CoM invites anyone in the Congregation interested in our work to please contact any of the members.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Innes on behalf of the Committee on Ministry

## **Community Lunch Annual Report 2016-2017**

Chairperson-Elect: Mary Kiner

Committee Members: There are no committee members, but a great group of dedicated volunteers both from UUCGT and other places.

We have provided lunch for 20-50 people on a weekly basis. We manage to provide a nutritious and tasty lunch for \$150 per week. We do this at the Friends Church at Fifth and Oak because it is more centrally located and many of our guests have transportation problems.

Our vision for the next year is to continue serving more of the hungry in our community.

The only difficulty is that we never know how many are going to show up and there is nothing we can do about that.

Mary Kiner

## **Community Needs Annual Report 2016-2017**

**Committee Purpose:** To distribute funds collected during Sunday morning services to non-profit agencies, religious organizations, charities and groups within Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Benzie, Kalkaska and Antrim counties that provide charitable services to those in need.

We strive to donate to a wide mix of groups benefitting people of all ages with a variety of needs. We do not give to agencies in Benzie County since the UU Benzie group gave \$5900 last year to Benzie charities.

**Current Members:** Liz Bruning, chair, Shari Cope, Jane Fochtman, Joan Sheard, Chris Walter

### **Successes:**

Our committee received \$10,258 to distribute to local charities this fiscal year.

### **Challenges:**

We receive very few donation requests from UU members. As a result we are learning about local charities and non-profits by inviting local agency representatives to speak to our group and researching agencies ourselves. Each quarter articles are submitted to the Beacon and Flash summarizing our funding decisions and UU members are encouraged to contact us and fill out donation request forms. Every Flash and Beacon article contains a link to the form.

We occasionally receive donation requests to fund global charities; these are never funded as they are not “local” and thus beyond our scope. It has been suggested to the Board that perhaps a small percentage (e.g., 5%) of the quarterly funds collected at Sunday Services could be withheld before funding Pastoral Care, Community Needs and Community Lunch and this money could be used to respond to global needs (e.g., Syrian refugees). Local Community Needs would not administer these funds.

We would like bulletin board space to provide information to members about the agencies we fund and to display thank you notes. We did have this in the past but it was removed with no explanation.

### **Funding recipients for fiscal year 2016-2017:**

#### Food and Shelter

Grace Episcopal Food Pantry	\$1000.
Safe Harbor	\$ 600.
Blessings in a Backpack	\$ 350.
Food Rescue - Goodwill	\$1000.
Food Rescue Empty Bowls Table Sponsor	\$ 250.
Jubilee House	\$ 500.

Health needs

Traverse Health Clinic – Immunization Clinic	\$1000.
Planned Parenthood	\$ 500.

Miscellaneous

Laundry Project	\$ 850.
Justice for Our Neighbors	\$1000.
Commission on Aging – heating assistance	\$ 500.
Northwest Michigan Community Action – heating assistance	\$ 500.
Northwest Michigan Community Action Financial Management Services Program	\$ 500
Grand Traverse Baby Pantry at Bethlehem Lutheran Church	\$ 125.
West Bay Baby Pantry at West Bay Covenant Church	\$ 125.
Leelanau Baby Pantry via Leelanau Christian Neighbors	\$ 250.
Antrim Baby Pantry in Mancelona	\$ 250.
Kalkaska Baby Pantry	\$ 250.
Migrant services	\$ 500.

Benzie UU Group gave to:

Benzie Area Christian Neighbors	\$3000.
Community Spirit Fund	\$1000.
Habit For Humanity	\$ 400.
Animal Welfare	\$ 300.
Benzie Human Health Care	\$ 800.
Saint Andrew’s Presbyterian Church STAMP Program	\$ 400.

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Bruning, Chair

## **Congregational Care Team Annual Report 2016-2017**

Members: Rabbi Chava Bahle – Spiritual Leader, Joan Jackson, Patricia Light – co-chairs, Marilyn Mayo, Don Fraser, Barb Gibson, Hal Gurian, Judith Briggs, and Jerry Schatz.

Our team meets twice a month to monitor the needs of our congregation by word of mouth, calls from family, notes in Joys and Concerns book as well as newspaper articles and obituaries. We provide whatever care is needed with food, calls, visits, cards and follow through as long as necessary.

