



First Unitarian Church of Des Moines  
Annual Report 2009

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT:**

We are a welcoming, inclusive community. Celebrating life, we strive to transform ourselves and our larger community. Together we support one another, encourage religious inquiry, nurture spiritual and intellectual growth and work for social justice.

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**AGENDA**  
**First Unitarian Church of Des Moines**  
**Annual Congregational Meeting**  
**May 31, 2009 – 10:30 a.m.**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Call to Order & Welcome                      | Sally Boeckholt, President                       |
| 2. By the Numbers: The Year in Review           | Congregation                                     |
| 3. Establish Quorum                             | Sally Boeckholt, President                       |
| 4. Minutes of 2008 Annual Meeting               | Ginny Malcomson, Secretary                       |
| 5. Recognizing Board Members ending their terms | Phyllis Swink, Vice President                    |
| 6. Recognition of Delegates to General Assembly | Phyllis Swink, Vice President                    |
| 7. Nominations/Elections*                       | Abby Chungath, Nominating Chair                  |
| 8. Outreach/2nd Basket Nominees*                | Linda Lemons, Social Justice<br>Council Co-Chair |
| 9. 2009-10 Operating Budget*                    | Deborah L. Dessert, DFA                          |
| 10. Unsung UU Award                             | Ginny Malcomson, Secretary                       |
| 11. Closing Words                               | Sally Boeckholt, President                       |

*\*denotes action item*

**Minutes from First Unitarian Church of Des Moines,  
Annual Congregational Meeting, June 1, 2008 at 10:30 a.m.**

- I. Call to order at 10:37 a.m. by Board President, Dan Aten  
Official Count: 400 active members, 115 members present
  
- II. Minutes of 2007 Annual Meeting  
Motion to approve the minutes for the June 2007 Annual Minutes as written.  
Made by Harvey Harrison, second by Al Powers
  
- III. MORE for the Future of this Congregation
  - A. MORE Leadership Development information presented by Caesar Smith.
    - 1. Recognizing Board Members ending their terms and presentation of gifts: Jane Bell, Walter Pearson, Jane Rider
    - 2. Nominations/Elections for Board of Trustees, Endowment Committee and Nominating Committee presented by Julie Goldman, Nominating Chair
    - 3. Motion to approve for Board of Trustees: Louise Alcorn, Tom Thurtell, Phyllis Swink. Made by Steve Herwig, second by Walter Pearson. Approved by voice vote.
    - 4. Motion to approve for Endowment Development Committee: Linda Appelgate, Ruth Ann Harstad. Made by Scott Emison Clair, second by Louise Alcorn. Approved by voice vote.
    - 5. Motion to approve for Nominating Committee: Ann Mowery. Made by Priscilla Witke, second by Carol Evans. Approved by voice vote.
  - B. MORE Social Justice and Outreach .....Doug Aupperle, Convener
    - 1. Outreach Basket Nominees presented by Judy Loning  
Motion to approve Children and Families of Iowa and Des Moines Area Religious Council as recipients of the Outreach Basket collection. Karen Herwig asked how the single basket has worked out. Less money has been received than the prior year. The Board will address this. Made by Xenda Lindel, second by Steve Herwig. Approved by voice vote.
  - C. MORE Religious Education.....comments by Caroline Pelley
  - D. MORE Finance Team.....Dan Aten/Jane Bell, Conveners
    - 1. Treasurer's Report presented by Rolland Riley.
    - 2. Operating Budget presented by Dan Aten. Motion to approve the 2008-09 budget. Made by Walter Pearson, second by Bruce Martin. Approved by voice vote.
    - 3. Steve Herwig presented information on the new REACH grant program provided by the Endowment Committee. Applications are due by 4 p.m., June 30, 2008.
  - E. Unsung UU Award presented by Dan Aten to Ellen Taylor.
  
- IV. Thank you to outgoing president Dan Aten.
  
- V. Commitment to your piece of the pie! by Sally Boeckholt
  
- VI. Thank you to Barb Martin for her service.

Meeting adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ginny Malcomson, Secretary, Board of Trustees

## NOMINATIONS FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The nominating committee is pleased to announce our nominees for the Board of Trustees. These positions are to be voted on by the members of First Unitarian Church at our annual meeting on Sunday, May 31, 2009.

### **Board of Trustees (3 positions open, 3-year term for each):**

#### **SARA KARBELING**

I have been attending First Unitarian for many years. When we started to going to church regularly, I was in fourth grade, and my mother's primary goal was to find a thought provoking religious education program for me. By the time I was in high school, this church had become a comfortable religious community for our whole family. As a youth at church, I was very involved in church projects, organizing for district-wide multi-generational events and youth-planned and led conferences. The church and its members offered me a community of support that genuinely shaped my high school experiences and memories.

While in college, I was an active member of the UU group on campus. We held weekly meetings and planned a Prairie Star District young adult conference. I also worked with other members of our group to coordinate and teach RE for the children at the Unitarian Fellowship in Northfield.

Returning to Des Moines, my husband, Adam, and I joined the church in 2007. This fall, we started working with the youth group, and have really enjoyed the opportunity it provides us to give back to the church and engage members of our community. I am honored to be asked to join the board of trustees, and look forward to serving in this leadership role.

#### **CURT SIMMONS**

As my family (Cat, Marit, and Greer) defined our needs and vision for ourselves within a religious community, we were not sure we would be able to find one that lived up to our expectations. With our first visit to the First Unitarian Church in August of 2007, we immediately knew we had found what we had been searching for. We became members shortly after that first visit and the church has filled our lives with focus, purpose, challenges, and inspiration from the beginning.

I am always rewarded by my involvement with the church. Participating in Small Group Ministries has afforded me the opportunity to get to know other members in meaningful ways. Our family has enjoyed preparing a few meals for Wednesday evenings and are equally rewarded by helping clean the kitchen after the meals. Wednesdays have become a real focus of the week for us. Even if I don't have a specific activity I plan to participate in, I enjoy just spending time with our friends at church.

I am also now serving on the Religious Services Committee sparked by an interest in learning more about, and contributing to, the efforts, insights, and passions that are put into creating the weekly religious services of our shared journey. I have also been helping out with the RE program assisting with teaching the *Journey for the Planet* class. It has been so enriching to be part of this community.

#### **LINDA APPELGATE**

I've been a member of First Unitarian since 1985, when my 11-year old daughter, Mollie, wanted a church so she could be like her friends. Almost immediately, I knew I'd found my spiritual home. I love this church, what it stands for, and our members and staff. I've served on the Endowment Committee for the last two years. Over the years, I've served on the Minister's Advisory Committee, Family Life, and Forum committees. I've led one of this year's hospitality committees, "AACHOO", helped organize many events, taught in RE, been part of the annual pledge campaign team, and was initiated into the Usher Queen's 10-year club several years ago.

I would be honored to be chosen to give my time, energy, and talents to the Board. This is a wonderful, exciting time for our church community, and the greater community of which we are a part, with so many opportunities to live our faith and values. I would work hard for all of us.

**First Unitarian Church of Des Moines  
2009-10 Budget**

Description	2008-09 Approved Budget	2009-10 Budget	Difference between 2008- 09 and 2009- 10
<b>INCOME</b>			
<b>CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS</b>			
Current Pledges	\$ 370,000	\$ 447,000	
Previous Year's Pledges	12,500	15,000	
Cash Contributions	30,000	15,600	
Memorials	1,000	1,000	
Second Basket outreach	-	13,800	
KUNI radio	-	250	
<b>NON-CHARITABLE INCOME</b>			
Rental Income	7,270	5,000	
Noble Fund	800	800	
Misc Inc	1,000	1,580	
Endowment Grant Income	8,000	7,500	
Coffee Income	2,000	3,000	
Fundraisers	16,500	19,200	
Bookstore income	-	4,000	
Kids FACE income	-	2,000	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 449,070</b>	<b>\$ 535,730</b>	19%
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Interest and Insurance	\$ 37,000	\$ 39,500	
Utilities	22,400	22,702	
Contracted Services	7,400	6,724	
Building and Grounds	3,600	6,900	
Office Operations	27,900	22,999	
Compensation and Benefits	254,572	325,138	
Music	11,500	11,905	
Denominational Support	30,298	32,189	
Charitable Outreach	15,150	20,131	
Conferences and Training	3,000	3,000	
RE Programs-Children and Youth	4,668	5,440	
Membership Support, including Adult R	2,500	3,250	
Committees and Special Interests	25,875	35,853	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 445,863</b>	<b>\$ 535,730</b>	20%
<b>Excess Income (Shortfall)</b>	<b>\$ 3,208</b>	<b>\$ (0)</b>	

## Minister's Report

Greetings members & friends of First Unitarian,

One of many delights I have experienced as your minister since you called me to serve you in 2001 has been the yearly opportunity I have had to contribute to the annual report, outlining the highlights of the ministry we have shared during the last year. Without fail, as I have written this yearly summation of our accomplishments, I have been struck by how vibrant and healthy this congregation is, and how fortunate we have been to serve liberal religion together during this extraordinary period in our church's history.

This year, of course, is no exception. In fact, it may be the year of our ministry about which I am most proud because it feels like a year in which we have made perhaps our most significant commitments yet for our future, commitments that not only promise to further deepen our own congregational growth and development, but that also promise to have a lasting impact on the greater community.

When I returned from my five-month sabbatical last June, a time of intentional study of other growing, vibrant UU congregations, I had a vision of things I believed we needed to do to improve our ministry together. This vision was grounded in the wisdom of other congregations who had walked a similar path, so it felt solid to me. Still, I knew this vision would only be as solid as our willingness to make it real here in Des Moines.

The first priority was to restructure our administrative approach and create an overall staffing plan that was designed to meet the needs we currently have and better position ourselves for the needs to come. I am grateful to Liz Bredeson, Walter Pearson, Phyllis Swink, Caroline Pelley, Harvey Harrison, Dorothy Ramsey and Steve Stephenson, for being among those who contributed to a complete evaluation of our current staffing structure and for giving me the support to pursue a new approach. I had cold feet early on in the process, acknowledging to the group that upping the ante on our staffing would require a significant increase in our members' financial support. They assured me: "Mark, tell us what you think we need. The money will follow." How could I refuse such positive thinking?

So beginning in October, we hired the congregation's first Communications Coordinator (CC), Carla Herling, who in her ¼-time position has overseen the creation and publication of our various

communication vehicles. As the website gets updated and expanded, our CC will likely play a role.

Following the resignation of our administrator, Mary Reinsmoen, in October, the church did without an administrator for a couple of months. Hats off to Lori Emison Clair, who temporarily managed some of the administrative responsibilities during this time. Barb Royal, Ellen Taylor and Barb Martin were also extremely helpful during this transition. At last, in January we were delighted to hire Deb Dessert to our staff as our new Director of Finance and Administration (DFA). When we dreamed up the position (based in large part on what works in other congregations), Deb was exactly the kind of person we had in mind. Professional, personable, and experienced in virtually every area the DFA would need to manage, Deb has become, in just a few short months, an indispensable member of our team. We are truly fortunate to have her working with and for us.

The RE council teamed up with the personnel committee and me to redesign the Director of Religious Education position into a role that was not only doable, but desirable. Tracy Beck, who had served us in an interim role for the past year and a half felt called to the position, and I am certain we will be glad that she was. Tracy brings with her a diverse education background and a can-do spirit that will serve us well. In addition, she has agreed to pursue her UU Religious Educator credentials through continuing education opportunities over the next few years. She will learn from the best and brightest RE minds and programs UUism has to offer, and we will benefit, too.

Finally, we will have just hired a part-time office assistant, JoLynn Evans, to further complete our new staffing structure, someone who will be a regular presence in the office so that the rest of the staff can focus on their program and administrative responsibilities. The staff is looking forward to this additional resource, and I trust the congregation will appreciate the added staff presence as well.

