

2017-2018 Annual Report



First Unitarian Church of Omaha
3114 Harney Street
Omaha, NE 68131
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www.firstuuomaha.org

In Memoriam

Dean Christensen
Dana Meister
Barbara Ross
Jeanette Ryan

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Board of Trustees

Alan Vovolka, President
Maria Wallace, President-elect (replaced Wendy Hessler)
Walt Jesteadt, Treasurer
Linda Parker (May 2018)
Geoff Erickson (May 2018)
Floyd Prine (May 2019)
Joe Schaaf (May 2019)
Catherine Plumlee (2020)
Donna Tubach Davis (2020)

Elected Trustees of the Capital Trust

Evelyn Whitehill (May 2018)
Ellen Shurson (replaced Dean Christensen, May 2019)
Daniel Byrd (May 2020)

Nominating Committee

Convener: Jackie Anderegg
Molly Dewell, Dave Olson (May 2018)
Carol Ramsey, Ben Wallace, Marie Sedlacek (May 2019)
Kathi Oliver (May 2020)

Agenda
The One Hundred Forty-Ninth Annual Meeting
First Unitarian Church of Omaha
May 20, 2018

Call to Order	Alan Vovolka, President
Confirmation of Quorum	Catherine Plumlee, Secretary
Appointment of Parliamentarian	G. David Richardson

Approval of Minutes (as printed in meeting book) 148th Annual Meeting, May 14, 2017. See pages 6-7.

Annual Reports

Questions from the floor regarding any and all annual reports as printed in the meeting book, including those of the Minister, President, Ministry Team Council, Director of Religious Education, Trustees of the Capital Trust Fund, and all team and committee reports.

Presentation of Proposed Budget Adoption of 2018-2019 Budget. See pages 53-54.	Walt Jesteadt, Treasurer
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Elections:

Presentation of the Nominees. **See page 17.**

President (Maria Wallace completing Wendy Hessler's term)

President-Elect

Board of Trustees

Trustee of the Capital Trust

Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee

Recognition of Completion of Terms	Alan Vovolka
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Nominations and Awards	Nominating Committee
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Unitarian of the Year	Alan Vovolka
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Approval of Capital Resolution:	Daniel Byrd
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Resolution to approve amendments to The First Unitarian Church of Omaha, Nebraska, Capital Trust, in particular (1) to provide that Trust Asset earnings be reinvested instead of automatically distributing them, but permit the release of no more than 4% of the net assets of the Trust in a given fiscal year if needed to pay budgeted Church expenses, (2) to permit the Capital Fund Trustees to also invest other Church funds upon request, and (3) to clarify that Nebraska state laws regarding trustee investments apply to this Trust, and that it is in the discretion of the Church Board of Trustees whether to annually appoint an auditor to review the investments and accounting of the Capital Trust.

See page 8 for the complete explanation of Proposed Capital Trust Agreement Amendments and Reason for Amendments. Review the marked changes on the Capital Trust Agreement on **pages 9-16**.

Authorize use of \$20,000 from the Preserve Our Building Fund	Floyd Prine
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Approval of giving Rev. Frank Rivas the title Minister Emeritus	Alan Vovolka
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Adjourn	Maria Wallace, President-Elect
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First Unitarian Church of Omaha

Minutes of 148th Congregational Meeting

May 14, 2017

Call to Order: President Jackie Anderegg called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

Confirmation of Quorum: Joe Schaaf, Secretary, confirmed the presence of a quorum of eligible members (81 were present).

Appointment of Parliamentarian: Jackie Anderegg made the appointment of David Richardson as Parliamentarian.

Approval of Minutes of the 147th Annual Meeting on May 15, 2016 (as printed in meeting book). Kate Wiig moved to approve; motion was seconded; approval was unanimous.

Approval of Minutes of Special Congregational Meeting on December 4, 2016 (as printed in meeting book). Maria Wallace moved to approve; motion was seconded; approval was unanimous.

Approval of new Vision/Mission Statements and Covenant (as printed in meeting book).

Mission Statement: Several members expressed concern that the proposed statements were either too vague to be meaningful or that the decision making process was not valid and both arguments were discussed at length. Motion to close discussion was made by Maria Wallace; motion was seconded; motion approved by consensus. Motion to approve Mission Statement, as worded, was made by Kate Wiig; motion seconded; motion approved by majority vote.

Vision Statement: Motion to approve Vision Statement, as worded, was made by Catherine Plumlee; motion seconded; motion approved by majority vote.

Covenant: Motion to approve the Covenant, as worded, was made by Geoff Erickson; motion seconded; motion approved by majority vote.

Annual Reports (printed in meeting book)

Minister's Report
Ministry Team Council Report
President's Report
Director of Religious Education Report
Trustees of the Capital Trust Fund Report
Committees and Team Reports

Presentation of the Proposed Budget: Walt Jesteadt, Treasurer (included in meeting book)
Walt and Jackie Anderegg highlighted several items from the proposed budget.

Adoption of Proposed Budget

Presentation of Nominees for Election: Nadine Keith, Nominating Committee

President-Elect

Wendy Hessler

Board of Trustees

2020 — Donna Tubach-Davis

2020 — Catherine Plumlee

Trustee of Capital Trust Fund

2020 — Daniel Byrd

Nominating Committee

2019 — Marie Sedlacek

2020 — Kathi Oliver

Nadine Keith moved to approve the slate; motion was seconded; approval was unanimous.

Recognition of Completion of Terms: Jackie Anderegg

Board of Trustees: Sheri Conner, Cy Leise, Kabin Thomas

Nominating Committee: Jack Round

(continued on next page)

Nominations and Awards: Presented by Nadine Keith

Heritage Award: Rev. Ron Knapp

Religious Education Award: Ryan and Bethany Cook

Keeping the Faith Award: Royal Carlton

Social Justice Award: Laurie Gift

Youth Social Justice Award: Ami Al-Fatihah Amini

Unsung Unitarian Universalist Award: Harriet Major and Judith Wright

Unitarian of the Year: Post humorously awarded to Shelton Hendricks and Frank Norris

Adjourned at 1:10 p.m. by Alan Vovolka, President

Capital Resolution:

Resolution to approve amendments to The First Unitarian Church of Omaha, Nebraska, Capital Trust, in particular (1) to provide that Trust Asset earnings be reinvested instead of automatically distributing them, but permit the release of no more than 4% of the net assets of the Trust in a given fiscal year if needed to pay budgeted Church expenses, (2) to permit the Capital Fund Trustees to also invest other Church funds upon request, and (3) to clarify that Nebraska state laws regarding trustee investments apply to this Trust, and that it is in the discretion of the Church Board of Trustees whether to annually appoint an auditor to review the investments and accounting of the Capital Trust.

Explanation of Proposed Capital Trust Agreement Amendments and Reason for Amendments

1. Direct that Trust asset earnings be reinvested instead of annually distributed, and authorize the Board to annually withdraw no more than 4% of the value of the Capital Trust investments but only if needed to pay for budgeted expenses. (Section 3.) Reimbursement of earnings simplifies investing in general and permits a focus on prudent investment growth while eliminating the pressure to primarily focus on income. It has also become common with foundations (such as the Trust) to permit minor withdrawals of capital if needed for approved budgetary purposes; based on historic data, investment returns generally exceed 4% so this would not deplete the principal if ever needed.
2. Authorize the Capital Trust to accept Church general moneys (including moneys of Board approved church groups such as Women's Alliance, Sarah Joslyn Society and Preserve Our Building) and invest them with Capital Trust investments. (Section 8B.) This would enable the Capital Trustees to invest general Church funds which the Board and Treasurer are not equipped to do, or do as efficiently. Also, a larger investment pool permits more investment diversity which provides greater safety.
3. Miscellaneous (cleanup) amendments.
 - a. Specifically reference the state "prudent investor" law with respect to trustees investing mon-
eys. (Section 6(e).) Almost 20 years ago the Nebraska Unicameral enacted a "prudent investor"
law specifically addressing the legal responsibilities of trustees such as the Capital Trust
trustees.
 - b. Clarify that the requirement for an annual audit is in the discretion of the Church's Board of
Trustees. (Section 13.) Annual audits can be expensive – and probably unnecessary when
investments are simple and held for the long term.