We continue with the shawl ministry and present shawls or lap robes when congregants are recovering from an illness, surgery or grief. These shawls are made by congregants, donated to our team and held in reserve until the need arises.

We continue to put notices in The Flash and write the “All About Us” column for The Beacon.

The CCT coordinates Memorial Services with the Memorial Services Committee. This may also include interment of ashes in the Memorial Garden.

The following are deaths of UUCGT members or friends this past fiscal year: John Ort, Gene Rundell, Mercedes Kimling, Ron Yatich, Mike Semrau. Interment of Arline Howe’s ashes occurred during this time frame.

We have a discretionary fund which comes from a portion of the funds given from the offertory basket passed on Sunday mornings. We have used some of these funds to help congregants in need. There are gas and food gift cards also given when appropriate. A portion of this fund was transferred to the Memorial Services Committee.

Respectfully submitted

Joan Jackson  
Patricia Light  
Co-chairs Congregational Care Team

## **Endowment Committee Annual Report 2016-2017**

The UUCGT Endowment Fund concluded its most recent fiscal year on December 31, 2016. A copy of the financial statement for the year is included with this report.

At the conclusion of the fiscal year, the Endowment Fund had a balance of \$77,321.75 and had earned dividends and interest of \$ 1,623.89. During the year the fund received contributions of \$ 9,550.78 and \$250.00 in UUCGT's restricted fund. Contributions included memorials for deceased members.

As required by the bylaws, the principal of the fund remains intact and a distribution of up to 90% of dividends and income is allowed each year, following a specific allocation. Consistent with the bylaws, the Endowment Committee has recommended to the board that \$ 1,455.00 be distributed from the fund as follows:

- \$ 485.00 to the UUCGT Building Maintenance Fund
- \$ 485.00 to the Community Needs Fund
- \$ 485.00 to support a member or staff member's attendance at a regional or national UUA conference.

The Endowment Committee voted to maintain the current investment philosophy, which calls for a relatively conservative investment allocation of 60% bonds and 40% equities utilizing low cost index funds. The equity portion of the fund will remain invested in a socially responsible index fund.

The Endowment Committee's treasurer, Joe Cook met with Sheri Nowak (UUCGT Business Administrator) and Kay Sturgeon (UUCGT Treasurer) to complete an annual review of EC accounts as required by the Bylaws. Treasurer, Joe Cook, drafted Endowment Committee Accounting Procedures, which were approved by the Committee. A copy of the Accounting Procedures is attached to the annual report.

Members and friends of UUCGT can consider gifts to the Endowment Fund as a means of providing long-term benefits to UUCGT. Opportunities for donations to the fund include:

- Memorial contributions in honor of a deceased member, friend, or loved one.
- Wills
- Direct contributions.

Questions regarding the Endowment Fund can be directed to any of the members of the Endowment Committee. Current members of the Endowment Committee are Maura Brennan, Joe Cook, T. Michael Jackson, Douglas Wozniak and Ann Swaney.

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Grand Traverse  
2016 Endowment Fund - 12 months**

Vanguard Funds	12/31/15
Perc(%)	
	12/31/16
Perc (%)	
FTSE Social Index Fd	
	25,791.01
	40.0%
	30,782.09
	39.8%
Total Bond Mkt Fd	
	38,647.74
	60.0%
	46,539.66
	60.2%
	\$64,438.75
	100.0%
	\$77,321.75
	100.0%
Net Gain/(Loss)	\$12,883.00

Activity by Fund:

FTSE  
Total Bond

Total  
Beginning Balance (12/31/15)

	\$25,791.01
	\$38,647.74
	\$64,438.75
Dividends & Interest	
	588.96
	1,034.93
	1,623.89
Redemptions	
	(1,290.00)
	(1,290.00)
Exchanges	
	(3,246.00)
	3,246.00
Fees	
Contributions*	
	5,935.89
	3,614.89
	9,550.78
Investment Gains/(Losses)	
	3,002.23
	(3.90)
	2,998.33
Ending Balance (12/31/16)	\$30,782.09

\$46,539.66

\$77,321.75

01/18/17

\*Not included: \$250.00 in UUCGT's restricted fund

## **Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Grand Traverse Endowment Fund Accounting Procedures**

- Responsibilities

The Endowment Committee Financial Secretary and the Congregational Business Administrator are jointly responsible for ensuring that accurate and complete financial records are maintained for the Endowment Fund.