None of these changes would have been possible without two key circumstances. First, member Karen Kraemer, who had been one of our interim RE staff people (along with Tracy), refused to be compensated for her work with us, literally and figuratively buying us the time and resources to fund staff changes during this budget year. Thank you, Karen, for your devoted volunteer spirit and generosity. You have been a treasure to this church this year! And

second, the overwhelmingly successful pledge drive this spring kept us from having to pull back on our staffing plan. We required a significant pledge increase and our membership came through. The budget for next year assumes a pledge income of 20% more than last year, which is simply outstanding and a testimony to our membership's commitment. Thanks to everyone for digging deep this year. We are positioned very well for the following years, in large part because of your generosity this spring. Much more than staffing changes happened this year. Here are just a few highlights:

In October, the church hosted a Social Justice Empowerment weekend, which featured two UUA facilitators leading us in a two-day process targeted at helping us claim our social justice ministries in new ways. There can be no doubt that this workshop has paid significant dividends for our congregation. We now have an inspired Social Justice Council that meets regularly and is positioned to be supportive to the initiatives already under way as well as those yet to bubble up. We have several working groups all doing good work on issues related to human rights, international peace and justice, universal health care, hunger, housing, the environmental justice... and more. I've never seen our church so organized and energized around our justice work. Next year's budget reflects this new energy, in that a full one percent of our operating fund is being devoted to the work of the social justice council and its working groups...and this is in addition to our other commitments to AMOS, DMARC, the UUSC, the Interfaith Alliance, and our second basket charities. We are not only giving more than ever to justice work, we are doing more than ever. What an exciting time for our congregation!

We have several new program initiatives being developed as well. A new *Coming of Age* curriculum (built on one developed by our UU congregation in East Lansing, MI) will be employed next year that promises to shepherd our youth into a deeper relationship with UUism, our congregation and their own spiritual journeys. I've already begun working with a team of leaders to develop *Wellsprings* a new adult spiritual deepening program built upon the work of our Rochester, NY congregation, which has chosen us as one of two pilot congregations as they roll this curricula out to the larger UU movement. Next year will be devoted to training the future program facilitators, but by Fall 2010, we should be ready to share this promising program with the rest of the congregation.

Another exciting development this year has been your Board of Trustees' progress in our transition towards policy governance, a new way of doing church that enables the board to focus more on policy and vision. Through a grant we received from the Prairie Star District, we have been working with a consultant team from Unity-Unitarian in St. Paul, MN, the same team used by the UUA Board as they went through a similar transition last year. It's such a privilege to learn from the best!

I have begun working with a core group of leaders on developing a new *Lay Ministry* program aimed at connecting and nurturing more leaders within our church so that we can more effectively carry out the ministries we envision. Stay tuned for more information!

This past year also saw deeper member commitments to our RE programming, including our youth hosting their first "con" in a decade; an ever-growing, ever-vibrant Wednesday night programming that regularly saw 100 or more people for dinner and/or programming; expanded music programming; and the results of the first round of Endowment REACH grants, which included funding for our new bookstore (so ably managed by Greg Pelley), and the children's theatre production (thanks to the Fillipones for their commitment), among others.

Add to this impressive list, the exciting news that we will host our first ministerial intern next year, Ricky Klein. Ricky is a student of Starr King, our UU theological school in Berkeley, CA. He will be with us from September through May. We even have an intern lined up for 2010-2011, too. How wonderful for us to become a "teaching congregation", as we help prepare our future UU ministers!

And, then, of course, I have to acknowledge my pride at our congregation being chosen as one of four UUA Breakthrough Congregations for 2009. We will be honored at General Assembly in Salt Lake City this June and will be featured in an upcoming issue of the UU World.

So much good news...and so much good news yet to come. As always, sincere thanks to everyone who makes this church the vibrant, liberal religious community it is. I am truly honored to serve as your minister.

With love and respect,

Mark

## **Director of Finance and Administration's Report**

Having started in this newly created position in January, 2009, the time has gone so fast! My initial impressions are the Church has a beautiful, welcoming building, the staff are great and have gone out of their way to help out as I learn the ropes and the volunteers are amazing – so many doing so much!

These months have been a combination of learning the day-to-day operations as well as working on several priority projects.

**2008-09 Financial Status** – Through April 2009 77% of the pledge income for the year has been collected which is slightly lower than the 83% where we should be for April 30. Pledge income to date is \$284,700 with pledges for the year totaling \$370,000. Second Basket income is an amazing \$11,650 through April 30. The Fabulously Fund Food Fair has raised over \$16,000 and the UU Children's Theater contributed \$2,300. Expenses are running about as expected for the year. Facility costs are slightly over-budget which reflects additional usage and needs covered after the renovations were completed.

**2009-10 Budget** – The budget for the upcoming year was prepared by Rev. Mark Stringer and myself to address the church's goals and priorities, including staffing and programming, outreach and membership. The budget provides salary and benefits based on the new staffing model to include a full-time Director of Religious Education, a .75-time Director of Finance and Administration, a .25-time Communications Director, a .40-time Office Assistant and an increase in the Membership Coordinator position to .75-time. The other staff positions remain unchanged.

Programs, Outreach and Membership are receiving a budget allocation of over \$77,000, an increase of approximately 45%! This increase includes religious education programs, membership support and church committees, as well as allocating 1% of the budget (\$5,080) to the Social Justice Council. This budget is possibly because of the generous spirit of BREAKTHROUGH giving that occurred as a result of Celebration Sunday – a 21% increase in giving! Congratulations to all of you for excitement this level of giving has generated and for the spiritual needs that will be met through this level of giving. As of May 11, 221 pledge cards have been returned for total pledges in excess of \$401,000. Eighty three Pledge cards remain to be returned.

**Room to Bloom 2 Capital Campaign** – The projects slated to be completed in 2008 are essentially done. Thanks to a generous member contribution, the timeline for the sound system upgrade in the auditorium was moved to 2009 and much of the work has already been completed. Projects slated for 2009-2011 are being evaluated and prioritized. A line of credit at Bankers Trust allowed the church to complete projects based on anticipated capital campaign contributions. This line of credit is being paid down with contributions received and will be converted to a mortgage at the appropriate time.

**Audit of the church's financial records as of June 30, 2008** – Although I wasn't at First Unitarian when this decision was made (or here when the actual audit took place), it was ably handled by Barb Royal, treasurer, Sally Boeckholt, President and Connie Price, bookkeeper. The results of the audit were communicated to your Board of Trustees along with the Executive Team response and communicated to the membership in the May Intercom.

**Church web site** – After many years of dedicated service by Terry and Jane Swanson, maintenance of the current web site has now been transitioned to the staff. In the upcoming months, I will facilitate a project to redesign the web site.

**New Office Assistant position created** – Based on input from a group led by Rev. Mark Stringer, a new position of Office Assistant was created. I am thrilled to have welcomed on board very recently JoLynn Evans in the Office Assistant position. I am confident she will ably handle the office operations. This position will allow me to focus on value-added, high priority projects.

I am looking forward to the 2009-10 year to continue adapting the operations to a more professional and business-like approach and improving communication and processes to become more efficient and productive. I am excited to continue working with Rev. Stringer and the Board of Trustees in moving forward with the implementation of the policy governance model. And I look forward to meeting even more of you in the coming months.

Sincerely,

Deborah L. Dessert, CPA  
Director of Finance and Administration

## Director of Religious Education's Report

This year has been a highly successful one in the area of religious education for First Unitarian Church of Des Moines. Each Sunday, the classrooms are full of children learning, growing and developing community together. An energizing teacher training was held to kick off the year in September and teaching teams were set. We have had wonderful volunteer teachers this year! Thank you!

At 9 am, we have had two classes, a K-1 class, using the Discovering Year Curriculum, as well as a Multi-Age class entitled Journey For the Planet, focusing on our Seventh Principle, Respect for the Interdependent Web of Life. Jon McAlister has lead the planning and development of curriculum for this class all year. It has truly been a wonderful experience for our children, as they grow in their knowledge of the ways in which we should treat the earth, and also building community across age levels.

We have had a multitude of offerings at 10:30 am. We again have a K-1 class who are exploring UU Values through new the Tapestry of Faith curriculum from the UUA-Wonderful Welcome and Creating Home. In the Second Grade class, the curriculum being explored is called Free to Believe, in which the children develop an idea of what it means to be Unitarian Universalist, as well as examining some of the 'big questions' through the UU perspective. The third grade class started the year off with Experiences with the Web of Life and is closing it out with a new Tapestry of Faith curriculum, Moral Tales. Moral Tales attempts to provide children with the spiritual and ethical tools they will need to make choices and take actions reflective of their Unitarian Universalist beliefs and values. The 4-6 Grade class has had a wonderful year, exploring Our Neighboring Faiths. Jennie Groves has been instrumental in helping organize this class. Setting up speakers and field trips, she has helped the class to become familiar with a variety of religions, including: Islam, Mennonite, Hinduism, Judaism, Catholicism, Baptist, Quaker, Buddhism, Infinite Wisdom, as well as Unitarian Universalist. The 7-8 Grade class has had a successful year of OWL (Our Whole Lives) Sexuality Curriculum. The High School Youth put on a very successful Youth CON the weekend of April 17-19. Participants from Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and Minnesota attended.

During the summer of 2008, the children explored

nature in a variety of ways here at church—tromping through the grounds, cleaning up litter and searching for insects-while also taking part in weekly spiritual rituals and stories. There were four adult volunteers working with an average of 25 children each Sunday. What a wonderful way to get to know each other!

We started an extremely successful program using RE Facilitators this year. They served as point people each Sunday morning and assisted with everything from walking the children down from service, to greeting and touring visitors. I am looking forward to continuing this program and growing its possibilities in the future.

Our Craft Closet got some much needed organization and attention from Abby Chungath and Ginny Malcomson. Multitudes of others also donated their time and talents to help with classroom set up, clean up and organization. Thank you!

Looking ahead, 2009 Summer Programming is in full swing, as well as 2009-2010 Curriculum Planning. We are beginning an in-depth Coming of Age program for our Middle School Youth in September which will lead to even more opportunities for involvement at church as well as an opportunity to development a faith statement and take part in specific rituals that may serve as a rite of passage into larger service to the church and community. Many other ideas are in the works....

I began the DRE position full-time on April 1. I am looking forward to my new career and am delighted to have found something that fits me so well, both personally and professionally. As I go forward, I am beginning the process of becoming a Credentialed Religious Educator and look forward to future learning experiences. I want to add to my educator toolkit as well as further my knowledge on our religion- Unitarian Universalism. A year from now, I am hoping to be writing this same report-making comments about overflowing classrooms, an overabundance of volunteers, my own professional and spiritual growth and a happy family life too.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tracy Beck

## **Membership Coordinator's Report**

### **MEMBERSHIP EFFORTS**

I have a series of membership events, three times per year:

(1) Get Acquainted Gatherings - Coordinated by Mike Shaw and Julie Brown and hosted this year by the SGM Facilitators.

(2) Exploring Membership class -

(a) Our Programs and Pathways Class facilitated by David Proudfit and Louise Jacobs

(b) Our American Roots DVD Viewing

(c) Our Roots and Branches Class

Led by Mark Stringer and facilitated by Tom Thurtell and Barb Martin.

(3) A Connections Dinner specifically for new families with children held after each New Member Ceremony. One change I have made to the membership series is that we now rotate the days the classes are held on, having one series on Tuesdays, one on Thursdays, and the final series on Saturdays.

In addition to the programming we have to make our guests feel welcome, I want to thank the many volunteers behind the scenes who make things happen: Jane Smaardyk and Sharon Welch who kept our visitor table well stocked over the past year; Priscilla Witke and Karen Nicholson who eagerly call all first time visitors each week to see how their first visit was and answer any questions; Pat Larson who helps make RSVP phone calls for our Get Acquainted Gathering; Mary Bourquin who puts her creative energies to work to create a new member bulletin board every three months; and Barb Royal who keeps our brochures ordered and available. These kind souls help keep the process running smoothly.