CAPITAL TRUST
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH
OMAHA, NEBRASKA

John Wagner
Proposed Changes
04-04-18

THIS TRUST AGREEMENT, effective May 1st, 1981 and amended on ~~this 17th day of~~ May, 17, 1987, and May, 2018, by and between the FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH of Omaha, Nebraska, hereinafter referred to as the "Unitarian Church," and THREE DULY ELECTED TRUSTEES, hereinafter referred to collectively as "Trustees," under the following terms and conditions;

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the Unitarian Church owned the sum of \$118,285.95 as of the date that this agreement was first entered into, hereinafter referred to as the "capital," and

WHEREAS, the Unitarian Church is desirous of preserving the "capital," and thereby assume its protection from use for ordinary operating expenses of the Church, and

WHEREAS, the membership of the Unitarian Church at an annual meeting duly called the 29th day of May, 1981, voted unanimously to invest said proceeds to acquire the benefit of the income from interest and to have the management of said funds independent from the daily operations of the Church to preserve the capital nature of the funds, in the following form:

"RESOLVED, that the capital be paid into a trust to be administered by three trustees elected by the members of the Church. The trustees so elected shall be directed to invest the money, paying all income to the Board of Trustees for use as general church income, holding the principal intact, and, in any event, disbursing the principal only upon recommendation of the trustees approved by the Board of Trustees and ratified by the membership. In the event of a vacancy caused by the death or resignation of a trustee or trustees, the remaining trustee or trustees shall nominate successors from whom the Board of Trustees shall elect a trustee or trustees." and

WHEREAS, the membership of the Unitarian Church at its annual meeting in May, 2018, voted to amend this Agreement to allow the Trustees to increase the Capital Trust principal by prudently investing as best they can without regard to whether that increase results from income or capital gain, and made a related change to provide that rather than each year paying all income to the Church, the Church instead shall have the option during each Church fiscal year to withdraw up to 4% of the market value of the Capital Trust to pay for budgeted expenses if needed.

BE THESE TRUST POWERS THEREFORE HEREBY GRANTED:

1. Trust Property. For good and valuable consideration, including the promise of the Trustees to manage the Trust Estate for the benefit of the Unitarian Church, said Church did on the date of the original entry into this agreement transfer and deliver unto the Trustees, the sum of \$118,285.95 to have and to hold such "capital" to constitute the "Trust Estate," together with any other property that may be transferred and delivered to the Trustees thereafter by the Unitarian Church or any third party identified as a gift pursuant to the provisions of this trust; and the

Trustees agree to manage said Trust Estate for the uses and purposes of, and to transfer the income and principal thereof only upon, the terms and conditions set forth herein.

2. Name. This trust shall be known as, and property in the Trust Estate held in the name of: "THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF OMAHA, NEBRASKA, CAPITAL TRUST" and shall be known herein as this "Trust."

3. Dispositive Provisions. The Trustees shall hold, manage, invest and receive the Trust Estate in the manner hereinafter provided, shall collect the income thereof, and shall dispose of the net income and principal as follows:

- a. Income. The Trustees shall ~~pay annually or at such more frequent intervals as shall be convenient or in the best interests of the needs of the Church, retain and reinvest as additional principal~~ all income derived from investment of the Trust Estate, ~~as defined for income tax purposes, to the Treasurer of the Unitarian Church for its use as its Board of Trustees may from time to time direct.~~
- b. Principal. Nothing to the contrary withstanding and without discretion, the Trustees shall pay and distribute only so much of the principal as the membership of the Unitarian Church shall direct by resolution passed at a valid meeting called for that purpose, provided that in each Church fiscal year the Board of Trustees may direct the Trustees of the Capital Trust to pay and distribute no more than 4% of the market value of the assets of the Capital Trust (as of December 31 of the previous fiscal year) if and to the extent needed to pay budgeted expenses of the Church.
- c. Counsel. The Trustees are informed that they have a duty to advise the membership in the event a resolution is proposed that would require payment of such principal that would leave the balance of the Trust Estate in an amount less than the original sum in order that the membership be mindful of the purpose of this Trust at the time of a vote to expend the principal of the Trust Estate.
- d. Receipt. Receipt of any funds by the Treasurer of the Unitarian Church shall relieve the Trustees of any further accountability therefor.

4. Trustees' Powers. The Trustees shall have the following powers and discretions, in addition to any conferred by law:

- a. To retain the capital described in paragraph 1 and any property added to the Trust Estate, without any liability for decrease in value.
- b. To sell or exchange any property comprising the Trust Estate and, without being restricted to property authorized by the State of Nebraska or of any other jurisdiction for trust investment, to invest in any kind of property whatsoever, real or personal, whether or not productive of income, and without regard to the proportion that such property, or property of a similar character held, may bear to the entire Trust Estate.

- c. To sell, exchange, or lease, mortgage, partition, or improve any property comprising the Trust Estate, upon such terms as they may deem proper, and to execute and deliver deeds, leases, mortgages, or other such instruments relating thereto. Any lease may be made for such period of time as it may deem proper without regard to the duration of the Trust or any statutory restrictions on leasing and without the approval of any court.
- d. To vote in person or by proxy any securities held by them and in such connection to delegate discretionary powers.
- e. To exercise options, conversion privileges, or rights to subscribe for additional securities and to make payments therefor.
- f. To consent to or participate in dissolutions, reorganizations, consolidations, mergers, sales, pledges, security agreements, transfers, or other changes affecting securities held by them and in such connection to delegate their discretionary powers and to pay assessments, subscriptions, and other charges.
- g. To extend or modify the terms of any bond and mortgage; to foreclose any mortgage or take title by deed in lieu of foreclosure or otherwise; to protect or redeem any property from forfeiture for nonpayment of taxes or other liens; and generally to exercise as to such bond and mortgage on such property all powers that an absolute owner might exercise.
- h. To retain any property acquired in connection with the foregoing provisions whether or not such property shall be authorized by the laws of the State of Nebraska or of any other jurisdiction for trust investments.
- i. To register any property in the Trust's own name or to hold property unregistered or in such other form that title shall pass by delivery, but without thereby increasing or decreasing their liability as Trustees.
- j. To make any division of distribution required by this agreement in cash or in other property, real or personal, or undivided interests therein, or partly in cash and partly in property.

5. Right to Rely. No person or corporation dealing with the Trustees shall be required to investigate the Trustees' authority for entering into any transaction or to see to the application of the proceeds of any transaction, or require or keep a copy of this trust agreement.

6. Trustees' Rights. The Trustees without regard to any legal restrictions otherwise applicable to trustees, shall be entitled:

- a. To act at any time and in any jurisdiction without bond or other security to ensure the faithful performance of their fiduciary duties.