- Vanguard Endowment Account Parameters:
- The UUCGT address is utilized for all mailed correspondence.
- Distributions will only be by check mailed to the UUCGT address.
- The Business Administrator receives quarterly account statements by mail.
- The Financial Secretary and the Endowment Committee Chair have electronic account access to the Vanguard account as authorized by UUCGT board resolution.

- Accounting

Quarterly statements are mailed directly from Vanguard to the Business Administrator who prepares a financial statement for the Endowment Committee.

- Contributions are received by the Business Administrator and recorded in an Endowment Fund holding account.

- When the holding account exceeds \$100 the Business Administrator notifies the Financial Secretary who prepares a Deposit slip for the appropriate Vanguard investment fund(s).

- The Business Administrator mails a check with the deposit slip to Vanguard.
- Receipt of the contribution by Vanguard is mailed to the Business Administrator and sent electronically to the Financial Secretary.

- Annual Review

- The UUCGT Treasurer will meet with Business Administrator and the Financial Secretary at least annually to review procedures and financial records.

- At a minimum the review will verify.
- Compliance with the procedures outlined in this document.
- Consistency between Vanguard statements and the annual financial statement.
- Fund distributions have board approval consistent with UUCGT Bylaws.

## **Facilities Committee Annual Report 2016 – 2017**

Some of the projects of the Facilities Committee include the following:

- Changed the soffit lights in the sanctuary to LED's
- Fixed the exterior electrical outlets
- Hired Critter Control to help us control our mouse residents
- Hired Rod Mills to build protection for the gas lines to the building
- Changed front entry door locking mechanism to electrical functioning key code system
- Installed a hearing loop to improve the acoustics in the sanctuary
- Organized Spring and Fall Clean-up days
- Watered and maintained grass and plantings
- Maintained lawn mowers, gas trimmer
- Dealt with the ice and snow
- Created a French drain for part of the parking lot (we no longer have a lake!)
- Communicated with Northern Fire and Safety re: alarm notices
- Cleaned roof of leaves and branches
- Created covers for electrical outlets on floor of sanctuary
- Began a process to add to our projector technology
- Cleaned chairs in the RE classrooms
- Replaced batteries in thermostats
- Considered purchasing a shed for gas-powered mowers, trimmer and snow blower
- Unplugged sewer line and cleaned partially flooded basement
- Washed windows

Many members of the Congregation have helped with various projects and tasks.

Thank you,  
Dave Halsted, Chair

## **Finance Committee Annual Report 2016 - 2017**

In addition to “counting beans” the Finance Committee worked diligently the past year to deal with a reduced budget. Through March we are in the “black” for the year, thanks to generous giving by our congregation and diligent expense control by our staff and committees. We are in the process of finalizing our 2017-2018 budget and are optimistic that we will have another successful year.

The main roles of the Finance Committee are to ensure proper financial practices are followed, preparing the budget for the next fiscal year, recommend to The Board where funds for special projects and unexpected expenses are to come from and both develop financial policies and ensure that those policies are followed. The Finance Committee meets monthly to review financial reports, project revenues and expenses to ensure that we are financially sound and discuss any pertinent items regarding financial practices, policies and unusual expenses. A special thanks to Phyllis Jessup, Judy Myers, Sheri Novak, Kay Sturgeon and Price Watts who served with me on the Finance Committee this year.

Mike McDonald, Chair

## **Green Sanctuary Committee Annual Report 2016-2017**

Green Sanctuary was accredited through the UUA, with many thanks to Misty Sheehan for her persistence and talents as a writer. Misty has since stepped down as co-chair, and Mary Van Valin has continued on as chair.