### **Membership Committee**

I continue to work closely with Ellen Taylor as the Chair of the Membership Committee. You can see Ellen's report for all the exciting happenings this year. I try to be available to Ellen as needed to provide staff support to the many projects she has going. Two areas where we have collaborated include welcoming visitors and retaining current members.

### **Welcoming Visitors**

This year we have made an exciting transition to a new system of welcoming visitors, friends and members on Sunday mornings. Thanks to the

amazing leadership of Ellen Taylor, Marge Graves and Cathy Musset we have successfully implemented a new Hospitality Team System. Each team consists of a leader and approximately 10 members who all come together for one service every eight weeks to provide coffee, treats, greeting, ushering, and kitchen cleanup. If you haven't yet signed up for a hospitality team, it's not too late. It is like SGM but with busy hands. It has been fun to see all the kitchen sink conversations each week.

### **Membership Retention**

This year we convened a group of member representatives from the Membership Committee (Ellen Taylor), Caring Ministry (Pat Winters), Growth Committee (Liz Bredesen), and Canvass (Barb Royal) to look at our membership rolls with a fresh set of eyes. We wanted to reach out to those members who had not been around as much. We wanted them to know that we missed them and we set a goal of meeting quarterly to review our lists and reach out to our members. This has been an intentional attempt to reach out when not asking for help or for money, but simply as a check in. This has been a wonderful first step and we look forward to not only continuing with the re-connection phone calls but also looking for other ways to strengthen our connections with our members.

### **COMMUNITY BUILDING EFFORTS**

#### **Celebrating Membership Dinner**

We held our third annual Celebrating membership dinner last June with 50 in attendance. This is always a moving night as we come together to remember what it is for each of us that is meaningful about our membership at First Unitarian and our connections to each other. It is also a fun way for the leaders in the church to get to know the newest members in a relaxed environment.

#### **All Church Picnic(s)**

We had three fun filled summer BBQs last summer with attendance around 80 in June, 70 in July, and 40 in August. A big thank you to Ellen Taylor, Marge Graves, Chris and Kathy Jorgensen, Mike Smith, Susan Seitz, Teresa Miller for helping.

### **Halloween Party**

We had another wildly successful Halloween party this year with approximately 120 people in attendance. The Youth Group did an amazing job with the Haunted House and even helped with clean up after the party was completed. Kent Newman and Brian Banse were a big hit and had all the kids (and a few adults) dancing for almost 45 minutes. Terrie Lilly led the way with games for the kids. Abby Chungath and Jodi Clark had some great crafts for the kids including a Fall door swag for adults and kids which was the favorite. S'mores were had by the fire. All the kids in costume received a prize from Mark Campbell as he served as emcee and Judge for the costume contest. Denny Shrock and Patrick Phillip did a wonderful job with decorations adding to the appeal of the evening. The whole community pitched in and cleaned up Channing Hall in record time.

### **Holiday Party**

We had over 130 people for the event and it seemed to be enjoyed by all. Crafts and games kept everyone entertained for over an hour. The evening concluded with a gathering around the piano as Bruce Martin and Moira Leu led everyone in a round of caroling. Abby Chungath, Jodi Clark, Stephanie Windom, Sara Karbeling, Moira Leu, and Bruce Martin helped in planning and implementing this year's party

### **New Year's Luncheon**

Our new members from 2008 joined together to welcome in the New Year over a hot meal. Approximately 30 members attended. Jerry and Susan Hurst provided a wonderful meal including two types of homemade soups.

### **Love Makes a Family Party**

This was the first year we held a Valentine's Day party. I am hoping that we will make it an annual tradition. We had over 50 members and friends come together on Valentine's Day. We made crafts, decorated cookies, had a scavenger hunt and enjoyed another great potluck.

### **Silver and Gold Circle Supers**

We kicked off our third year with around 90 individuals signing up to share meals together quarterly. The programs were coordinated this year by Sue Repplinger and Lynn Fox.

### **Wednesday Night Programming**

Wednesday nights have become a centerpiece of church programming over the past year. We have had a wide variety of classes and programming available and have seen attendance most Wednesdays at approximately 60 people for dinner and 120 people for programming. We have a group of hard working guest chefs including: Greg Pelley, Abby and Jeff Chungath, Bob Baker, Cat and Curt Simmons, Michelle and Rob Heater, Rolland Riley and Carol Hibbs, Ehren Stover Wright, Bob and Maria Filippone, Jodi and Pat Clark and Volker Liebeseller. Programs available have included: Kids FACE coordinated by Linda Kearins and Suzanne Popson, Youth Games - Adele Villemez, Martial Arts - Joel Blair, Secret Santa - Dawn Connet, Tai Chi - Sherrie Levine, Adventures in Science - Curt Simmons, Music with Moira - Moira Leu, Five nights of Clay - Larry Bredeson. We ended the year with a month of Magic with Sydney Storm. Youth Choir Directed by Karen Kraemer. Second Wednesdays with Mark, Buddhist Meditation led by Gary Keast and Denise Daniels, Bible for Skeptics - Caesar Smith and Andy Popson, Documentary Movie Night - Volker Lieberseller, Hatha Yoga led by Andrew Salgado, Second Wednesday Stamping Workshop led by Tracy Beck and Dawn Connet, Silk Painting facilitated by Bev Westra and Michelle Heater, Great Books Discussion Group II and Taste of Poetry led by Greg Pelley. Circle of Friends Coordinated by Xenda Lindel and Bob Anderson. Additional new community Building programs this year include: Inter-generational softball with Adam Kurth and Sara Karbeling. Boys Night Out- Bob Filippone and Steve Evans and Girls Night Out - Becky Evans.

### **Churchwide Clean Up**

As we finally came to the end of our construction it became clear it was time for some deep cleaning/ de-cluttering. Ginny Malcomson and Maria Filippone helped clean out the Mary Safford Room, Ginny went on to tackle the area near the large activity room, under the RE stairs, and the coat closet in December. In January we gathered a group of over 30 people to cleanout the old pipe organ room as well as work down a "honey do" list that had been gathering over the 2 years of construction. It was amazing to see people pair up and get those long waiting projects done in a flash!

### **Recruiting Office/ Church Volunteers**

As we have been in transition this past year I have been working to provide volunteer support to a variety of church projects and appreciate everyone who has said yes....when they have gotten the call. It is wonderful to not only see everyone step up when a need arises, but to see the relationships and friendships that develop when we roll up our sleeves together.

### **Childcare**

One additional responsibility I took over this spring has been the infant/ toddler/ multi-ages childcare program. Karen Kraemer had been handling this area since Joan McDonald left last year. It has been fun to work with our dedicated childcare staff to assure we provide the cleanest, safest, and most fun place for our children.

### **Mentoring Smaller Congregations**

One of the exciting things this year has been contacts by congregations seeking information about the programs we have here in Des Moines. It has been wonderful chance for me to share with them the resources we have created. Just another opportunity to be proud of the amazing programs we have.

### **District Training**

I was asked to lead the membership track of this year District training. This was a chance for me to put together of presentation of all the material we use to welcome visitors.

### **“How It Works” Manual**

I put this manual together several years ago. I completed a small update this past summer. But the most exciting news is how fast word has spread that we have created this document. I have shared a copy with 40 congregations over the past year. It has been wonderful to be able to provide support to developing congregations.

It has been a busy year. I am honored to work as your Membership Coordinator and feel lucky to have a job I love, that also allows me the flexibility to put my family's schedule first. I look forward to an even busier next year with what I anticipate will be a year full of growth!

In Peace,

Lori

### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

*These people have become members during the 2008-2009 church year. Due to our printing deadline it may not reflect June membership class participants.*

*Sharon Ancell  
Jennifer Berger  
Jeanne Bowles  
Tim Brown  
Joel Gesaman  
Angela Haen  
John Holmes  
Margret Holmes  
Dick Karpinen  
Kathie Karpinen  
Karen Kittel  
Emil Larson  
Linda Larson  
Gene McCracken  
Connie Muetzel  
Maureen Myshock  
Lainie Ori  
Ari Palczewski  
Mark Perkins  
Seana Perkins  
Chery Peterson  
Bill Ross  
Tara Ross  
Diane Ford Shivers  
Cornie Van Walbeek  
Gretchen Van Walbeek  
Marion Whitaker  
Wendy Wilson  
Ben Woline  
Tigon Woline*

### **Music Coordinator's Report**

I was hired as the Director of Music in July 2008 after Barbara Martin retired from the position. I'm thoroughly enjoying this new position and I am grateful for the opportunity to work at First Unitarian Church.

The goal of forming a music committee was reached. We now have a group of people who are in place to support and enhance the music program here at First Unitarian. The music committee will continue to be an important resource as we continue down the road of growing our church.

The goal of providing music for each service was accomplished this year as I worked with Mark and the musicians to make that happen. The choir provided music for 23 services this year, including Celebration Sunday at Drake and 5 services that were mostly music. Members, friends, and guest musicians provided music for over 60 services this year. We were also fortunate to have Charlie King plan a weekend of services with Mark.

The task of finding and preparing music and musicians is large and exciting. I'm looking forward to a summer full of volunteer and guest musicians.

Sincerely,

Moira Leu

### **Communication Coordinator's Report**

I started at First Unitarian in October 2008. I am the first person to hold the position of Communications Coordinator, so I've been working hard with Rev. Mark and the other staff members to determine how I can best serve the congregation's needs.

As I reflect back on my first six months here, I'm happy with my accomplishments thus far. I re-designed the OOS and the Intercom to try and make them more useful communication tools. This is still a work in progress, however, so look for more changes in the future. I've also focused on making sure all church publications are consistent and accurate, and provide the best promotion for programs, causes and events.

Recently, I've taken on management of the church web site with the retirement of Terry and Jane Swanson. I appreciate their help in the transition, along with that of Adam Kurth. They have all been generous of their time for my many questions.

Starting this next fiscal year the weekly email newsletter, which is anecdotally the most popular form of church communication, will be changing its format. Look for the weekly email's makeover coming later this summer.

I'm also hoping to streamline the church's look with the development of a church logo and new letterhead. I'd love input from any congregation members that have ideas on what will best visually represent this community. I appreciate the welcome that I've been given here at church and look forward to the future of Communications here at First Unitarian.

Sincerely,

Carla Herling

## President's Report

What an exciting year!

In October, with the help of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) we brought in two trained facilitators to lead us in a Social Justice Empowerment Workshop. As a result, our justice ministry has expanded and grown, with groups dedicated to reducing our individual and collective carbon footprint, to addressing hunger in our community and in the wider world, to helping Iowa become home to refugees arriving in Des Moines.

For the first time in anyone's memory, the congregation invested in a financial audit. Our treasurer, Barb Royal, along with bookkeeper Connie Price, made sure records were accurate and available to the auditors – and we came through with flying colors!

The Endowment Committee launched a new program, selecting several programs to receive R.E.A.C.H. grants – these projects included expanding our ministries in theater (Bob Fillipone and friends' fantastic John Lennon and Me), literature (Greg Pelley's A Good Book bookstore) and more (see their annual reports for full details!)

Mary Reinsmoen, our church administrator, retired in November. We were grateful for her skill in managing the church during all the construction. Her flexibility was legendary (remember the office in a trailer?).

Our new Director of Finance and Administration, Deb Dessert, began her duties in January – she brings a wealth of experience and knowledge, and best of all, a “can-do” approach to the myriad mysteries of our church's finances.

Our Communications Coordinator, Carla Herling, is doing a great job keeping us informed about what's happening when, where and why! She retooled the Intercom newsletter, and her weekly e-mail has become a mainstay of my in-box. On a personal note, I especially appreciate her gentle reminders to turn things in on time!