- b. To rely on any document or other paper if believed by them to be genuine and to be signed and delivered by or on behalf of the proper person, firm, or corporation, without incurring liability for any action or inaction based thereon.
 - c. To assume, in the absence of written notice to the contrary from the person or persons concerned, that a fact or event, by reason of which an interest or estate under this agreement shall commence or terminate, does not exist or has not occurred, without incurring liability for any action or inaction based upon such an assumption.
 - d. To continue to have or exercise, after the termination of the Trust in whole or in part and until the final distribution and receipt thereof, all the title, powers, discretions, rights and duties conferred or imposed upon the Trustees by law or by this agreement during the existence of the Trust.
 - e. To use their best judgement in exercising the powers, discretions and rights conferred by this agreement or in performing the duties imposed on the Trustees by law, including in particular the prudent investor rule, and, in order to feel free in doing so, to be exempt from liability for any action taken or omitted in good faith.
 - f. To employ agents, depositories, and lawyers, and accountants, and to delegate to them discretionary powers if need be, and to compensate them for their services by charging the reasonable and necessary value of said services to the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church so long as said expenses do not exceed the annual income of the [trust estate] Trust, but not to pay for said services themselves.
 - g. To charge the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church for all reasonable expenses incurred in the administration thereof, but not to reimburse themselves directly therefor.
7. Principal and Income. The rights of the Unitarian Church in the Trust Estate shall be subject to the following provisions:
- a. As to any property originally or hereafter donated to the Trust Estate, all dividends declared but unpaid having a record date prior to the receipt of such property by the Trustees shall belong to the transferor, whereas all other dividends declared but unpaid and all interest accrued but unpaid at the time of the receipt of such property by the Trustees shall belong to the Trust Estate and shall be income, except as otherwise hereinafter provided in this paragraph.
 - b. If securities are acquired by the Trust Estate at values in excess of par or other stated values, the Trustees in their uncontrolled discretion may, but need not, use part of the income from such securities to restore such excess to principal. If, on the other hand, securities are acquired at values less than par or other stated value, no part of the discounts eventually realized from such securities shall be treated as principal.
 - c. All regular or ordinary dividends payable in cash, shares, bonds or other property shall be income regardless of whether or not such dividends represent either wholly

or in part assets of the declaring corporation other than earnings. All extraordinary dividends payable in the shares of the corporation declaring the dividend shall be treated as principal. All other extraordinary dividends payable in cash, shares, bonds, or other property to the extent that they represent earnings of the declaring corporation, regardless of when earned, shall be income. The Trustees shall nevertheless, to the extent possible, transfer cash rather than securities to the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church.

- d. The Trustees shall have discretion to resolve any doubts concerning the application of the provisions of this paragraph, or the allocation of any property between principal and income for which no express provision is made in this agreement, and their decision shall be binding upon all interested parties. The primary concern of the membership of the Unitarian Church in creating this Trust is for the preservation and growth of the principal, and they request the Trustees in exercising the foregoing discretions to take such fact into consideration.

8-8A. Additional Property. The Trust Estate may be increased from time to time by the addition of such cash or property as may be added to it by the Unitarian Church or by any person with the consent of the Trustees, and the Trustees shall receive, hold, manage, invest and reinvest any such cash and property as herein provided.

B. Unrestricted Investment Property. In addition to the Trust Estate as described in the preceding provisions, the Trustees may agree, at the request of the Board of Trustees of the Church, to accept other funds of the Church (or any Church group as approved by the Board of Trustees) (herein, "Unrestricted Funds") for management and investment pursuant to the terms and provisions of this agreement, provided that such funds (whether constituting income or principal, or both) may be withdrawn without limit at the request of the Board of Trustees (or the approved Church group). Such moneys may be commingled for investment purposes with investments of the restricted Trust Estate moneys, provided that the Trustees shall maintain appropriate records to account for the Trust Estate investments and any Unrestricted Funds investments.

9. Accounting by Trustees. The Trustees must once a year on April 30, render an account of their proceedings to the Unitarian Church, and the written approval of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church shall be final, binding, and conclusive upon all persons then or thereafter interested in the Trust. The Trustees may also at any time enter a judicial account of their proceedings if they in their sole discretion deem it appropriate, provided however that the Trustees shall provide an account of their proceedings to the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church at least quarterly.

10. Compensation of Trustees. The Trustees agree that they will serve without compensation except for the reimbursement of actual expenses.

11. Expenses. The Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church agrees to pay all reasonable expenses of the operation of this Trust upon submission of vouchers of the Trustees accompanied by statements of the parties performing services for the Trust for so long as such

expenditures are reasonably deemed necessary or advisable by the Trustees and do not exceed the income of the Trust for the fiscal year in which incurred.

12. Court Administration. The Trustees shall not be accountable to any court of competent jurisdiction until and unless they or the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church make valid petition to such court within Douglas County, Nebraska or in any other jurisdiction where assets may be held.

13. Audits and Reports. The Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church shall ~~may~~ appoint an auditor to annually review the investments and accounting of the Trust Estate and prepare such report to the Board of Trustees as ~~he or she~~ it deems advisable. The Board of Trustees shall make any such report available to the membership of the Unitarian Church on or before the said Annual Meeting of the Church.

14. Call of Meetings. Semi-annual meetings of the Trustees shall be held at 12:00 noon on the first Sunday of April and October, each year, at the site of the Unitarian Church, or other such time or place specifically designated by the Trustees by notice. A special meeting may be called for a time and place upon seven (7) days actual notice delivered to each Trustee of this Trust called by the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church or by any two Trustees of this Trust. Any notice may be waived in writing.

15. Quorum and Vote. A quorum shall consist of any two Trustees and a vote of any two Trustees shall pass all actions of the Trust. Roberts Rules of Order shall prevail unless amended by a vote of two or more Trustees.

16. Offices. The Trustees shall appoint from among themselves a Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer who shall assume the usual responsibilities of such offices.

17. Legal Instruments. All instruments required for the investment of the funds of the Trust Estate, promissory notes, or checks drawing upon any account of the Trust established with a depository of the funds of the Trust Estate shall require the signatures of any two Trustees.

18. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of this Trust shall be from the first day of May, of each year through the last day of April.

19. Election of Trustee(s). Three Trustees having been elected as of the date that this agreement was first entered into, one for a one year term, one for a two year term, and one for a three year term, at the expiration of the term of any Trustee, the position shall be filled by another or the same Trustee elected for a subsequent three year term.

20. Expiration of Term, Resignation or Removal of Trustee(s). As specified in paragraph 19, Trustees are elected for three year terms. Additionally, any Trustee may resign by written notice to the other Trustees or the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church or his or her office terminate by reason of his or her death. Any Trustee may be removed at any time by majority vote of the membership of the Unitarian Church by written notice to the Trustees. Until the accounts of the Trustees are settled and the Trustees discharged, they shall continue to have all the powers and discretions granted to them hereunder or conferred by law. In case of the resignation or removal of any Trustee, or after his or her death, the remaining Trustees shall

nominate up to three successor Trustees from whom the Board of Trustees shall elect a substitute Trustee to serve the balance of the predecessor's term. Each successor Trustee upon executing an acknowledged acceptance of the trusteeship, and upon settlement of the accounts and discharge of the prior Trustee, shall be vested without further act on the part of anyone, with all the estate, title, powers, duties, immunities, and discretions granted to his or her predecessor. The prior Trustee or his or her legal representative shall, however, execute and deliver to the successor such assignments or other instruments as may be deemed advisable or necessary by counsel. If a successor Trustee is not appointed within 30 days after the giving of notice of a resignation, death or removal, the remaining Trustees may apply to a court of competent jurisdiction for the appointment of a successor. Any prior Trustee shall be entitled to reimbursement from the Unitarian Church for all expenses incurred by him or her in connection with the settlement of his or her accounts and the transfer of the Trust Estate to his or her successor.