The mission of the committee and the intention of the congregation as a result of becoming a “Green Sanctuary” is to be conscious of our role and responsibilities to the web of all life and act accordingly. This year, we have not had formal meetings, which is not a good thing, and we hope to become more formalized in the coming year. What we have done this year is partner with other organizations in the community who are working on environmental issues. We have co-sponsored several events with the Citizen’s Climate Lobby to educate and train members about being advocates in DC for climate action. Our biggest endeavor is the collaborative effort on April 21<sup>st</sup> to help Traverse City Central students fund raise to send them to Washington to lobby for climate change in June. Groundwork Center, Citizen’s Climate Lobby, the Students for Environmental Advocacy, and Green Sanctuary are working together on this effort. We have historically worked on a Sunday Service on water, or other environmental topics each year. Our water service last fall was in collaboration with Sunday Services Committee and our music director, and the head scientist from Inland Seas Education Association.

Thanks to the facilities committee for their work continually to increase our LED lighting, replace an inefficient furnace, and program the many electrical draws to reduce waste of electricity. And the wonderful people who work in the kitchen and provide coffee continue a conscious decision to use real cups for coffee and tea rather than consumables. Thanks to all of you for doing dishes and saving trash from our landfills! The landscaping volunteers continue to use native plantings, which eventually may lead to less need for watering and mowing.

Things we’d like to improve for next year include: hold regular meetings (what a concept!) and even elect officers! Make intentional connections with the social justice committee, the facilities committee, and lifelong experience committee when there are connections that relate to our mission.

Aspirations: We would like to welcome more people to participate in planning. We want to have a communication plan to hear ideas from people in the congregation. We hope to coordinate a Sunday service on an environmental issue during the next year.

Mary Van Valin

## **Leadership Development Committee Annual Report to the UUCGT Board of Trustees 2016-2017**

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The LDC had a very active year.

We held regular monthly meetings all year, and sent a representative to every Board of Trustees and Program Council meeting.

In close to chronological order, we accomplished the following:

- Responded to written suggestions from the Safe Congregation Response Team with a lengthy and carefully thought through memorandum and by altering some of our past practices
- Developed a written protocol for organizing our work, including written criteria for the qualifications we are seeking in candidates.
- Developed a recruitment process which included face-to-face interviews with potential candidates and more detailed conversations with nominees.
- Completed our task of developing and submitting a list of nominees for all open positions on March 21, 2017, 10 days ahead of our goal.
- Developed a proposal for a program to address, on a congregation-wide basis, the question “Who Are We Now” as a way to get at the continuing disquiet in the congregation in a positive manner.

We have developed and maintained a committee culture of openness and frank conversation about the matters we are considering. Our meetings start and end as scheduled and we have finished each meeting with a sense of satisfaction with our relationships and our accomplishments.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Darnton, Chair -- LDC, and committee members Ann Swaney (Vice-Chair), Nancy Doughty (Secretary), Mary VanValin, Richard Miller, Judy Myers and Judy Weaver.

**UUCGT Library**  
**Annual Report for 2016-2017**

Committee Members: Bonnie Mathias and Pinkie Hoffmann

Activities/Accomplishments: We catalogued incoming books, entered materials into a developing data base, managed check-out and returns, reminded of overdue books, and completed the annual inventory of the collection.

Plans for Upcoming Year: We will periodically offer articles, informing the congregation of some of the interesting, informative materials available in the library. We will continue to weed the collection for space and relevancy, and will work to add significant books. We also hope to attract new members to the committee.

**Membership Committee  
Annual Report  
June 2016 – May 2017**

The very devoted, energetic, idea-filled and caring members this past year are: Sherry Davis (joined Feb 2016), John and Pinkie Hoffman, Sue Pyne, Charlotte Shea, Chris Walter, Rick Walter, and Jane Watts. Bryan and Penni Newlun resigned in September 2016. The Committee has met monthly - August, September, October and November 2016 and January, February, March and May 2017.

Working to fulfill our charge to Welcome, Greet, Facilitate into membership, and Nurture (in Partnership with other groups at UUCGT) prospective, new and current members, the committee organized and sponsored numerous activities and rituals this year:

- ★ **STAFF the Welcome Table** each Sunday - **NOTE:** Dottie Cain, Membership Committee Emeritus, often helps in this capacity.
- ★ **PROVIDE Greeters** for all Services - **NOTE:** Charlotte Shea took on this job June 2015. All new members are added to the Greeter List and encouraged to sign up.

Dates for the following activities were set at a meeting with Rabbi Chava Bahle, Sarah Montgomery-Richards, and Susan Sherman September 2016, in consideration of all schedules.