Wednesday Night at church has become the “in” place to be! With dinner, discussion, Small Group Ministry, Mark's 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday experience, movies, classes, and even a category called “Misc.” –Lori Emison Clair has shepherded this growing and changing ministry with style and class...in addition to helping new members to feel at home.

Tracy Beck and Karen Kraemer completed their

terms as the two-headed director of religious education – what a team! – and Tracy became our full time Director of Religious Education this spring. My heartfelt thanks to both Karen and Tracy for stepping up in 2008, and for shaping a renewed, exciting and fun RE program for our children and youth. Thanks to all the volunteers who worked to make a great RE program – I know that Tracy appreciates you, and I do too!

The economy has been the topic of lots of conversation at church, just like it is everywhere these days. The success of our Celebration Sunday canvass event was truly a testament to how much First Unitarian means to all of us – when asked to increase our pledges, we did it. We are funding an exciting future!

Rev. Stringer returned from sabbatical and truly became the CSO (Chief Spiritual Officer) of our church. We are headed in new directions as a church, and with Mark leading us, I feel sure we will keep becoming better and better.

The Board started off our church year with a day-long retreat in July 2008. Rev. Mark had just returned from sabbatical; he had three new board members, and renewed energy to continue working on improving our church through better governance, improved staffing, building completion, and strong programs.

The Board's work on Policy Governance has been challenging, interesting and awesome. I am so grateful for all the board: Dan Aten, Doug Aupperle, Ginny Malcomson, Tom Bierley, Jeff Chungath, Phyllis Swink, Louise Alcorn, and Tom Thurtell. Your passion for our work and for our (best) church (in the world) has made serving alongside of you a true joy.

Most of all, I want to say THANK YOU to each of you for all the ways you've made this year a success, whether by serving on a hospitality team, working on our grounds, teaching RE, helping in the office, or noticing when something needs to be done and doing it! Together, we are First Unitarian Church of Des Moines!

It has been an honor to serve as your President.

Sally Boeckholt, President

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### AMOS Committee

Committee Leaders: Sally Boeckholt, Bruce Martin, Scott Clair, Dave Witke, Linda Lemons

Committee Members: Congregation of First Unitarian – all can participate!

Added Mid-Year Objectives:

- Encourage members to attend AMOS three-day training on community organizing in June 2009

Committee Accomplishments:

- Presented a religious service about AMOS
- Presented a Wednesday night program on economic policy
- Hosted the annual AMOS fundraiser, and devoted significant member time to its success.
- Along with the Social Justice Council, applied for and received a grant from the UU Veach Foundation for training in community organizing.

Budget Allotment: \$4200 Funds Spent: \$4200

Major Expenditures: Membership Dues to AMOS 1% of the previous year's operating budget

Recommendations for next year:

- Host at least 20 house meeting in 2009 AMOS House Meeting campaign
- Invite and train more members to get involved in this "ministry of public life"!

### Archives Committee

Committee Leaders: Rob Nicholson

Committee Members: Bob Glass, Ruth Keairns and Alice Willis

Beginning of Year Objectives:

1. Organize and file accumulated documents, photographs, and so forth
2. Arrange for the systematic collection of regularly produced documents
3. Periodically prepare columns on church history for the Intercom

Committee Accomplishments:

- Objectives (2) and (3) have been fully met
- substantial progress has been made toward meeting objective (1).

Budget Allotment: \$200 Funds Spent: \$75

Major Expenditures: Heavy-duty shelves

Barriers to excellence: None that our imagination and dedication cannot overcome!

Recommendations for next year:

- Finish meeting objective (1)
- Obtain a plaque noting that the archives room has been named for Dwight and Beth Saunders.

### A Good Book. (The Bookstore of the First Unitarian Church) Committee

Committee Leader: Greg Pelley

Beginning of Year Objectives:

- Re-establish the bookstore at the church using UUA Bookstore titles.
- Include Don Justo Coffee sales.
- Establish operating procedures.

Added Mid-Year Objectives:

- Set up additional agreements with publishers and book distributors.
- Accept donated books/magazines for resale.

Committee Accomplishments: \$3735 in book sales as of April 30.

Budget Allotment: \$2000 seed from the Endowment, no allotment from operating budget in FY09.

Funds Spent: Endowment Grant + \$4076

Major Expenditures:

- Book case/kiosk and Book orders.

Barriers to excellence:

- Need better procedural organization - so that the store is more easily run by volunteers

Recommendations for next year:

- Establish volunteer crew of book sellers.
- Continue to develop relationships with publishers.

Recognition of special contributions:

- Caroline Pelley, Rob Heater, Andy and Suzanne Popson, and Tim Brown for staffing the store when Greg was otherwise occupied.
- Generous members and friends for their donations of used books and magazines.
- Everyone who has purchased books and given their wonderful recommendations!

### **Annual Canvass Committee**

Committee Leaders: Lea Ann Flanagan,  
Heidi Lackmann

Committee Advisors: Rev. Stringer, Harvey Harrison,  
Ellen Taylor, Barb Royal, Deidre Fudge

Committee Members: Doug Hoffman, Kent Newman,  
Linda Applegate

Beginning of Year Objective:

- Hold a successful annual canvass in order to increase pledge income by 15%

Added Mid-Year Objective:

- Create a buzz around the church's designation by the Unitarian Universalist Association as a "Breakthrough Congregation"

Committee Accomplishments:

- We chose the canvass theme "An Invitation to Our Next Breakthrough" and were intentional about sharing the level of pledging necessary to fund our vision and be the church we say we want to be.
- We shared consistent messages in many ways – via sermons, testimonials, newsletter articles, mailings and phone calls to our members, friends and visitors.
- We asked for meaningful pledges, shared why we care about giving to this church and were rewarded with an average increase of 15% by existing pledgers and commitments by many first-time pledgers.

Budget Allotment: \$1500 Funds Spent: \$3596

Major Expenditures:

- Fees for Drake rental and Sodexo catering
- Printing and postage

Barriers to excellence:

- None – it is a privilege to be surrounded by so many generous and dedicated members and friends

Recommendations for next year:

- Start early – involve many – communicate openly – enjoy the journey

Recognition of special contributions:

- Thanks to those who shared their heartfelt testimonials on Celebration Sunday – Lauren Malcomson, Marian Whitaker, Dave Proudfit, Cat Morris, Harvey Harrison and Rev. Stringer.
- Special thanks to Kent Newman for creating a video with cameos of many of our members and allowing us to show our best side.
- Thanks to those of you who shared your personal reasons for engaging in our community and giving your time, talent and treasure to First Unitarian.
- Thanks to Rolland Riley & Carol Hibbs, Liz & Larry Bredeson, Bev Westra and Joel Severinghaus, and Ron & Eileen Bowerman for hosting small group breakthrough conversations.
- Thanks to staff members Deb Dessert, Carla Herling and Lori Emison Clair, as well as Jane Smaardyck and other volunteers for coordinating mailings and announcements.
- Thanks to Deidre Fudge for communications insight and pre-event signage.
- Thanks to Barb Royal for pledge card design and logging incoming pledges in a timely fashion.
- Thanks to Ann Mowery, Linda Appelgate, Tom Thurtell, Price Flanagan, Sharon Welch, Barb Martin, Susan Seitz, Dave Proudfit, Mark Campbell, Jane Rider, Jane Bell, Ellen Taylor, Janine Choudury, Carol Evans, Marge Graves, Kay Hertz, Karen Herwig, Lynn Fox, Mary Hays and Lea Ann Flanagan for making RSVP and follow-up calls.
- Thanks to the nine members of our Board, as well as Harvey Harrison, Mark Stringer, Lea Ann Flanagan and Heidi Lackmann for acknowledging our pledgers with hand-written postcards.
- Thanks to all of you who give your time and money to make First Unitarian such a vibrant and engaging community!

### **Caring Ministry Committee**

Committee Leaders: Pat Winters

(temporarily the only coordinator)

Committee Members: Currently 10 dedicated subgroup leaders: Barb Klubal (prepare/deliver meals, and limited household tasks), Linda Lovell (transportation), Barb Martin (visits/check-ins by phone or in person), Carolyn Spencer and Kay Hertz (cards and notes), Danielle Stull and Joan McAlister (babies/new parents), Pat Peterson (memorial services/memorials), Hazel Zimmerman (medical equipment loans), Pat Winters (communications). These groups manage a total of approximately 90 volunteers.

#### Beginning of Year Objectives:

- Recruit two new coordinators (if not already in place)
- Develop pastoral care and related training for volunteers and coordinators
- Determine additional ways of identifying persons and families who might desire CM attention
- Remind the congregation of the availability of loanable medical equipment and other Caring Ministry services
- Establish communications systems and/or meetings of key volunteers to coordinate services and needs
- Continue to inform the congregation of joys, concerns, and milestones in lives of church members during services, in the Intercom, and in other ways to be developed by new coordinators.
- Continue to highlight church members in the Intercom's "Honoring Each Other".

#### Added Mid-Year Objective:

- Update lists of volunteers and interest areas after Caring Ministry month (October);

#### Committee Accomplishments:

- Dozens of dedicated church volunteers assist other members with identified needs through the Caring Ministry
- For the ten babies born into the church in the past year (so far), an average of 10 meals were prepared for each family who requested them (3 families), with a personalized quilt from the Bent Needles group.
- Joys and Concerns were presented at church services, with Cares and Concerns in the Intercom and occasional *Honoring Each Other* articles in the Intercom.

- Dozens of meals were prepared for 3 people recovering from surgery and cancer treatments and for one family with a child in the hospital.
- Two persons received approximately 9 rides provided by 3 volunteers through the CM program, although many other drivers and rides cannot be accurately counted. Thirteen additional volunteers agreed to provide rides when needed.
- Many dozens of calls were made to at least 20 church members, with weekly visits to one individual and occasional visits to at least 8 shut-ins or members recovering from surgery or other medical treatments.
- One person borrowed medical equipment.
- One memorial reception was held (for Dr. Erle Fitz) with assistance from 12 volunteers.

Budget Allotment: \$400

Funds Spent: at least \$113 (reported as of 4-30-09)

#### Major Expenditures:

- For memorial services (refreshments; flowers for the family)
- stamps for cards and notes (cards are usually donated).

#### Barriers to excellence:

The following can limit our knowledge of individuals or families who have needs:

- "word of mouth" as the only source of information;
- lack of a formal system to identify and follow up with individuals who share during Joys and Concerns
- lack of a formal system to coordinate knowledge between all CM volunteers.

#### Recommendations for next year:

- See "Objectives".
- Also, the "babies/new parents" group would like to have a picnic for all families who have had babies in the past few years.

#### Recognition of special contributions:

- Jo Fitz resigned this year after dedicated service to the Caring Ministry program as a co-coordinator for about 10 years. Jo contributed in many important ways, coordinating several CM subgroups, arranging "Honoring Each Other" articles for the Intercom, and generally serving as an inspiration to members of the committee and of the church.

### Endowment Committee

Committee Leader: Steve Herwig, Chair

Committee Members: Linda Appelgate, Carol Evans, Ruthanne Harsted, Margaret Karbeling, David Witke, and Louise Alcorn-Board Liaison

Beginning of Year Objectives:

- Develop Endowment Fund brochure.
- Host a series of forums dealing with a) philanthropic giving, b) various methods of contribution to the Endowment Fund and c) estate planning.
- Conceive the REACH (Radical Engagement and Creative Happenings) Grant program to use Endowment Fund interest to support church programs and initiatives.
- Contact church members about Endowment Fund support.

Committee Accomplishments:

- All of the items planned at the beginning of the year. The member contacts are on-going.

Budget Allotment: \$1,000 Funds Spent: \$594

Major Expenditures:

- Endowment brochures.
- The other expenditures are the REACH Grants which come from a portion of the interest money generated by the Endowment Fund (about \$6,250 for past year).

Barriers to excellence:

- The Endowment Fund will be as successful as those who support it find it an important part in the present and future work of the Church.
- The economic downturn requires that we work to restore the value of the fund to the pre-recession levels and beyond.