21. Situs. This Trust has been accepted by the Trustees in the State of Nebraska, and all questions pertaining to its validity, construction, and administration shall be determined in accordance with the laws of that state.

22. Notice. Notice to any party shall be deemed sufficient if deposited in the United States mails with regular postage affixed to the following address or to the registered postal address of any one of the three Trustees, or such substitute communicated to all parties in writing:

First Unitarian Church
3114 Harney Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68131

23. Power of Amendment and Revocation. The membership of the Unitarian Church may from time to time by instrument signed, acknowledged, and delivered to the Trustees modify, amend, or revoke in whole or in part this agreement or the Trust hereby created. To the extent thus revoked, the Trustees shall deliver the principal assets of the Trust Estate to the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Church, upon receiving a proper receipt, and shall execute and deliver any instruments required to release all interest of the Trustees in such property. No modification shall increase the obligations of the Trustees without their consent in writing.

24. Acceptance of Trust. The Trustees do hereby accept this Trust, and undertake to hold, manage and administer the Trust Estate in accordance with the terms of this agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have duly executed this amended trust agreement.

TRUSTEES AS OF _____

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH

TRUSTEE

By _____
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

TRUSTEE

Attest:

TRUSTEE

Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Document comparison by Workshare 9 on Wednesday, April 4, 2018 4:37:42 PM

Input:	
Document 1 ID	netdocuments://4845-2009-6862/1
Description	JJW First Unitarian Church Trust Agreement
Document 2 ID	netdocuments://4845-2009-6862/5
Description	JJW First Unitarian Church Trust Agreement
Rendering set	Kutak Option 1

Legend:	
<u>Insertion</u>	
Deletion	
<u>Moved from</u>	
<u>Moved to</u>	
Style change	
Format change	
Moved-deletion	
Inserted cell	
Deleted cell	
Moved cell	
Split/Merged cell	
Padding cell	

Statistics:	
	Count
Insertions	18
Deletions	6
Moved from	1
Moved to	1
Style change	0
Format changed	0
Total changes	26

**Slate of Nominees for Election
Annual Congregational Meeting
May 20, 2018**

President

Maria Wallace

President-Elect

Joseph Schaaf

Board of Trustees

2021 — Sharon Piehler

2021 — Tom Seguin

2019 — Carol Ramsey

Trustee of Capital Trust Fund

2021 — Bob Hess

Nominating Committee

2021 — Royal Carleton

2021 — Kate Godfrey

Annual Reports

Minister, Ministry Team Council, President, Director of Religious Education,
and other Team and Committee Reports as Submitted

*(Reports are presented alphabetically by group name.
Unless otherwise noted, reports were submitted
by the Team Leader or Committee Chair.)*

Minister's Report to the Congregation — 2017/2018

Submitted by Rev. Frank Rivas

The biggest news, at least for me, is that I decided to retire at the end of this church year. I will be 72 when I retire. I feel that a minister is called to retire while he and the church are still making progress together. A younger minister would lead you well in the years ahead.

Sunday mornings continue to be vital in the sanctuary, in the classrooms, and in the common room. The music program continues to amaze. Programs for youth, young adults, young families, and the rest of us continue to be successful. The goal of repairing the sanctuary windows is on course. Our social justice programs remain strong, although there is room for improvement. Our membership continues to increase steadily, and an increasing number follow our services electronically.

The six years in which I have served at the First Unitarian Church of Omaha have been the best years of my life. Anne's too. I will hold you in my heart in the years ahead, and I hope that, when the time is right, I will be invited back to preach and to engage with each of you once again. I expect to encounter an even more vibrant congregation.

Blessings and love,
Frank

Ministry Team Council

Members: Rev. Frank Rivas, Diane Withem, Nellie Chenoweth, President-Elect(s) Maria Wallace (preceded by Wendy Hessler)

The Ministry Team is composed of the approximately two dozen individual teams that serve the church. The Ministry Team Council (MTC) provides procedures, direction, support and leadership to the individual teams. The membership of the MTC is the President-Elect, chosen by the congregation; a board appointed member for a two-year term; and a member elected by representatives of the ministry teams for a two-year term. The board appointee and the ministry teams' appointee alternate terms. The MTC meets on the first Saturday of the month and the teams meet once every two months, on the first Saturday of even-numbered months. All members are welcome at both meetings. Our newsletter is *The Candle* (formerly known as *Voluntary Servitude*) which is emailed to all team leaders each month. The MTC does a great deal of decision-making around events in the church, administrative details, problem-solving, and support for the teams. At the teams meetings, the MTC communicates decisions made between teams meetings, information is shared by leaders regarding new events and programs, input is sought from team leaders on various issues, and team leaders express concerns and explain what support is needed.

Activities — 2017/2018

- Sponsored a volunteer fair and a small group fair.
- Participated in a forum on division of board and MTC duties.
- Approved the purchase of a new dishwasher.
- Set Share the Plate recipients for the coming year.
- Approved new teams: the Gratitude Team and the Technology Team.
- Designated Mary Kay Peters as Stewardship chair.
- Discussed and acted upon social media issues.
- Sent representatives Pierce Carpenter and Elaine Wells to a church safety workshop, who then reported back and will advise future safety plans.
- Approved purchase of the Soul Matters curriculum for small groups, worship, and religious education.
- Approved creation of more handicapped spaces in the parking lot.
- Identified the importance of reserving items for vegans at church events.
- Sponsored a Partner Church "Refresh Weekend."
- Solicited bids for a security camera system.

President's Report

Submitted by Alan Vovolka

Early in the year, the board had to scramble to replace President-Elect Wendy Hessler who moved to Idaho. Maria Wallace was moved to President-Elect and Geoff Erickson was added to the board to complete Maria's term. This transition went smoothly and we worked well together as a group with diverse strengths that stayed focused on the long-term vision of the church. Below are some of the tasks we accomplished:

- Extended Nellie Chenoweth's term on the Ministry Team Council through November 2018.
- Elected Catherine Plumlee as board secretary.
- Elected Floyd Prine to board executive committee.
- Created a Gratitude Team to appreciate congregation members and friends for their participation.
- Addressed food policy (allergies, vegan, etc.) for adults at events, and for children all the time.
- Sponsored a reading of the play "Sedition in Nebraska 1917-2017" in the Common Room.
- Approved sponsorship of "Elders for the Earth" offsite retreat.
- Authorized and supported a team to explore becoming a Sanctuary church.
- Approved Bruce Godfrey for the Committee on Ministry.
- Approved Stan Harper as director of the Early Morning Risers.
- Created a tech team to review and enhance all electronic aspects of the church.
- Participated in Rev. Frank's exit interview.
- Selected interim search committee: Catherine Plumlee, Joe Schaaf and Maria Wallace.
- Supported the sanctuary window repair project.
- Recommended updates to the Capital Trust Agreement.
- Initiated feedback box in foyer.
- Reviewed and recommended church budget.
- Began discussion of a church safety policy.
- Elected Ellen Shurson to complete Dean Christensen's term as a trustee of the Capital Trust Fund.

Director of Religious Education

Submitted by Jan Wilson

The Religious Education team has welcomed many new families this year. We have maintained the vitality of our program with the added emphasis on touring local places of worship in our study of Abrahamic religions. We came together to participate in the Petrow family Passover Seder.

We have added one new paid staff member in the nursery and have welcomed two new backup professional nursery workers to add some depth to our staff. Our system of providing child care for Sundays and evening events has gone smoothly thanks to Jenny Hastings, who handles that seamlessly.

Parents of Preschoolers (POPS) is a group run by parents incorporating parents from both UU churches. They meet monthly and alternate churches. Their POPS group has been a fellowship which provides young parents with UU friends who identify with their concerns.