★ **ORIENTATION SESSIONS - for Prospective (and current) Members, 12 Noon - 1:15 pm Sundays**

History of UUCGT, Getting to know each other, Brief Q/A about UUism; *Participating:*  
Rabbi Chava Bahle and Membership Committee representatives

October 16, 2016 - 17 pre-registered, 14 attended

January 29, 2017 - 16 pre-registered, 8 attended

April 23, 2017 - Canceled, No registrants

★ **15 MINUTES WITH THE RABBI, 10:00 - 10:15 am Sundays**

Intended for individuals or small groups, no more than 3-4 people; Informal chats for prospective members who feel they already know Rabbi Chava or for busy families who find it difficult to schedule a separate one-on-one meeting with her; Also for people who have already been involved in a UU fellowship or congregation.

October 30, 2016

February 12, 2017

May 14, 2017 - Canceled due to no Orientation

★ **FELLOWSHIP FRIENDS**

The Committee adopted this program in which current members volunteer to answer questions, invite to UUCGT events, guide, and help integrate our newest members. The first set of Fellowship Friends and New Members were paired in June 2016.

★ **NEW MEMBER WELCOME SERVICES**

**June 12, 2016** - **Jamie and Paula Jo Kemler** and **Carol and Alan Ritter** were welcomed as new members. They signed the Member Book during the service, a tradition the Membership Committee hopes to continue *once Pledge Forms have been submitted* (March 2017 decision by Membership Committee and some Board members). Kemlers Fellowship Friends were Bryan and Penni Newlun (who have since left the congregation) and Pinkie and John Hoffman are Fellowship Friends for the Ritters.

**October 16, 2016** - New Members were Welcomed and their Fellowship Friends were acknowledged: **Barbara Conley and Gerald (Jerry) Schatz** / Hal Gurian; **Mark Dragovich** / John Hoffman; **Rebekah Fuller** / Jane Watts; **Carolyn Kelly** / Sherry Davis; **Jim Linsell** (had signed the Member Book in the office prior to the service) / Anne Hughes; **Kat Norman and Keith Anderson** / Ellie Smith and Charles Brackett; Geoff Norman - Anderson (15 year-old Associate Member, full membership at age 16); **Lynnette Rhodes** / Linda Fletcher; **Izzy and Mike Semrau** / Sandra and Mike McDonald; **Liz Swartzmiller** / Pinkie and John Hoffman. The New Members spoke a bit about themselves and signed the Member Book during the service,

**February 26, 2017** - **Laura Ciccone** / Laura Matchett; **Carolyn Kraw** / Rick and Chris Walter; **John LaBrie** / Judy Myers; **Gary and Nancy McRay** / Chris and Rick Halbert; **Mary Povolo** / Sherry Davis; **Rebecca Roper** / Ariel Love; **Kim Sibilsky** / Dottie Cain signed the Member Book and were welcomed into membership.

**New Member Folders** are assembled for each new member and presented to them at the service. Most of the forms included were revised and updated during the year, and this process continues as we continue to improve the information flow. The Committee chair works closely with office Administrative Assistant Susan Sherman on all processes, updates, communication, organizing materials for the Welcome Table and scheduling. Beginning October 2015, New Member Welcome Bags, including local food and paper products, were assembled for all new members. This is partially in lieu of not buying and serving cake at the receptions (decision made jointly with Hospitality Chair, LE Director and Membership Chair). However, the Membership Committee will provide special snacks and celebratory food on New Member Sundays.

Twenty-four New Members joined / were welcomed since June 2016. The Committee is aware of the deaths of two members and the resignation of two members during the past 12 months.

**Other Membership Activities:**

Jane Watts facilitated the new 2017 Member and Friend directory made available beginning late March 2017.

Telephone and email communications as well as personal contact help us stay in touch with committee members, visitors and new members. **Welcome - Hope to See you Again Soon Postcards** are sent to all newcomers who fill out a Welcome Registry at the Welcome Table. Sixty-2 individuals filled out Welcome Registry forms to date since June 2016. Beacon articles are written each month and Flash articles as needed to keep everyone informed about Membership activities and introducing new members to the congregation with short human interest stories.

A great deal of committee time and chair time has been spent on researching and writing New materials for the Welcome Table, New Member Welcome Folders and the UUCGT website.