Recommendations for next year:

- We will begin an annual recognition Sunday for those who support the Endowment Fund and we will continue to solicit new supporters.

Recognition of special contributions:

- All those who say "yes" when contacted by the Endowment Committee.

### Annual Report of the First Unitarian Church Endowment Fund

Submitted by the Investment Managers:

Chancy Bittner, Carol Evans, Dwight Saunders

The Investment Management Committee aims at long-term decision making and utilized professional expertise thorough an emphasis on holding mutual funds as assets of the Endowment Fund. The Fund's investment policy, developed in 2000, recognizes that the Management Committee members are not professional managers and thus do not make short-term portfolio adjustments as a response to short-term market fluctuations. In light of the market volatility of the last several years, this policy underscores the wisdom of long-term investing.

The Investment Managers are using the format of reporting which we developed in 2000 since we feel that it is easily understood by member of the Board of Trustees as well as by the general congregation.

Description of Monies Received by the Endowment Fund

1. Income
  - a. Dividends
  - b. Interest
2. Return of Principal (not income)
  - a. Capital Gains
  - b. Repayment of debt owed to the Fund
  - c. Redemption of mutual funds

85% of net income\* is reserved for use by the church for project expenditures and/or repayment of debt to the Fund.

15% of net income\* is reserved for the Fund's use and becomes an asset to the Fund.

*\*Net income = income minus expenses*

**Forum Committee**

Committee Leaders: Mark Campbell and Michelle Heater

Beginning of Year Objectives:

- Schedule Weekly Forums

Committee Accomplishments:

- Able to schedule a forum for every available weekend.

Budget Allotment: \$0 Funds Spent: \$0

Barriers to excellence:

- Access to Channing Hall was sometimes a large hurdle.
- Not having the church calendar easily accessible when planning Forums.
- Having something planned in Channing Hall at the same time by someone else without consulting the Forum chairs (only happened once or twice).

Recommendations for next year:

- One person to do scheduling as it gets confusing when there's two.

**Fundraising Committee**

Committee Leader: Barb Royal

Others Who Helped: While there really isn't a Fundraising Committee, many people have contributed to raising money this year.

*Rummage Sale & Auction* – we actually didn't have one this year, but Mary Dycus and David Whitaker are already busy planning a big event for November 6-8, 2009. Save your treasures to contribute.

*Fabulously Fun Food Fair Fundraiser 10* – countless people helped make this a huge success, including the event and auction item donors and all of the people who made purchases. In addition, Deidre Fudge made all of the signs, and event-day helpers included Jane Bell, Karen & Steve Herwig, Marilyn Lantz, Ann Mowery, Linda Appelgate, Pat Winters, Jill Moser, and Michelle Heater.

Beginning of Year Objectives:

- Have a record-setting 10th Food Fair – \$11,000 or more

Committee Accomplishments:

- The Food Fair raised over \$16,000 – that's \$6,000 more than our previous record!

Budget Allotment: None

Funds Spent: \$20+ in donated stamps and supplies

Major Expenditures:

- Time and energy.

Recommendations for next year:

- Have even more people donate new and different events for the Food Fair.

**Green Team Committee**

The Green Team has not been meeting and needs to be revived. The Kids FACE group has initiated composting food scraps and we're making an effort to recycle everything possible.

## Grounds Committee

Committee Leaders: Pat Headley and Theresa Miller  
 Committee Members: Bill & Lois Leonard, Bruce Vandegrift, Alan Billyard, Tom Thurtell, Jane Rider, and Tigon Woline. Lots of people who attend the clean up days although they aren't formally on the committee. These people are greatly appreciated.

### Beginning of Year Objectives:

1. Work on the Druid Hill project. Our number one objective was to clear a 20 foot strip of ground from the SE corner of the lower parking lot to the corner of Druid Hill and Cassady Drive. For years we have had a problem with people driving by and tossing trash out their vehicle windows. We hope that a 20 foot buffer strip of park-like area may discourage some of this dumping. If it's inconvenient to dump something into the woods, maybe they will consider dumping it elsewhere.
2. We wanted to install a bench at the west church entrance so people waiting for rides could have a place to rest and to make that entrance more welcoming.
3. We wanted to continue creating small garden areas for people to plant and/or maintain.

### Added Mid-Year Objectives:

1. Part of the bio swale near the playground collapsed and we have been working on a plan to make it more usable and more effective.
2. We have developed a plan to begin replacing trees on the property while the current ones are still healthy, which will be ongoing.
3. We attend the Gray's Lake Neighborhood Association meetings.

### Committee Accomplishments:

1. Conducted fall and spring half-day work days.
2. Removed 60-80 linear feet of underbrush along Druid Hill.
3. Chipped some of the smaller brush and spread it around various trees.
4. Conducted two day clean up over Thanksgiving.
5. Installed bench near west church entrance.
6. Installed flagstone pathway in front of new bench.
7. Designed two half circle garden areas to be placed at east sidewalk as it meets the lower parking lot.
8. Designed garden area to be placed around newly installed bench and continuing to NE corner of church.
9. Ordered trees, bushes, and plants for the 2009 spring planting season.
10. Made plans for the 2009/2010 season and

budget expenses.

11. Created an 18-page book of "Facilities Projects" for all church members/groups/committees to peruse when they are looking for service projects.
12. Began removing invasive honeysuckle.
13. Conducted an emergency clean up of the creek area after heavy summer rains.
14. Repaired railing on sidewalk over creek, also after heavy summer rains.

Budget Allotment: \$600 Funds Spent: \$600

Major Expenditures: Equipment rental, installation of bench and flagstone and ordering flowers and shrubs

### Barriers to excellence:

- We need more families and young people to serve on the committee.
- We also need to generate as much excitement about the grounds as people have shown for the building. The grounds and the building complementing each other. Each makes an impression on church members, neighbors, and the general public. Per city reports, the Annual Average Daily Count for vehicles traveling on Bell Avenue is 10,700 vehicles. That's a lot of people getting a daily impression of our property.

### Recommendations for next year:

1. Continue removing invasive species.
2. Rebuild path and peace garden.
3. Repair gazebo leading into woods.
4. Develop a comprehensive recycling/composting program.
5. Conduct several all-day work days.
6. Continue planting new trees on the property.
7. Implement plan for improving bio swale.
8. Continue sprucing up the place.

Recognition of special contributions: The new bench at the west church entrance was donated by Ron and Eileen Bowerman and the Olund Saunders Thi family. The flagstone was donated by Rhino Materials. The First Unitarian Endowment Fund's REACH grant provided funds to have the flagstone installed. Chris Jorgensen contributed ten hours of professional time to the bench project and Alan Billyard contributed three hours of professional time to the project. Eight church volunteers gave a total of ten hours in preparing the site for the bench project. We sincerely thank all who helped make this project possible.

### **Hospitality Committee**

*Committee Leaders:* Ellen Taylor, Marge Graves, Cathy Mussett *Committee Members:* Team leaders, in addition to those listed above, are Mary Hays, Liz Bredeson, Carol Henderson, Carol Hibbs, Eileen Lundberg, Linda Appelgate, Xenda Lindel, Mike Smith, Eileen Bowerman, Jill Moser, Sydney Royal, Cathy Mussett, Dagny Fidler, Suzie Stewart, and Mary Humphrey

#### Beginning of Year Objectives:

- We wanted to coordinate scheduling for greeters, ushers, coffee makers, and refreshment providers for coffee hours in a way that would avoid stress and be welcoming for everyone.

#### Added Mid-Year Objectives:

- We have tried to be sure guests are being engaged in conversation after the services and during coffee hours.

#### Committee Accomplishments:

- Approximately 165 folks have been involved in providing hospitality for the Sunday services!
- Also, this committee has been an excellent chance for new members or friends to contribute and to become acquainted with church members.

#### Major Expenditures:

- Donations do not cover the entire cost of coffee and tea. All refreshments served are donated.

#### Barriers to excellence:

- The dishwasher has broken down several times.

#### Recommendations for next year:

- We plan to form two new teams to serve on the fifth Sundays.

#### Recognition of special contributions:

- Ellen Taylor brought the idea for this hospitality plan from another UU church and was instrumental in setting up the present teams.
- Regarding the above-mentioned dishwasher, Al Powers has been very prompt in checking out problems and repairing them as soon as parts could be obtained.
- Kent Newman, assisted by Cathy Mussett, has been responsible for buying the church's Fair Trade coffee.
- Also, Lori Emison Clair has been invaluable in helping us coordinate.

### **Interweave Committee**

*Committee Leaders:* Mark Metz

#### Beginning of Year Objectives:

Our yearly objectives are almost always the same.

- Organize PRIDE events for the church
- Host a STARS party
- Lead a service in October sometime around National Coming Out Day
- Provide four Forums.

#### Added Mid-Year Objectives:

- Because of the flooding last year PRIDE was moved to October.

#### Committee Accomplishments:

- Successful Pride Parade organized
- Hosted a STARS party
- Led a service and one forum.

#### Major Expenditures: T-shirts

#### Barriers to excellence:

- The committee has not been able to sustain a secretary over the last year.

#### Recommendations for next year:

- We need to change the STARS fundraiser to attract more congregational participation
- Get Rev. Stringer involved in our yearly service
- More energy in Forum presentations
- More social events for Interweave

#### Recognition of special contributions:

- Doug Aupperle was amazing this past year with all of his help. I couldn't have done it without him.
- Walter Tomlinson and David Ross went beyond the call of duty to take care of the T-shirts and the PRIDE booth.
- David Witke makes the best soup for the Interweave potluck/ meetings. It's worth it to come to a meeting just to eat his fabulous food.
- And to all of the people who were the secretary this year. Many many Thanks. You all know how crappy I am at running a meeting and taking notes at the same time.

**Membership Committee**

Committee Leader: Ellen Taylor

Committee Members: Susan Applegat-Hurst, Adele Villemez, David Witke, Susan Seitz

Beginning of Year Objectives:

1. Recruit "Gift Based Ministry [GBM]" survey subgroup
2. Have members complete GBM surveys to help provide information to various groups in church looking for people with like interests
3. Actively use PowerChurch database for tracking members, GBM surveys, and other membership needs
4. Help launch Sunday Hospitality Teams

Added Mid-Year Objectives:

1. Produce updated church directory

Committee Accomplishments:

1. Worked with Barb Royal to update database
2. Worked with Lori Emison Clair and Barb Royal to input any essential information received from contacts with less active members
3. Recruited Gift Based Ministry survey subgroup and collected survey info online/& on paper
4. Provided recruitment and support to Marge Graves and Cathy Mussett for Hospitality Teams
5. Produced updated church directory with help from Lori Emison Clair and data queen, Barb Royal – who sent out our first "electronic version" of the directory to all members with email addresses!

Barriers to excellence:

- Only human nature.

Recommendations for next year:

1. Continue to clarify structure/role of committee
2. Continue to recruit working subgroups

Recognition of special contributions:

- Barb Royal is not officially on the Membership Committee, but we would not be able to function without her computer skills deftly manipulating the PowerChurch database.
- Thanks, also, to Lori Emison Clair, who continues to nudge me along as we retool the format of the Membership Committee itself.

As Wayne, my hiking guide in the Bitterroot Mountains used to say, "We're gettin' there."

**Memorial Garden Committee**

Committee Leaders: Pat Farland

Committee Members: Jane Rider, Jean Tauber, Lois Leonard, Doug Aupperle, Sandy Johnson, Phyllis Briley and Pat Farland

Beginning of Year Objectives:

- Purchase and have water fountain installed
- Purchase flower urns and keep them planted
- Maintain Memorial Garden

Committee Accomplishments:

- Purchased water fountain and it was installed
- Purchased wrought iron flower urns and kept them planted
- Maintained Memorial Garden

Funds Spent: \$1220

Major Expenditures:

- Fountain and urns purchased with donation money (around \$1,500)

Recommendations for next year:

- Recruit more members for Memorial Garden,
- Planting along edging on outer walkway if ok with Grounds Committee
- Repair walk
- Condition soil
- Replace yews and maybe roses

Recognition of special contributions:

- Sandy Johnson and Mary Hayes for their generous donations for the water fountain and wrought iron flower urns.