In the youth area, we have welcomed two new youth advisers to YRUU. Geoff Erickson from First Unitarian and Justin Short from Second Unitarian have provided youth with stability and direction at this important age. Carolyn Miller, from Second Unitarian, continues to contribute her quiet strength. The Sunday program for youth is in transition. Parents are meeting at the end of this month to collaborate on creating a customized vision for this unique group.

The Spring Carnival was held indoors because of uncooperative weather.

Summer Camp, as ever, will be a highlight and much anticipated. Our study will focus on the ancient Greeks. In the morning, we will make art and learn at the church. After a picnic lunch, we will go on a Greek-themed field trip each afternoon. This year's camp will be June 11-15, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m

Twenty Years Ago — 1997-98

Submitted by Dave Richardson

From the Annual Report for 1997-98:

Interim minister, Charlotte Shivvers, reported that during the past year considerable progress was made in the areas of congregational communication and overall vitality. President Kim Dunovan also reported that under the Interim Ministry of Charlotte Shivvers the church had made considerable strides. Among the accomplishments listed by both Kim and Charlotte were the following:

Success of the first year of summer services

Creation of the Committee on Ministry

Creation of the Office Committee

Completion of the renovation of the minister's office

Formation of an ad hoc committee to pursue the purchase and ultimate razing of the derelict building to the west of the church

Continued success of the RE program under the direction of Cheryll Wallace, who was now a full time director.

The Ministerial Search Committee reported that at a special congregational meeting, held on March 1, 1998, Rev. Richard Benner was officially called to our pulpit. The meeting came at the conclusion of the "candidating" week. The search for a successor to Rev. Ron Knapp took place over a two-year period. During that time the church was served by two interim ministers.

During the year, the church welcomed 28 new members bringing our total membership to 268.

Archives Team

Leader: Linda Parker

Activities — 2017/2018

Team members have begun indexing the resources in the church archives. Barb Henney is working on the sermons of Newton Mann. Steve Davis is handling old church documents and the Holland Lectures. Linda Parker is indexing materials on Whitney Young. Walt Jesteadt is digitizing images and documents. The project is expected to last well beyond the anniversary year as we explore ways to develop access to the materials.

Atheists, Humanists, Agnostics Discussion Group (AHA)

Leader: Sheri Conner

Members: 41 people are on our email list. Meeting attendance runs from the low end of about 10 to the high end of about 35.

Activities and Projects — 2017/2018

AHA took the summer months off; however, the steering team continued to meet for planning purposes. When AHA reconvened in the fall, the group dropped back to meeting every other month starting in September and ending in May with a total of five meetings during that time period.

Rev. Ron Knapp ushered in the AHA year with our September meeting by giving a presentation titled “Thoughts on a Homegrown Nebraska Humanist, Loren Eisley.” Ron also facilitated the November meeting by having a three-person panel review, analyze and critique his “Primacy of Perception” sermon. For the January meeting, we had a hot soup potluck with roundtable discussion about how Atheists, Humanists and Agnostics would handle certain ethical dilemmas. The March meeting was another roundtable discussion about “Faith, Hope and Humanity in a Godless World.” Rev. Knapp will end the year with our May meeting by giving a presentation titled “Bertrand Russell and a Free Man’s Worship.”

The AHA group will not meet during the summer months again this year. The steering team, however, will continue in order to ensure plenty of viable and pertinent material.

Book Club

Chair: Dave Richardson

Members: Varies widely

Activities — 2017/2018

The First Unitarian Book Club continues to read and discuss a wide range of books. We meet on the last Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Merritt Lounge. Our discussions are informal and we encourage participation by everyone. Our motto continues to be: “You Don’t Have to Have Read the Book to Attend.”

Here is a list of this year’s books. We do not meet in November, December or July.

2017

May	<i>American Amnesia</i> by Jacob Hacker
June	<i>When Breath Becomes Air</i> by Paul Kalanithi
August	Discussion of everyone’s summer reading.
October	<i>Dark Money</i> by Jane Mayer

2018

January	<i>We Were Eight Years in Power</i> by Te-Nehisi Coates
February	<i>The Hidden Life of Trees</i> by Peter Wohlleben
March	<i>A Warrior of the People</i> by Joe Starita
April	<i>The Reformation</i> by Andrew Atherstone

Capital Trust Fund

Submitted by Daniel Byrd

Members (Term expiration date in parenthesis): Dean Christensen 1931-2018 (2019); superseded by Ellen Shurson (2019); Daniel Byrd, Default Chairman (2020); Evelyn Whitehill (2018); (Indispensable Bill Ross, ex officio member and data compiler (expiration not allowed).

The Capital Trust was established in 1981 to provide management of the Church's long-term capital investments and keep them independent of the daily operations of the Church. Amendments to the Trust (current year 2018), were debated and approved by the Board. They are subject to a vote by the congregation at the annual meeting and will be delineated in the annual report.

Pursuant to congregational approval, investment income will be distributed as directed by the board to the Church for operating expenses, subject to the 4% limitation. Preservation and growth of the principal is the primary directive and principal cannot be distributed to the Church without a vote of the congregation. The Trust also handles the investments of two small restricted use donations: Music and Women's Alliance.

Approximately 73% of the Trust's total assets are invested in two Vanguard equity funds. The balance of the investments are invested in Fidelity and T. Rowe Price current income funds — 14% in mortgage funds and 13% in bond funds. The Trust holds \$400.00 in cash.

In the fiscal year ended April 30, 2018, the Trust distributed \$13,896 of income to the Church (compared to \$14,323 last year). Of that total amount, \$13,048 was attributable to regular trust income and \$848 to restricted use income. During the year, the market value of the investments managed by the Capital Trust Committee increased from \$527,098 (at April 30, 2016) to \$549,466. During the last fiscal year, the Capital Trust Fund produced a net gain of 4.24%. This performance trailed the broad stock market indices.

Caring Team

Leader: Louise Jeffrey

Members: Kay Lynn Goldner, Deb Duggan, Terri Lynn Brewer, Kim Callaghan, Douglas Lee-Regier, Debbie Hunsberger, Katrina Schmidt, Becca Hatcher, Sara Switzer, Kim Dunovan, Elaine Wells, Marie Sedlacek, Nadine Keith, Pat Will, Suzanne Arney, Vanessa Timberlake, Lois Norris, Linda Hruska, Judith Wright, Carol Ramsey, Eddith Buis, Anne Rivas

Activities — 2017/2018

This year the Caring Team provided rides, meals, visits, and hospitality to many members of the church community. Contact with the Caring Team is generally by word-of-mouth or through the church office, facilitated by Catharine Dixon, our phenomenal church administrator. The Caring Team has several sub teams: Hope in Action, Greeting Cards, Memorial Services and Baby Welcoming.

The memorial reception sub-team (co-chairs Kay Lynn Goldner and Deb Duggan) hosted receptions in memory of Dana Meister (9/15/17), Barbara Ross (10/7/17), William J. Schaaf (1/20/18), Dean Christensen (2/10/18), and Jan Sedlacek (3/5/18). A Celebration of Life During Life reception is planned on April 28 in honor of Audrey Freyer.

The greeting card sub-team (chair Terri Lynn Brewer) sent holiday cards to church members who are unable to attend services. We sent cards for Valentines Day, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The baby welcoming sub-team (co-chairs Katrina Schmidt, Becca Hatcher and Sara Switzer) organizes baby showers to celebrate new additions to our church family, and meal trains once a baby is born, to help the new family as they adapt to the changes the baby brings. This year, new baby Raven was welcomed by parents Ryan and Bethany Cook; new baby Diana was welcomed by Drew and Jen Dillon (and big brother Jason); new baby Margaret was welcomed by Tom and Caitlin Seguin; and new baby Marie IV was welcomed by Seth and Kerri Wingert.