**Budget:** \$375.36 of the budgeted \$480.00 has been expended to date by the Committee for Membership Supplies - locally and from UUA.

Submitted by Chris and Rick Walter, Co-Chairs  
April 27, 2017

## Memorial Garden Committee Annual Report 2016-2017

(Manual: p. 42)

*Composition: minimum of 3 members.*

### *Purpose:*

*1. Maintenance of the physical condition of the Memorial Garden, the area just above the Williams Garden and immediately surrounding the oak tree, and the plaques designating those interred within the Garden and elsewhere.*

*2. Designation of Interment sites and provision of memorial markers within the Garden and engraved plates for the memorial boards.*

*3. Administration of records and materials associated with those interred within the Memorial Garden and of expenditures from the Memorial Garden's restricted funds for maintenance and improvement of the Garden. (Note: UU Board approval is required for expenses over \$1,000.)*

*It is understood that regular coordination between the Memorial Garden Committee and the Landscape Committee will occur to assure consistency with the overall land- scape concept and site plan of the church.*

Continuing on track from our energized re-start the previous year (2015/16), our committee this past year (2016/17) has three major accomplishments to its credit creating and carrying out a vision for an outdoor space appropriate for memorial to interred members and friends who have passed away and a resting place for their ashes.

The first significant act, in early summer, was the hiring of Carolyn Thayer, an experienced, professional landscape designer, to help us create a long-term planting plan, one that reflects the site's natural setting and relies specifically on plant material that is both indigenous to the State of Michigan and is non-invasive. Now it remains for us to diligently carry through in its fulfillment in the present year and those in the near future.

By mid-summer, having received the plan and accepted, with minor adjustment, its comprehensive and very specific planting design, we took our first steps in its implementation. Before the onset of Winter, three specimens of small trees (serviceberries) and a cluster of potentilla (a perennial) had been set in place. All have successfully made it through to the present Spring. We are now focusing on identifying species of moss to use as ground cover in the immediate area specifically designated for interment. We hope to have this in place before June.

Thirdly, we have staked out and preliminarily graded a pathway on the east side of the garden, which will allow barrier-free access to the garden. We have reached conceptual agreement on a permeable paving material and hope to have this component installed by mid-summer.

This past year has thus far seen the interment of four members and friends within the garden, bringing the present total interred on site to thirty.

Respectfully submitted,  
Richard Miller, chair  
April 27, 2016

Ingrid Brophy  
Arlene Dean  
Andrea Kramer  
Richard Miller  
Jalene Moore  
Bill Scharf  
Kay Sturgeon

## **Music Committee Annual Report 2016-2017**

The Music Committee meets bi-monthly on the second Tuesday of the month at 5:30. The Committee consists of John Bailey, Music Director ; Bob Hicks, Chairman ; Mary Van Valin , Secretary , members of the Vocal Ensemble and interested UUCGT members.

John Bailey was new to the job of Music Director this year. Much of our committee time has been spent working to help him “learn the job”, pick hymns for Sunday Service, select music for the Vocal Ensemble, etc. John came to UUCGT with a long history of related experience making this easy to do. We also do long range planning with John. Thus helping the VE know what’s coming and giving us a chance to have input.

Our long range efforts have been focused on reworking the music storage closet. This space has been generally neglected for a number of years making the selection of music problematic at times. Shelley Burnes, Cindy Edmondson and Mary Anne Rivers have been working weekly to re-alphabetize and clean up the music files. Once this is completed Mary Van Valin plans to create a computerized filing system that will allow us to keep detailed records of what’s there, when was it last sung, what type of service it is appropriate for and so on.

Respectfully submitted

4-26-2017

Bob Hicks

## **Pledge Drive Task Force Annual Report 2016-2017**

Our annual Pledge Drive started in February. Our theme for the year was “Come Together”, a reflection of what we do as a vital spiritual community. For the first three Sundays in February we asked the congregation to reflect on three questions regarding the role UUCGT plays in their lives. These reflections were posted on the hallway windows throughout the Drive.

On the fourth Sunday of the Drive we asked for pledges for the 2017-2018 fiscal year with an emphasis for the congregation to consider the role UUCGT plays in their lives and to consider increasing their pledge by at least \$300. As of the third week of April over half of the pledges we have received to date have been increased and the average increase is nearly \$400.