**Nominating Committee**

Committee Leader: Abigail Chungath, Chairperson

Committee Members: Ann Mowery, Jane Bell, Sally Boeckholt, Doug Aupperle

Beginning of Year Objectives:

- Nominate three church members to the Board of Trustees (outgoing members are Sally Boeckholt, Dan Aten, and Doug Aupperle), and one member to the Nominating Committee.

Added Mid-Year Objectives:

- Jane Bell appointed to committee in place of Pam Olund in February.
- Board of Trustees transition to policy governance meant that the Nominating Committee will only be seeking three members to fill the Board of Trustees openings.

Committee Accomplishments:

- Three great nominees for the Board of Trustees.

Recommendations for next year:

- Committee needs to meet earlier in order to give enough time to schedule and attend meetings.
- Review process should be evaluated in response to suggestions and concerns that were brought up late in the process this year.

**Personnel Committee**

Committee Leaders: Tom Bierley

Committee Members: Tom Bierley, Walter Pearson, Liz Bredeson, Steve Stephenson, Dorothy Ramsey

Beginning of Year Objectives:

- To work with the Executive Committee to move toward a new Policy Governance model which transforms the Personnel Committee from a decision-making committee to a resource for advice.

Committee Accomplishments:

- We participated in the hiring of a new Director of Finance and Administration, a new Communications Coordinator, and a new Director of Religious Education.

Recommendations for next year:

- Continue to support the Executive Committee and the church in moving to our new Policy Governance model.

**RE Council**

Committee Leaders/Members: Caroline Pelley, Harvey Harrison, Jennifer Williams, Caesar Smith, Tracy Beck as of April '09

## Beginning of Year Objectives:

- Create, recruit for, train volunteers and manage an RE Program that supports the needs of the entire congregation.
- Organize for and lead the transition process from our full time DRE to our new staffing model.
- Recommend new staffing model to Board for full-time replacement of DRE staff.
- Lead the hiring process for the new DRE with the Personnel Committee

## Added Mid-Year Objectives:

- Identify Coming of Age program and initiate working group. Pilot program to begin Fall 2009.
- Enhance Youth Activities, Host Def-Con
- Enhance Adult Education opportunities
- Increase integration of children and youth within all aspects of the congregational life

## Committee Accomplishments:

- New teacher team model supports continuity of teachers, adds stability to the program and reduces ad-hoc recruiting requirements.
- New facilitator volunteer role supports Sunday Morning RE and supports DRE function.
- Tracy Beck hired as new FT DRE!!!!
- Coming of Age Program adopted for 2009-2010 year. Working group established.
- Hosted Youth Def-Con. First in over 10 years.
- Identified Curriculum for Core Adult Ed and working group in action to roll out for 2009-2010.
- Increased participation in activities like social action, services, service projects, etc.

## Major Expenditures:

- Most expenses are consumables for RE.

## Barriers to excellence:

- None – looking forward to Tracy's leadership.

## Recommendations for next year:

- Support DRE Professional Development with budgeted funds.
- Examine role of RE Council and adjust to reflect current governance changes within Congregation and appropriate support for DRE.

## Recognition of special contributions:

- Karen Kraemer – she took on the PT position of RE Administrator and worked to support the RE program and coordinated all of the childcare. She donated her services to the congregation for this, and we are eternally grateful for her service.
- Tracy Beck – took a PT position for RE Programming to assist the congregation during a transition, and made it into a flourishing program. Her vision and leadership, compassion and determination made her the perfect choice as our FT DRE.
- Jennifer Williams – What great dedication and leadership to the Youth Programming for the church.
- Harvey Harrison – Countless contributions to guiding the program during our transition. Led our staffing search and worked to identify and organize the new Coming of Age Program.
- Caesar Smith – For contributions to the RE Council related to visioning around Adult Education and working with the core group to develop the new program.
- All of the many teachers and volunteers in support of this program. Your hours of commitment to teaching the youngest members of our congregation are and investment in the health and vitality of our congregation.

We Thank You ALL !!!!

**Religious Services Committee**

Committee Leaders: Scott Emison Clair

Committee Members: Maria Fillipone, Rob Heater, Bruce Martin, Greg Pelley, Curt Simmons, Carolyn Spencer, Rev Mark Stringer, Marian Whitaker and Priscilla Witke

## Beginning of Year Objectives:

1. Identify lay leaders for services when our minister is not in the pulpit.
2. Assist lay leaders in providing high quality religious services when minister is out of pulpit.
3. Recruit lay leaders to assist with components of the religious services including: Chalice Lighters, Welcomers and Story Readers.
4. Insure that church staff obtain the needed information regarding services and involved individuals in a timely manner.
5. Coordinate the reimbursement of individuals performing services at First Unitarian, as needed.

## Added Mid-Year Objectives:

1. Explore options for assisted listening devices
2. Explore options to improve the Auditorium's sound system including the potential for podcasts.

## Committee Accomplishments:

- We feel that the overall quality of lay led religious services has improved.
- We have developed a Service Guide for Lay Leaders to help assist them in the planning of their services.
- Equipment was identified and installed to provide assisted listening device thru FM radio.
- New speakers have been installed in the auditorium improving the overall quality of the sound system.

Budget Allotment: \$2000 Funds Spent: \$1470.59  
(as of 4-28-09 Anticipate spending full amount by 6-30-09)

## Major Expenditures:

- Reimbursing out of town speakers – Phyllis Griffin, Dawn Cooley and Charlie King
- FM Radio Transmitter for assisted listening

## Barriers to excellence:

- The sound system has been an ongoing barrier and we need to insure that we have a reliable way to record services AT LEAST on CD preferably also via podcast.

## Recommendations for next year:

- The new speakers are a definite improvement but we need to make sure that we have a reliable way to record the services and this NEEDS to be in the budget.

## Recognition of special contributions:

- All group members for their discussion and other contributions towards improving religious services.
- Greg Pelley and Al Powers for setting up the new speakers.
- Rob Heater and Mark Campbell for setting up the FM transmitter for assisted listening.

### **Social Action/Social Justice Council**

*At the beginning of the year it was called the Social Action Committee*

Council Leaders: Linda Lemons and Scott Clair, Bob Henderson and Judy Lonning

Council Members: Douglas Aupperle, Jane Bell, Sally Boeckholt, Louise Jacobs, Judy Lonning, Eileen Lundberg, Ann Rezarch

#### Beginning of Year Objectives:

- The Social Action Committee, which was lead by Bob Henderson and Judy Lonning, successfully hosted a Social Justice Empowerment Workshop in October, 2008.
- From this Workshop we re-organized social justice work within our congregation.
- We officially sanctioned six task groups and a Social Justice Council.
- Our Mission is to harness and encourage the power to work for social justice within our congregation and the world.
- Our goals were
  1. to provide information about social justice work underway at the church and in the community
  2. to support and facilitate the successful work of action groups.

#### Added Mid-Year Objectives:

- We hosted a social gathering in January to further develop social justice work within our congregation
- We took on developing the policies and procedures for how the Council will function
- We organized a budget for fiscal year 2010.

#### Committee Accomplishments:

- Hosted the Social Empowerment Workshop
- Sanctioned International Peace and Justice task group
- Applied and obtained Veach Grant funds to be used for IAF training
- Supported the Health Care Committee in organizing a Health Care Symposium
- Started using a social justice e-mail list serv.

Budget Allotment: \$1500 Funds Spent:

\$1278.50 Social Empowerment Workshop

\$ 110.00 Health Care Symposium

\$ 110.00 International Peace and Justice

Major Expenditures: Social Empowerment Workshop

#### Recommendations for next year:

- Implement the new policies and procedures
- Establish an atmosphere that fosters better communication and coordination of social justice issues between the task groups and the congregation
- Develop a brochure

#### Recognition of special contributions:

- Bob Henderson and Judy Lonning for their work in organizing the Social Justice Empowerment Workshop

#### ENERGY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL SUBGROUP

Group Leaders: Jon Knapp McAlister, Kathie Dawley

Group Participants: Fred LaCroix, Stephen Lauer, Roger Lemons, Eileen Lundberg, Diane Shelby-Churchill, Rob Stephens, Bruce Vandegrift

#### Beginning of Year Objectives:

- To encourage UU's and the broader public to take personal and political action in response to the crisis of climate change.

#### Added Mid-year Objectives:

- To cut down on carbon fuels by sending the Intercom electronically.

#### Committee Accomplishments:

- Completed a brochure
- Hosted Vegetarian Potlucks;
- Hosted a forum on Sisters on the Planet
- Coordinated efforts with Iowa Global Warming campaign

#### Barriers to Excellence:

- The only challenge came when we missed the switch from the "administrator" e-mail address to the "DFA" e-mail address. This led to a shortage of communication that led to some significant but manageable confusion.

#### Recommendations for next year:

- Continue the committee activities
- Work harder to get more involved in the broader community (including Iowa Interfaith Power and Light, DMARC, and Iowa Global Warming)
- Work harder to educate members about things we can do (possibly through adult RE)
- Find new ways to green the church and church operations

### EDUCATION SUBGROUP

Group Facilitators: Caesar Smith and Sara Karbeling  
 Identified Interested Members: John Audlehelm, Jennie Groves, Ginny Malcomson, Rob Malcomson, Gene McCracken, Teresa Miller.

#### Beginning of Year Objectives:

- The group is in a “pre-planning process.” It is currently inactive. However this group may become active in the future if time and energy permits and if a particular issue arises.
- It should be noted that at one time these members expressed an interest in education.

### FEDS: FEED EACH DESERVING SOUL/STOMACH

Group Facilitator: Bruce Martin  
 Group Participants: Becky Evans, Shannon Massoth, Barb Martin, Ann Mowery, Evelyn Glazebrook and Ellen Taylor, with others occasionally in attendance.

#### Beginning of Year Objective:

- To identify as many hunger-based programs and organizations in Central Iowa as possible
- We compared our findings and distributed the resulting list to the Small Group Ministry Coordinators for possible SGM service projects.

#### Task Group Accomplishments:

- Accomplished identifying hunger based programs and organizations through individual assignments and initiatives.
- From the list we chose three that our task group could realistically pursue during this first year:
  1. helping in the national aid recipient survey being conducted locally by the Central Iowa Food Bank
  2. helping in the preparation and serving of meal(s) for the Churches United Shelter for the homeless, in downtown Des Moines
  3. establishing some sort of connection with the ongoing meal distribution at Trinity United Methodist Church.

Anyone wishing to join the task group or to make suggestions is welcome to do so. Contact me at 288-3427 or [bruce.martin@drake.edu](mailto:bruce.martin@drake.edu)

### HEALTHCARE SUBGROUP

Group Facilitator: Nicky Keller  
 Group Participants: Mark Campbell, Angie Doyle Scar, Bob Glass, Barb Glass, Maureen Myshock, Max Knauer, Teresa Miller, Linda Lemons, Jane Swanson, Terry Swanson and Phyllis Swink

#### Beginning of Year Objectives:

1. Hold a Wellness Station for church members
2. Get active in Broadlawns Mental Health Discussion group
3. Get active on the state and national level in support of universal health care.

#### Task Group Accomplishments:

1. Committee members are reviewing different assessment tools and are hoping to offer screenings next fall.
2. Members of the church were involved in an AMOS Broadlawns Board of Trustees Accountability Night and members are involved in an AMOS Mental Health and Addiction Research Team.
3. The committee invited about two dozen faith based and community service organizations to join us in putting on a Health Care Reform Education and Action Symposium which was held at our church on May 2.