Sub-Team of Caring: Hope In Action

Leader: Kim Dunovan

Members: Vanessa Timberlake, Kay Lynn Goldner, Liz Sagert, Larry Goeser, Carol Ramsey, Louise Jeffrey (ex-officio)

Activities & Projects — 2017/2018

Hope In Action was launched in August, 2014 as a new sub-team of the Caring Team. The purpose of Hope In Action is to make it easier for First Unitarian Church of Omaha members, friends, regular attendees and their spouses to ask for support. Hope In Action is available when people are dealing with a medical problem, need transportation or help around the house, can use assistance with referrals to social service agencies or just need someone to talk to about the ups and downs of life. Short-term emergency financial assistance may be available for lodging, food, clothing, medication, transportation and utilities.

Hope in Action uses a team approach, so at least three members of Hope In Action must participate in determining the nature of the response to a request for assistance.

Requests for assistance must be made directly by the person needing help. Hope In Action does not respond to any anonymous or third party requests for assistance. A confidential request for assistance from Hope In Action may be made by (1) sending an email to the designated email address or (2) using the Hope In Action link on the church website.

Hope In Action has developed an Omaha Resource Guide for social service referrals that is provided to folks who contact Hope In Action and people who come to the church door seeking assistance.

Hope In Action provided the following support during the past year:

- Transportation for a member with ongoing medical appointments;
- Emergency financial assistance to a church family facing unemployment;

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- Advice and emotional support for a frequent visitor transitioning out of supported housing;
- Publicized opportunities to help with rides to church services and events;
- Facilitated the donation between one member with a wheel chair and walker to donate and another in our church community in need of the equipment; and
- Connected a visitor with immigration concerns to relevant community resources.

Chalice Guild

Leader: Kay Lynn Goldner

Members: Kim and Brian Callaghan, Carolyn McNamara, Donna Neff, Christina and Roman Noriega, Lois Norris, Marie Sedlacek, Judith Wright

Activities — 2017/2018

Kitchen and table linens were washed as used.

The chancel candles were replaced approximately every three months and the brass candles tops cleaned. Because of the expense of the candles (\$3.75 each), the Guild has begun the practice of removing the brass tops as the candles burn down to extend the usage. With only one regular weekly service, the “candle life” is extended.

Several members were responsible for decorating, then un-decorating the church for Christmas in December.

A deep cleaning of the kitchen was done in January, including refrigerator, oven, and stove.

The pews and pew racks were wiped down and cushions were vacuumed. Occasional dusting in the foyer and sanctuary was done.

Anyone who uses the kitchen or sets up for events should be grateful to Vanessa Timberlake and Carolyn McNamara who did a major cleaning and reorganizing of the supply cupboard in the passageway and entry to the Common Room because it “needed to be done.” Many thanks!

The chairperson continues to be grateful for the Guild members who always cheerfully do whatever needs to be done. They are all unsung heroes!

Choir

Director: William Miller

Accompanist: J. Gawf

Librarians: Kay Lynn Goldner and Christina Noriega

Choir Members: *Kathy Alexander, Skip Ciulla, Jen Dillon, Cassandra Fish, *Todd Fossum, Sara Fox, Kay Lynn Goldner, Barb Herring, Grant Langdon, *Amy Lucas, Frank McKee, *Teresa n'ha-Pagani, Suzanne Neilson, Steven Nelson, Christina Noriega, Dave Olson, Clacy Olson, *Peg Pidgeon, Catherine Plumlee, Carol Ramsey, Gary Randall, David Rosser, Evy Rosser, Tom Seguin, Caitlin Seguin, William Tull, *Klyde Warren, Elaine Wells.

* Denotes recently joined.

Activities — 2017/2018

With the close of the choir year in May 2017, Elizabeth Kelly chose not to renew her contract for the 2017/2018 year. With that in mind, I set out to find a replacement choir accompanist and, after reviewing and speaking to several applicants, J Gawf was offered the position. We are very happy to have J with us and he has done a tremendous job in his role.

The first choir rehearsal was held on September 6, 2017 and rehearsals continue to be held each Wednesday from 7:00 to approximately 8:30 p.m. The choir sings on the first and third Sundays of the month, September through May, as well as at the Christmas Eve service.

This year we have focused on each member being responsible for their part of being in an ensemble. This is demonstrated through working on music outside of regular rehearsals, being respectful of others and the director, and striving to attend all rehearsals. Part of their responsibility includes checking the “choir member” website for recordings of anthems, announcements, schedules, articles, etc. As a way to get to know each other, we take a few minutes at every rehearsal and have three or four members do impromptu introductions. It’s been fun to get to know everyone better.

As a director, I have especially enjoyed the growth I’ve witnessed from the initial read through of pieces like Samuel Barber’s “Sure, On This Shining Night,” Randall Thompson’s “Choose Something Like a Star,” or Tomás de Victoria’s “O Vos Omnes,” when the challenge presented was great, but the determination to get to a performance ready piece was greater. The choir is challenged by varying genres, languages and difficulty levels in the music selected.

Approximately 30 choir members and their guests attended a holiday party at William’s and Gary’s home in December. One of the exciting events on that evening was meeting Tom and Caitlin Seguin’s new baby for the first time.

Recently, Amy Lucas volunteered to help be the group’s social support and arranges for cards for birthdays, illnesses and new babies. Kay Lynn Goldner and Christina Noriega did an outstanding job completing the music filing project which consisted of reviewing music, removing photocopies and making new filing envelopes for *every* anthem. I am working on producing a portfolio of candid photographs to be featured on the church website, showing what rehearsals look like and arranging for a choir portrait to be taken before the year is over.

Aside from the aforementioned works, the choir has presented several memorable anthems in 2018 including “You’ll Never Walk Alone” and “Simple Gifts.” During the months of April and May, the group will be busy preparing for the choir concert on May 20th.

Community Meals

Team Leader: Diane Withem

Activities — 2017/2018

First Unitarian Church has a very committed group of volunteers who regularly staff the dining room at First Baptist Church. They set up and clean up, and take care of the purchasing of supplies such as plates and napkins. This year that group has included Kay Lynn Goldner and Louise Jeffrey (who are leaders of the weekly crew), our dear recently departed friend Dean Christensen, Linda Hess, Brian and Kim Callaghan, and Terri Lynn Brewer. There are numerous volunteers who regularly donate desserts, cook and clean, but they are too numerous to list, but a special shout out to Rae Barry who never fails to deliver a dessert! Members of the Young Adult group also volunteered twice this year!

Over the course of the year, in addition to weekly volunteers, and with the help of other First Unitarian volunteers, we served six meals. Newsletters and notices in the weekly Orders of Worship were employed to alert those interested in participating beginning three to four weeks before each meal. While we partially fund the meals through Share the Plate donations, many people generously donated the food they prepared. Cooking is done by volunteers who sign up to prepare 10-16 servings of a given recipe, or who put their own twist on the main dish, as in the case of our chili meal. Other generous donors completed the meals by making delicious, easy-to-serve desserts and side dishes. On the mornings of the meals, contributions were dropped off at First Baptist Church or left at our church to be picked up by volunteers. The meals this year included baked chicken, enchiladas, Christmas casserole, Little Caesar's pizza, and soup.

Upon each occasion, an enthusiastic crew of First Unitarian Church volunteers met at First Baptist to finish preparing food. They visited with guests, served and cleaned up. The meals began with a blessing, given by a member of the serving group or Reverend Frank when he was present.