Overall, through the third week of April, our Pledge Drive, which does not end until June 30, has raised 96% of the total that was raised for the prior year. We are optimistic that we will be able to report that we have surpassed last year’s total by the time of our Annual Meeting in June. A special thank you to Kay Sturgeon, Jan Zerbel and Hal Gurian who joined me on the Pledge Drive Task Force.

Mike McDonald, Chair

## **Policy Committee Annual Report 2016-2017**

Policy Committee members: Don Pyne, Gretchen Kronk (chair), Judy Myers, Price Watts, Tom Darnton (secretary)

This report covers activities and accomplishments of the Policy committee for the period December 8, 2016 through April 13, 2017. Three sections of the policy manual were reviewed and revised, and submitted to the Board for approval; one section has been revised and is yet to be submitted to the Board; one section is yet to be drafted for the Policy Committee to review.

The committee reviewed and revised the scope of the *Conflict Management Policy*, removing involvement of the Committee on Ministry. The revised CMP was submitted to the Board and approved at its meeting on March 20.

In our work to conform the *Committee on Ministry* description and policy to our Bylaws, this committee removed conflict management material, removed LDC involvement from the selection of Committee on Ministry members, and revised the number of Committee on Ministry members to “at least three.” The revised material was submitted to the Board on and approved at its March 20 meeting.

Price Watts (a member of both the Policy Committee and the Finance Committee) and Board Trustee Phyllis Jessup (a member of the Finance Committee) worked to revise the *UUCGT Building Rental Policy*. This policy was submitted to the Board at its April 17 meeting and approved.

Policy Committee members Judy Myers led the Policy Committee in the review and revision of the *Safe Congregation/Child Policy*, with extra attention given to Section “V. Safe Congregation Response Team.” The role of the Safe Congregation Response Team in gathering and organizing information from confidential sources, and conveying that information to the LDC and to the Board, was clarified. The revised text of the SC/CP will be submitted to the Board for its May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The Policy Committee stands ready to assist members of the newly-formed Social Witness Committee in creating a description of this new committee, using the guidelines in the Standing Committee section of the Policy Manual, pp. 29-30.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gretchen Kronk

**Program Council  
Annual Report 2016 - 2017  
April 21, 2017**

The Program Council met monthly (except for November) throughout the year. Attendance ranged from 10 to 16 UUCGT members representing various UUCGT committees present at the various meetings with an average of 13.

Members reported on various activities that had occurred over the previous month and addressed any upcoming needs that they were expecting during future months. Summaries of the monthly meetings were reported in the Beacon and copies of the minutes and agenda were submitted to the office to be stored on the UUCGT computer.

Rick Walter

## **Safe Harbor Annual Report 2016-2017**

For the first time we hosted Safe Harbor in our own UUCGT building from Saturday, November 26 through Friday, December 2. Over 110 volunteers gave over 600 hours of their time to help our UU Congregation provide shelter, food and fellowship to an average of 28 guests who were experiencing homelessness over the seven nights. During the week we had 40 different guests, some of whom were here all seven nights and some for only one night. Several of our guests mentioned how much they appreciated how welcoming our volunteers were, how good the food was and the comfortable atmosphere in our facility.

Volunteers prepared and served over 250 dinners during the week, provided fellowship during the evening, stayed overnight with our guests, served breakfast and cleaned up every morning. In addition several volunteers helped with set up on the first Saturday and clean up on the last Saturday. Special thanks go out to five groups: the Jewish Congregation, the Grand Traverse Humanists, the Grand Traverse Area Pagans, the UU Men's Group and the Vocal Ensemble. Each of these groups provided the majority of the volunteers for an evening. Also a special thanks to Bernie Hanchett, Chris Innes and Joan Sheard who served with us on the planning Task Force for our Safe Harbor effort.

In addition UUCGT provided all (18) of the volunteers for Safe Harbor on Monday, April 3 at another church location. Our congregation's willingness to pitch in for another night enabled Safe Harbor to stay open one more week this Spring. Hopefully, this year's effort will prepare us to serve at the new Safe Harbor building downtown for a week during the next Safe Harbor season.