Budget Allotment: \$110.00

Funds Spent: Healthcare Symposium

#### Barriers to Excellence:

- None, in fact, quite the contrary. The church has been very supportive in making available meeting space for community wide meetings and for planning meetings.

Recognition of special contributions: Max Knauer, Nicky Keller for organizing the symposium.

### HOUSING SUBGROUP

Group Facilitator: Bob Henderson  
 Group Participants: Carol Evans, Debbie Kane,

#### Beginning of Year Objective:

- Focused on investigating the extent of the problem, the factors contributing to the problem, and how members could assist in improving the situation.

#### Task Group Accomplishments:

- Sponsored four forums to help the congregation better understand what is being done to address affordable housing issues in the Greater Des Moines Area.

#### Recommendations for Next Year:

- The group is determining the interest in developing a team to becoming a participating supporter of Habitat for Humanity.

## HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP

Group Facilitator: Doug Aupperle

Group Participants: Janice Hawkins, Karen Kittell, Mark Metz, Jill Moser, Pat Larson, Larry Schlatter, Tom Thurtell, David Witke

### Beginning of the Year Objectives:

- The two issues the task group addressed are Marriage Equality and Death with Dignity. Marriage Equality focuses on securing not just the right to civil marriage for same-sex couples but also securing the legal and financial rights that normally come with marriage at both the state and federal levels. Their first step was to connect with and learn more about the key issues and then plan to partner with them to work together most effectively. The other issue, Death with Dignity, involved securing legal rights for individuals around end-of-life issues and choices. Connecting with other stakeholders so far on this issue has included Compassion and Choices, and several local hospice organizations.

### Accomplishments:

- Assisted in organizing Unitarian Universalists to attend a rally last November in protest of the California Proposition 8.
- They partnered with Marriage Equality Iowa to host a special forum with Mandy Carter, a North Carolina-based black lesbian social justice activist who helped to found the National Black Justice Coalition and Southerners On New Ground (with 35 attending).
- They hosted a Marriage Equality Brunch, in collaboration with One Iowa, Lambda Legal, and Interfaith Alliance of Iowa (with 72 attending).
- After the Iowa Supreme Court ruling, the group helped organize church members to advocate with state legislators to oppose a state constitutional amendment to ban same sex marriage.
- They are currently in the process of organizing an education and petition drive on end of life issues and advocating for an Oregon-style Death With Dignity state law, which will progress in several phases, from within the church, to other churches, to public arenas.

### Barriers to Excellence:

- Involving more church members in action planning and implementation.
- Challenges of splitting the group's focus

### Recommendations for Next Year:

1. Further public education about marriage equality, targeting the "movable middle".
2. Advocacy with the state legislature to continue preventing a vote on a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage in the 2010 legislative session.
3. Begin advocating for the President and Congress to support repealing the Federal Defense of Marriage Act.
4. Provide education on the Death With Dignity issues and proposed state law, and advocate for it to the governor and state legislature through a petition to be presented to them by the next legislative session.

## INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND JUSTICE SUBGROUP

Group Facilitator: Robert Anderson

Group Participants: Xenda Lindel, Carol Henderson, Bob Henderson, Ellen Taylor

### Beginning Mid-Year Objectives:

- To create world peace, to improve international relationships with other countries
- To learn from refugee families and help them adjust locally.

### Task Group Accomplishments:

- We launched our own Circle of Friends group. At least six First Unitarian members have attended Circle of Friends training
- We are currently working with three local Iraqi families and have received approval for two more families in Iowa
- We endorsed the work of the Justice for our Neighbors program, which provides legal services for immigrants.
- We sponsored two forums, one conducted by Doris Knight, Director of the Neighbors Program, and another to discuss the UUSC Peacekeeping statement; and sponsored a Sunday morning session with African high school exchange students.
- We are also planning an international meal event. This has also made First Unitarian International Peace and Justice more visible in the greater Des Moines community.

Recognition of special contributions: Robert Anderson who developed and led the task group.

**Unity Circle Alliance**

Unity Circle Leaders: Patricia Peterson, President; Program Chair, Oren Peterson; Ron Bowerman, Secretary; Gloria Edwards, Treasurer; Evelyn Glazebrook, Nominating Chair; Phyllis Briley, Membership Chair

Members: Membership is open to all members and friends of First Unitarian Church of Des Moines.

Program: We meet monthly for a potluck lunch and program. Host responsibilities for meetings are shared monthly. Many members participated in the 100th Anniversary Suffrage Reenactment which took place in October, 2008, honoring women suffragists, many of whom had been members of the first Unitarian Church. We have had a roster of interesting, challenging programs this year. Weather precluded meeting in December and our irregular January meeting.

**Additional Activities:**

- Unity Circle purchased a number of glass pitchers and small juice and water glasses dedicated for use in memorial services.

**Major Accomplishments:**

- Participation in the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Suffrage Reenactment and Unity Circle support for memorial service receptions.
- Continued dynamic programs for the participants.
- Honoring birthdays for each month.

**Barriers to growth:**

- Need to recruit new members to the group as they retire from day jobs.
- Need to communicate Unity Circle is not a “private club”—apparently some have that perception.

**Recommendations for next year:**

- Broader dissemination of program booklet to encourage participation. Inviting guests to meetings.

**Recognition of special contributions:**

- We are grateful to Jerry and Janet Carspecken for their past two years as presidents.
- Ron Bowerman, secretary; Gloria Edwards, treasurer; Phyllis Briley, membership chair; and Oren Peterson, program chair provided leadership and support for Unity Circle.

**UU Children’s Theater Committee**

Committee leader: Bob Filippone

Committee Members: Maria Filippone and the cast members

Beginning of year objectives: play production

Added mid-year objectives: fundraiser

**Committee accomplishments:**

- successful play and fund raiser

REACH grant endowment funds spent: >\$1,250

Major expenditures: equipment rental

Barriers to excellence: lack of adult participation

**Recommendations for next year:**

- Recruit help before beginning the project. I unsuccessfully tried to do that this year, but went ahead anyway for the children.
- Next year, Shauneen Linton will act as producer and I as director and we will not proceed until we have commitments from the necessary number of people to follow through with the production.

**Recognition of special contributions:**

- All of the children who worked so hard.

**UUSC Committee**

Committee Leaders: Suzanne Popson

Committee Accomplishments: Guest At Your Table

Major Expenditures:

- Contributed \$695 as a congregation to Guest At Your Table.

Barriers to excellence:

- Need a new committee lead to provide more time and attention to the committee.

Recommendations for next year:

- Have the UUSC be more involved with the other social action committees to help bring more awareness to the organization.

**Windbreakers Committee**

Committee Contacts: Bill Paxson, Mark Campbell, Doug Hoffman et al.

Committee Members: The et al part. Hey guys! Wanna eat & talk?

Beginning of Year Objectives:

- Meet monthly on the first Sunday at 6 p.m. for a potluck dinner. This is non-negotiable, short of thermo-nuclear attack!

Added Mid-Year Objectives:

- Stave off requests for projects.
- We keep reminding ourselves & others that we are a social group.
- Questioning the viability of policy governance.

Committee Accomplishments:

- No projects, other than ones WE select, namely:
  1. Baseball outing to see the Iowa Cubs, Everyone invited. Proceeds go to the church.
  2. Oscar night potluck & viewing the Oscar presentation live from Hollywood, digitally on a big screen! Everyone is invited. Heck! Even non-UUs attended this year.

Budget Allotment: \$0 (but worth million\$)

Funds Spent: \$0

Major Expenditures:

- The sweat and joy of meeting one another monthly.
- Oh, and elbow grease cleaning up afterwards.

Barriers to excellence:

- What! We are about as excellent as a group could be! Harumph!
- We've been unable to secure the attendance and support of Dr. Wally Norton and Congressman Steve King.

Recommendations for next year: Keep on truckin.

Remember this equation: Men + Food = Windbreakers

Recognition of special contributions:

- Everyone who came to Windbreakers in the spirit of fellowship and good will (too schmaltzy? Tough beans.)

## **BYLAWS OF THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF DES MOINES**

The following Bylaws of the First Unitarian Church were duly approved at a properly called special meeting of the Membership on May 6, 1979, and subsequently adopted by the Board of Trustees, as provided by the Articles of Incorporation, and as amended May 17, 1992, May 15, 1994, May 21, 1995, May 18, 1997, May 16, 1999, and May 21, 2001. These bylaws were edited to remove accumulated strike-through modifications and underscoring on additional language on March 16, 2005. Additionally, changes made in June 2005, and approved on June, 4 2006 are incorporated in this version.

### **ARTICLE I: Name**

The name of this corporation shall be:

THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF DES MOINES, IOWA

### **ARTICLE II: Purpose**

The purpose of this corporation is to implement the commitment of the members as proclaimed in the Bond of Union:

“WE ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER FOR THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF MORALITY AND RELIGION, AS INTERPRETED BY THE GROWING THOUGHT AND NOBLEST LIVES OF HUMANITY, HOPING THEREBY TO PROVE HELPFUL ONE TO ANOTHER AND TO PROMOTE TRUTH, RIGHTEOUSNESS AND LOVE IN THE WORLD.”

### **ARTICLE III: Membership**

#### *Section 1: Becoming a member*

Individuals who are 16 years of age or older may obtain membership status by ascribing to the purpose set forth by Article II (The Bond of Union) and completing the following steps:

- a. Submit a written request for membership to the Membership Committee;
- b. File a pledge with the Finance committee and pay the first installment of the pledge;
- c. Sign the Membership Book in the presence of an active member.

There shall be no creedal test, explicit or implied, for membership.

The membership committee or their designee will report the names of new members to the Board of Trustees on a periodic basis.

#### *Section 2: Continuing membership*

- a. Membership continues as long as an annual financial payment in excess of the minimum cost of annual membership is made. The cost of membership is equal to the cost of UUA and PSD annual assessments plus the reasonable cost of supporting a member by the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines. The Board prior to the each annual pledge campaign will define this cost.
- b. The Board of Trustees may, at the request of the membership committee temporarily waive the requirement listed above for individual members of the congregation.

#### *Section 3: Membership Reports*

The Membership and Finance Committees shall verify the active member list annually and report findings to the Board of Trustees.

#### *Section 4: Resigning Membership*

A member may resign at any time by submitting a written resignation to the church office.

## **ARTICLE IV: Meetings**

### *Section 1: Annual Meeting*

An annual meeting of the active membership of the Church shall be held prior to July 1 at the time and place that the Board of Trustees shall designate. The purposes of the meeting shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Presentation of annual reports;
- b. Election of Trustees, members of the Endowment Development and Nominating Committees;
- c. Adoption of a budget for the next fiscal year;
- d. Discussion and vote on resolutions presented; and
- e. Transaction of other business, which may come before the meeting.

### *Section 2: Special Meetings*

A special meeting of the Members may be called for any purpose any time by:

- a. A majority vote of the Board of Trustees; or
- b. Shall be called by a petition, so requesting, signed by at least fifteen (15) percent of active members and presented to a Trustee.

Action taken at a special meeting shall be limited to the issue or issues that are set forth in the notice.

### *Section 3: Notice*

Notice of each annual and special meeting shall be given by mailing notices to active members at least two weeks before a meeting. The notice shall include:

- a. The time, place and purpose of the meeting;
- b. The proposed agenda, and
- c. The text of any resolution duly presented to the secretary, and
- d. Candidates presented by the Nominating Committee (annual meeting only).

### *Section 4: Quorum*

Fifteen percent of the active membership shall constitute a quorum of any annual or special meeting except as provided elsewhere in these bylaws, but a smaller number may meet and record an adjournment.

### *Section 5: Responsibilities of the Membership*

The membership shall elect the Trustees of the Board, members of the Endowment, Development and Nominating Committees, appoint or discharge the minister, buy, sell, or encumber real property of the Church, approve the Church budget and any other matters as may be brought to its attention by the Board of Trustees or the membership at a meeting duly called.