Serving Community Meals has been a rewarding time of camaraderie with friends and a chance to be of service to our neighbors and the church community. There will be three more meals in the 2017/18 church year, in September, November and December.

After ten years of coordinating and running the Community Meals program for all the churches working with Neighbors United, we are going to step down. There is no other participating church willing to take over, so the program will cease to exist. We will be directing efforts and funds to Youth Emergency Services and other programs.

Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS)

Leader: Stephen Switzer (Kathy Alexander was the team leader until February 2018)

Activities — 2017/2018

The goals of CUUPS include educating people about paganism and promoting interfaith dialogue, along with encouraging the greater use of poetry, dancing and creative rituals in Unitarian Universalist worship. As a group, we are growing and working toward a more collective planning, and leading of rituals, with all participants. Leadership has significantly changed, and included in our charter is an ever-adapting set of by-laws.

We try to hold our public meetings in the church common room. Our primary goal is to gather for public rituals celebrating the eight quarter and cross quarter holidays during the wheel of the year. We are still trying to pair up novices with more experienced leaders for developing rituals. There appears to be quite a collection of new people who are eager to participate and help out, and it seems our group is growing by every ritual and meeting. We also have been holding forums before our scheduled rituals to help get congregants familiar with the wheel of the year and different pagan holidays.

Early Morning Risers (EMR)

Leaders: Stan Harper, Mary Kay Peters, Sarah Copeland

Pianist/Featured Musician: Stan Harper

Members:

Bethany Murphy, Bruce Godfrey, Carol Cronin, Charlie McMahon, Collin Hatcher, David Rosser, Lloyd Olson, Jennifer Dillon, Kate Wiig, Kathy Alexander, Katrina Schmidt, Klyde Warren, Maria Wallace, Mary Kay Peters, Mary Thomas, Molly Dewell, Dave Olson, Matt Dewell, Peg Pidgeon, Sarah Copeland

Activities — 2017/2018

EMR has undergone some changes in the past year. René Harper handed over temporary leadership to Maria Wallace for summer 2017, followed by Mary Kay Peters and Peg Pidgeon as co-leaders in August 2017. Peg then passed her position over to Sarah Copeland in October after leaving EMR to sing with the choir instead. There's been a shift in participation but continued efforts to bring back inactive members have proven effective. Participants continue to come and go from the group on a regular basis.

Rehearsals are conducted every Saturday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the sanctuary, unless posted otherwise. Song selections are collected, discussed and decided by voting, if necessary, using Facebook event polls within the EMR Facebook Group. They are then reported to the church office for publishing in the Sunday Order of Worship. Stan's position has also changed from accompanist to director of this collaborative hybrid model group. We like to refer to it as a hybrid model of leadership because of its lay co-leadership and active participant collaboration. Sarah has also worked hard with past members to collect songs performed from the last few years and to organize them alphabetically in folders for easier access.

We have implemented a secondary source for special music sign-ups in an attempt to engage soloists who don't participate weekly, to find a space in which they can claim a specific date for performances. The idea has been both successful and challenging.

Events to highlight from the year are the first annual EMR end of summer concert, which was well received by the congregation; participation in the Christmas Eve service; and the upcoming last service of our minister, Rev. Frank Rivas.

New members, Bethany Murphy & Jennifer Dillon, welcomed children this past year, and Carol Cronin underwent surgery. David Rosser made a trip to the emergency room in relation to a rehearsal setup injury and Mary Thomas is awaiting surgery in the next couple of months. Molly and Matt Dewell enlivened many practice sessions with their growing twin girls.

Things to improve or work on include an extra person present for set-up to document the preparations that David Rosser and assistant Charlie McMahon make, as well as learn how to set up. We would like the church to consider funding registration for a Musicnotes and/or Sheetmusicplus account that can be managed by EMR and passed on as members and leadership changes. These platforms would enable us to print correct chords and sheet music for rehearsal and performances at minimal cost, so members don't have to pay for sheet music. David Rosser brought up the idea of phasing out older equipment to be exchanged for newer items, as some of the equipment is slowly aging out or no longer functioning correctly.

For the next year we want to continue casting votes for music selections (by majority vote); keep up with our quarterly meetings with the minister; and group meetings to discuss business, ideas and concerns – as has been done. It is important to all members of the group that it remain a group in which everybody can participate collaboratively and offer suggestions.

Environmental OTOC (Omaha Together One Community)

Members: Janet West, Laurie Gift, Cy Leise, Marcia Leise, Alan Vovolka, Mark Loscutoff

Activities — 2017/2018

Our goal is to focus the political power of members and friends of First Unitarian Church, by collaborating with other congregations, to improve life for ourselves and our neighbors. OTOC teams research issues and lobby political leaders for our positions on issues affecting Omaha.

Current issues:

- Predatory lending
- Immigration and refugees
- Environmental sustainability
- Mental health
- Housing and revitalization of neighborhoods
- Medicaid expansion/tax policy

This year's special focus is on broadening and diversifying the base of team members and member congregations. OTOC will hold an "accountability session" in October for candidates for U.S. Congress and the Nebraska Legislature. Past accountability sessions have moved candidates' positions on important issues. For more information, talk to a member, or visit otoc.org.

Fellowship Team

Co-Chairs: Nellie Chenoweth and Nadine Keith

Members who helped with activities: Marie Sedlacek, Lois Norris, Katie Zimmer, Julie and Roger Nicolaisen, Diana Byrd, Linda and John Hruska, Carol Prine, Becca & Collin Hatcher, Carolyn McNamara, John Wagner, Walt Jesteadt, Donna Neff, Bebe & Rob McCammond, Kate Kennedy, Dave Olson, Dave Rosser, Nolan DeVries

Activities — 2017/2018

Heart & Hand Potluck: October 27, 2017

Holiday Dinner: December 10, 2017

Chili Cook-Off: January 27, 2018

Finance Team

Leader: Walt Jesteadt

Members: Daniel Byrd, Tony Host, Louise Jeffrey, Chris Krull, Clyde Kramer, Carol Prine, Bill Ross, Christopher Schmidt, John Wagner

Activities & Projects – 2017-2018

The Finance Team has responsibility for advising the Board, the Ministry Team and the Treasurer on the financial functions of the church and assists the senior staff in carrying out specific functions. Walt Jesteadt continued to serve as Treasurer as well as finance chair. Work completed under both headings will be summarized here, but finances for the year and a proposed budget for the 2018-2019 year will be presented in a separate report. The Sarah Joslyn Society and Fundraising are also covered in separate reports.

- During the past year, Bill Ross continued to perform many church accounting functions including the payroll. Clyde Kramer handled disbursements. Walt Jesteadt handled contribution statements, monthly reports to the Board and automatic pledge payments through Vanco. Louise Jeffrey worked on the Preserve Our Building campaign. Carol Prine, Walt Jesteadt and Chris Schmidt worked on the Stewardship campaign. Daniel Byrd made investment recommendations. John Wagner revised the Capital Trust document.
- Contribution Statements were mailed in August, October, January and April. The April mailing provided information on the status of pledges before the end of the current church year as well as information on new pledges. We also used the April mailing to solicit pledges from those who had not yet pledged. We continued to email contribution statements to 75 households that gave us permission to do so.
- The Preserve Our Building Fund campaign was again held in January/February, with the help of Jamie Alexander and Louise Jeffrey. The fund total increased from \$63,799 in February 2017 to \$68,744 in February 2018.
- The members who pay their pledges by monthly automatic deposits handled by Vanco remained constant at 44. All Vanco contributors were contacted early in the stewardship campaign and informed that we would assume continued contributions and a pledge unless we heard from them. This system of opting out rather than in worked well.
- The plan to invest funds from recent bequests in exchange traded funds through the church's TD Ameritrade account got off to a slow start and was further delayed by the death of Dean Christensen. Daniel Byrd and Walt Jesteadt are currently investing \$300,000 over six months at the rate of \$50,000 per month in exchange traded funds selected by Daniel Byrd. We will have invested \$200,000 by the time of the annual meeting.
- The Finance Team met during the year to discuss modifications to the Capital Trust document and expanded use of Vanco to accept contributions via credit and debit cards. The consensus was that we should start by accepting credit/debit card donations for fundraising efforts such as Preserve Our Building and the Heart & Hand Auction during the coming church year.
- Clyde Kramer continued coming to the church office once a week to handle disbursements. This reduces Catharine Dixon's workload and separates our bank deposit function from our disbursement function.