Mike and Sandra McDonald, Co-chairs

## **Social Justice Action 2017 Annual Report**

This year there have been many threats to social justice issues in our nation and across the world. The election of a more conservative and narrowed government in our nation, has threatened many of the values and principles that we UUers and citizens of our country, have valued and worked to assure available for all. Therefore our social justice actions become even more paramount and urgent. There are many ways to be active fighting for social justice without being political.

One area is voting rights, trying to help all to have voting available to them, thru fair laws. Another pertinent issue is gerrymandering, very non-partisan. In both these areas we find our congregants actively fighting. These are just two areas that UUers are busy.

Reorganization of the Social Justice Committee was approved by the Board after suggestion by the Minister. The goal is to get more congregants active in social justice and hopefully working together in one or two issues. Anything that can be done to help congregants to know more and be active in social justice issues would be a positive action. Please join the discussions at the Activists Hub: <http://theactivisthub.discussion.community>

Emmy Lou Cholak  
Social Justice Action Chair  
Michigan UU Social Justice Network (MUUSJN) Board member

## **Social Justice Witness Committee Annual Report 2016-2017**

At a moment when thoughtful people have felt compelled to become more involved in their communities, the UUCGT reinvigorated the Social Justice Committee this spring. With many topics clamoring for our attention, it took some time to find concentrations for our considerable energies. Through a series of discussions and workshops we have narrowed our focus to two main issues, Redistricting and Mental Health, and two side issues, Migrants and Healthcare. All of these are big subjects, and we have begun to plan activities to address various aspects of each.

**Redistricting.** There is strong interest in Michigan to have an amendment to the State Constitution requiring a non-partisan commission redraw voting district lines to replace the gerrymandered system currently in place. Over 300,000 signatures on petitions are needed for the amendment to be voted on by Michiganders. UUCGT Social Justice Committee members, being fair-minded and energized, are uniquely qualified to assist with collecting signatures for the petitions and helping to educate others about this important initiative. Members of the Social Justice Committee will be sharing information about this campaign over the summer.

**Mental Health.** While evidence of people with mental health challenges is pervasive, this is a topic we rarely address head on. It is good to start understanding mental healthfulness within ourselves before addressing concerns in our community. We will be hosting a series of activities to personally check in and encourage discussions starting this summer.

**Migrants.** The compassion that UUCGT members feel for the increasing tenuosness of migrants living in our area is strong. Our ability to help migrants with their daily stress is limited by our not wanting to draw attention to their situation. There are some groups in our area, such as the Justice and Peace Advocacy Center (JPAC), dedicated to this concern and we will support their efforts and follow their counsel.

**Healthcare.** Recognized at a workshop was that there are a number of congregants with professional and personal experiences in healthcare. We plan to create a system where UUCGT members with healthcare expertise can offer solace and advice to congregants in need of guidance.

The SJ Committee is still determining the best method of communication. SJ Co-chair Lynnette Rhodes generously gave much time and effort to developing a way for us to communicate through the platform, The Activist Hub. Look also for SJ activities on the UUCGT Facebook page.

Paula Jo Kemler  
May 25, 2017

## **Sunday Services Committee Annual Report 2016-2017**

Some of our accomplishments over the past year are:

- During the past year, the Sunday Services Committee has added 7 new members and currently has a total of 17 members.
- In November, a new co-chair, Amanda Mangiardi, was announced.
- We have a new Board liaison, Donna Stein-Harris.
- We have put a renewed emphasis on feedback forms including rolling out new forms to the congregation and periodic mentioning of the opportunity to give feedback to the SSC through the forms and mentioning the location which is near the fern. We purchased a new box for the forms and have been averaging 5 feedback forms per service. These are read and discussed at each SSC meeting.
- We have created our annual budget, which includes: Purchasing Five Holiday trees, stands, tree skirts, and decorations for three trees.
- Members of the SSC have cleaned and organized the sanctuary closet allowing congregants who are designing service settings to have a clean and organized space to work in.
- We have updated our Handbook and new member packet. When a new member joins SSC we now have a packet of information to share with them that includes the handbook, a member directory, a contact sheet with SSC members' emails and phones, and a color-block schedule.

Hal Gurian & Amanda Mangiardi, Co-Chairs