### *Section 6: Voting*

Action on any matter to come before the membership at an annual or special meeting shall be by a majority of those members present and voting except as expressly provided otherwise in these Bylaws. The Board may elect to authorize by resolution the use of absentee ballots for voting on agenda issues at any congregational meetings.

## **ARTICLE V: Board of Trustees**

### *Section 1: Membership*

The Board of Trustees of this church shall consist of nine (9) active members, elected for terms of three years; three (3) of whom shall be elected at each annual meeting. Terms shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30. No person who has served as a Trustee for a term of three years shall be eligible for re-election until one year after the expiration of that Trustee's term.

*Section 2: General Powers*

The Board of Trustees shall be the legal representative of the Church, and shall have general charge of its business and administrative affairs subject to the will of the active membership. The Board of Trustees may adopt such rules and policies for the transaction of its business and of the Church as it may determine. In addition to other authority granted in these bylaws, the Board has authority to appoint individuals to act on behalf of the congregation in various capacities, including voting delegates at assemblies and meetings of the Unitarian Universalist Association and affiliated organizations.

*Section 3: Removal and Vacancies*

Trustees may be removed by a majority vote at an annual or special meeting, at which time a replacement shall be elected to serve out the remaining term. Notice stating the proposed removal, which complies with Article IV, shall be given before the meeting.

In the event of a vacancy on the Board, other than removal of a trustee by a vote of the active members, the remaining Trustees shall appoint a successor to fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting at which time a replacement shall be elected in accordance with Article IV, to serve out the remaining term.

*Section 4: Regular Meetings*

The Board of Trustees shall hold an open meeting once each month at a time and place it determines. Notice of the regular time and place of such meetings shall be published to the membership at the start of each fiscal year and whenever the regular time or place is changed. At such meetings, five (5) Trustees shall constitute a quorum. The membership shall be informed through the monthly church newsletter of significant actions taken by the Board at their meetings.

*Section 5: Special Meetings*

Special meetings or virtual meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by any member of the Executive Committee or any two (2) members of the Board for the transaction of business

*Section 6: Minutes*

The minutes of the Board meetings shall show the results of each vote taken and information sufficient to indicate the vote of each member present. These minutes of any meetings of the board that are held shall be posted in the church for inspection by any interested member.

**ARTICLE VI: Officers***Section 1: Officers and Officer Selection*

The Board of Trustees selects its own officers, who shall also serve as congregational officers according to the following procedures.

- a. The Board shall meet each year, after the annual congregational meeting and before July 1 to select officers for the coming year. The term of those selected shall begin July 1, and end June 30 of the following year.
- b. The officers of the congregation to be chosen shall include: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- c. The offices of congregational President, Vice President, and Secretary shall be filled by members previously elected to the Board.

*Section 2: Executive Committee*

An Executive Committee, made up of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and two additional Board members selected by the President, may act in the event of emergencies or to expedite matters between regular meetings of the Board.

### *Section 3: Duties of the President*

The President shall be the principal executive officer of the corporation and shall preside as the chairperson at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the membership.

The President, along with the other officers, shall perform such duties as may be prescribed by the Board of trustees either formally or informally.

### Section 4: Duties of the Vice President

The Vice President shall preside in the absence of the President and shall be responsible for such other duties as may be required by the Board of Trustees.

### Section 5: Duties of the Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for:

- a. The preservation of the minutes of all meetings of the members and of the Board of Trustees;
- b. the giving of all notices as required by law and these Bylaws; and
- c. such other duties as may be required by the Board of Trustees.

### Section 6: Treasurer

The Treasurer shall provide monthly reports of Church assets and liabilities, revenues, and expenditures to the Board of Trustees. The monthly report shall also provide updated comparisons of actual revenues and expenditures to budget projections. The Treasurer shall provide an annual report to the membership, and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Trustees shall require.

### Section 7: Removal

Any officer or agent elected or appointed by the Board of Trustees may be removed by the Board of Trustees whenever, in its judgment, it is in the best interest of the Church.

## **ARTICLE VII: Property**

### Section 1: Real Estate

Buying, selling or encumbering of real estate shall be approved at the annual meeting or a special meeting of the active membership called for such purpose.

### Section 2: Checks and Drafts

All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money issued in the name of the Church, shall be signed in the manner determined by a resolution of the Board of Trustees.

### Section 3: Deposits

All funds of the corporation shall be regularly and promptly deposited to the credit of the Church in financial institutions as selected by the Board of Trustees.

No funds shall be expended for purposes of the Church without first being deposited to its order and drawn upon as provided herein.

## **ARTICLE VIII: Employees of the Church**

### Section 1: Designation

The Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the Personnel Committee shall designate employees of this corporation with the exception of the minister.

### Section 2: Salaries

The salaries of all employees shall be fixed in the annual budget upon recommendation of the Personnel Committee and vote of the Board of Trustees, but may be established or adjusted between annual meetings by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees.

### Section 3: Other personnel policies

The Board shall insure the personnel committee maintains a periodically updated manual of personnel policies and procedures, to insure clarity, fairness, and legal compliance with best practices and legal requirements relative to employees. This manual shall address the range of issues of compensation, benefits, rights and obligations, practices and policies of First Unitarian Church and its employees.

## **ARTICLE IX: Minister**

### Section 1: Selection

The process for calling a minister shall begin with the selection of the Ministerial Search Committee by the active members. The Ministerial Search Committee shall recommend a ministerial candidate to the congregation. That recommendation shall be considered at a congregational meeting duly called for that specific purpose.

A congregational meeting to approve a ministerial candidate recommendation requires an extraordinary quorum of twenty-five (25) percent of the membership present, or represented by absentee votes, if such an absentee process is authorized by the Board.

Approval of a ministerial candidate shall require an extraordinary affirmative two-thirds (2/3) majority of all votes cast.

### *Section 2: Dismissal*

A majority vote of the active membership shall be necessary for the dismissal of the minister of this Church. The Board may authorize absentee voting for this process, consistent with other notice and meeting provisions of these bylaws.

### *Section 3: Settlement*

The terms of settlement with such minister shall be negotiated by the Ministerial Negotiating Committee, members of which are approved by vote of the Board of Trustees.

### *Section 4: Duties*

The minister, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees, and with the assistance of such committees as may be provided by the Board, shall

- a. be responsible for the religious services, ceremonies and observances led by the minister,
- b. be a non-voting member of the Board of Trustees and the Personnel Committee. The minister may serve as a non-voting member of any affiliated committee or group.
- c. coordinate the day to day activities of the professional staff of the church. Such personnel issues as the minister determines may be referred for consideration and resolution to the Personnel Committee to perform such additional duties and render such reports as the Board may require;
- d. the minister shall have the freedom of the pulpit and elsewhere to express his/her opinion.

### *Section 5: Evaluation*

The annual evaluation of the minister will be conducted in a manner prescribed by the Board of Trustees.

## **ARTICLE X: Committees**

### *Section 1: General procedures for committees*

The Board of Trustees retains authority, within the terms of provisions stated in these bylaws, to review activities and policies, and committee membership of all committees of the church. The Board of Trustees may

relieve the Chairperson and membership of standing and special committees as it is deemed necessary for carrying out the Church Purpose. Committees and their respective areas of responsibility and duties, beyond that addressed in the bylaws may be designated by resolution of the Board of Trustees.

*Section 2: Standing Committees Selected by the Congregation*

- a. Nominating Committee. This committee shall consist of five members of the church. Three members are to be elected on a staggered basis (one each year) to three-year terms by the congregation at the annual meeting. The Board president shall designate two additional members of the committee—who shall be members of the current Board—to serve on the committee for one year. The committee is charged with the responsibility of nominating members to serve in positions to be elected by the congregation, including the Board of Trustees, the Endowment Development Committee, and the Nominating Committee.
- b. Endowment Development Committee. This committee shall consist of five members of the church, to be elected on a staggered basis to terms of up to three years by the congregation at the annual meeting. The committee is charged with the responsibility of planning and executing strategies, events, and activities designed to build the principal balance in the fund to its designated goal. The committee must seek Board approval for its plans, which shall be coordinated with those of the canvass committee.
- c. Ministerial Search Committee. The Ministerial Search Committee shall be activated in the event of a ministerial vacancy. The Committee shall consist of seven members elected by the active membership. The committee chairperson shall be elected by the committee members.

*Section 3: Standing Committees Selected by the Board of Trustees and reporting directly to the Board or its designated Council liaison*

- a. Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee shall consist of four active members and the minister, as an ex officio member. Three committee members shall be appointed by the Board for staggered three year terms so that one new member is appointed each year. The fourth position on the committee shall be a member of the Board of Trustees, appointed by the President of the Board to serve as committee chairperson for one year. The committee shall oversee personnel matters and shall recommend, with the input of the appropriate committees, staff positions, hours per week, salaries, employee selections, job descriptions and reviews.
- b. Finance and Audit Committee. The Finance and Audit Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, and at least four additional active members, and will be responsible for developing the annual budget and auditing the Church financial records annually.
- c. Canvass Committee. The annual canvass committee will consist of at least three active members of the church and will be responsible for preparations and execution of the annual operating pledge drive for the church.
- d. Membership Committee. The membership committee will consist of at least three active members of the church, and will be responsible, in conjunction with staff, for coordinating new member activities, keeping accurate records of membership, providing reports to the Board as required, and preparing credentials and materials for congregational meetings.
- e. Religious Education Committee. The Religious Education Committee will consist of at least three active members of the church. Working with the DLRE, they are responsible to plan and execute a range of child, youth, and adult lifespan religious education programs for the congregation.
- f. Religious Services Committee. This committee will consist of at least three active members of the church, who, working with the minister and other staff, for planning

- and execution of a dynamic program of religious services throughout the year.
- g. Endowment Investment Management Committee. This committee will consist of three members appointed by the Board to serve indefinite terms at the pleasure of the Board. The purpose of the committee is to oversee investment of funds in the endowment relative to issues such as return, social responsibility, and donor and congregational priorities.

*Section 4: Other standing committees of the congregation*

The Board shall establish, by resolution, other standing or ongoing committees necessary to achieve congregational goals and missions. These committees shall continue on an ongoing basis unless terminated by Board action, and may determine their own membership. These committees shall report their activities to the designated Board and Council liaisons, and shall conform to Board policies and procedures on major program or budgetary initiatives.

*Section 5: Ad-hoc or specialized temporary committees*

Additional ad-hoc or specialized committees may be created from time to time to assist the congregation in carrying out its mission and achieving its vision. Creation of such committees shall be approved by the Board of Trustees for either a specified period of time, or for completion of a specified purpose, and will end when that time or purpose is completed.

**ARTICLE XI: Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the corporation shall commence the first day of July and end the thirtieth day of June each year.

**ARTICLE XII: Amendments**

Amendment to these Bylaws may be made at an annual or special meeting by a majority of those active members present and voting, providing the proposed amendment shall have been fully set forth in the notice for the meeting in which it is to be considered. All members shall have been mailed or given written notice of the intention for the adoption of such amendment two weeks prior to such meeting.

**ARTICLE XIII: Affiliation**

This church shall be an affiliate of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Prairie Star District of the UUA.

**ARTICLE XIV: Inclusion**

*Section 1: Nondiscrimination*

We affirm and promote the full participation of persons in all of our activities including membership, programming, hiring practices, and the calling of religious professionals without regard to race, gender, physical challenge, class, ethnicity, age, national origin, affectional or sexual orientation, or family choice.

*Section 2: Equal Opportunity*

Cognizant of the results of historical discrimination, this Church affirms that it is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**ARTICLE XV: Parliamentary Procedure**

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be the parliamentary rules of procedure governing all meetings of the church when not in conflict with the Articles of Incorporation.

Approved June 4, 2006 as amended.

First Unitarian Church of Des Moines  
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