FUNdraising Team

Leader: Donna Neff and Katrina Schmidt

Team Members: Walt Jesteadt and over 50 auction volunteers

Activities — 2017/2018

This year's operating budget specified that \$15,000 be raised by our team, a reduction of \$2,000 from last year, to ease auction leadership transitions. Thanks especially to the efforts of the new auction co-chair Katrina Schmidt, we greatly exceeded this goal, contributing about \$17,500 to the budget as of the end of March.

The majority of the funds raised (over \$17,000 profit) came from our annual Halloween Heart & Hand Auction Party offering physical goods, social activities and people's skills and services. Held Friday, October 27, 2017, over 100 people enjoyed a potluck, costume contest, raffle, door prizes, and both silent and live auctions of 200+ items. Nellie Chenoweth and Kathy Oliver entertained us as MCs. Free childcare with Halloween activities was provided for 26 younger children. Lois Norris won the raffle basket. Winners in the costume contest were: Pun Fun - Kerri and Seth Wingert as "Cereal Killers;" Thrift-Store Thriller - Sarah Copeland as "Greta Gremlin;" and Spook's Choice - Terri Lynn Brewer as "Midnight, the Black Cat." Experiments moving more of the auction online were successful for pre-auction sales of many items and half the seats for events, however, there was little interest in post-auction online sales of open event seats. Post-auction billing again worked well, albeit helping spread auction tasks year round.

Additional fundraising income this past year was over \$400 from shopping on Amazon Smile, use of Baker's cards (\$93), and profit from the Chili Cook-Off (>\$200). Last May, we participated in the Omaha Gives! fundraiser for non-profits, raising \$545 (15 donors) for our Midtown Helping Hands program. This program receives no budgeted funds and was selected by the Ministry Team Council to appeal to both non-church and church members.

Finally, special thanks to Fellowship Team members who generously work as our partners for the Auction and the Chili Cook-off...and to the generous donors, buyers and volunteers who make our annual auction both a financial and community building success.



Heart and Hand Auction 2017

Hospitality Teams

Coordinator: Carolyn McNamara

Team Leaders: Louise Jeffrey, Kim Callaghan, Janet West, Carolyn McNamara, Kim Dunovan, Joe and Lori Schaaf, Jack Round, Kay Lynn Goldner and Bill Ross

The Hospitality Teams concept began in 2014 as a new way to approach the Sunday morning tasks we are all familiar with. The goal is to provide opportunities for each church member to help serve the congregation and support the church service; to belong to a team that works together on a regular basis and takes a turn in its leadership; to learn the work that is required to bring our service together, share the knowledge with other team members, and help improve the process; and to become an integral part of welcoming all newcomers to our church. New church members who are physically able and available on Sunday mornings are asked to serve on a Hospitality Team.

It takes about 108 volunteers (nine teams of approximately twelve people each) to make Hospitality Teams work. The teams are purposely large so that team members who are unavailable on the Sunday that their team is scheduled, can be absent without disrupting the smooth flow of the team's work. Currently, the average team has eight members but more are needed. Each team serves six times per year — once every two months. Four teams serve one Sunday during each of the odd numbered months (September, November, etc.) and four other teams serve one Sunday during each of the even numbered months (October, December, etc.). A fifth team serves each time that there is a fifth Sunday in a month (generally 4 times per year). Team Coordinator Carolyn McNamara is the conduit between the individuals and teams that create our Sunday service and the Hospitality Teams that serve on any given Sunday.

Serving on a Hospitality Team takes about one hour and it only happens six times per year. Some people come in early to set up and some people stay a bit late for clean-up. Because everyone works together, nobody has to spend lots of extra time. Tasks include greeting congregants and visitors when they enter the church; taking up the offering; answering questions and giving directions; visiting with newcomers and helping them feel at home; and tidying up after the service. All of the tasks are documented and introductory training is offered. Team members are encouraged to rotate through the tasks to become familiar with every job.

Hospitality Team Leaders mainly do team coordination. Team Leaders receive information about what is planned for the service from the Hospitality Team Coordinator and share it with their team members. The Team Leader checks to see who will be able to attend on Sunday and schedules who will perform each of the various roles. The tasks are rotated until everyone has a chance to become familiar with each one.

Serving on a Hospitality Team is rewarding and fun and we hope you will volunteer for one and join us!

House & Grounds Team

Leader: Pierce Carpenter

Members: Bob Perrin, David Rosser, Bill Ross, Sharon Conlon, Jaime Major, Carolyn McNamara, Dean Christensen, Jack Perry, Jan Wilson, Marie Sedlacek, Kay Lynn Goldner

Activities — 2017/2018

This team worked on several projects this year including:

- Added two more handicap parking spots
- Put up additional signs in the parking lot
- Cleaned and organized downstairs storage areas
- Installed new dishwasher in kitchen
- Put together new benches in the garden (donated by Carolyn McNamara) along with plaques
- Worked on plastering and painting one wall in the sanctuary
- Added wiring for the streaming services team
- Replaced lights with LEDs on church exterior
- Unplugged drains as needed
- Installed security cameras
- Made repairs and changes for nursery safety
- Assisted with minor repairs as needed
- Removed mulch buildup to facilitate yard drainage
- Maintained gardens
- Extended cobblestone path to RE entry door
- Developed plan to repair sanctuary windows
- Repaired intermediate pew support
- Repaired and rebuilt downspouts
- Installed Common Room light switches
- Installed commemorative plaques for Dean Christensen on steeple windows
- Rebuilt 3 of the 10 lower window sashes in sanctuary.

Membership Team

Co-Chairs: Mike McAtee and Janet West

Membership Coordinator: Carrie Helmberger

Members: Beth Conover, Carolyn McNamara, Jaime Alexander, Lois Norris, Janet West, Ron Withem, Judith Wright, Tom Seguin, Caitlin Seguin, Mike McAtee, Lee Clausen, Bebe McCammond, Vanessa Timberlake

Activities — 2017/2018

- Held monthly meetings to discuss current business and ongoing projects, took attendance and documented meeting minutes on Google docs.
- Transitioned leadership of the team from Caitlin and Tom Seguin to Mike McAtee and Janet West.
- Transitioned administrative control of all Membership Team documents located on the team's Google Drive using our portable account: mtchair.firsttuomaha@gmail.com.
- Facilitated new members joining Hospitality Teams through formal process integrated into Pathways curriculum.
- Initiated quarterly "Why Membership is Important to Me" pulpit talks and solicited pulpit speakers. Members Mike McAtee, Sharon Piehler and Jackie Anderegg gave talks in November, December and March.
- Welcomed 16 new members to the church.
- Assisted Membership Coordinator with Pathways Class planning and execution.
- Promoted the Pathways Class at the mini-activity fair.
- Recruited new Membership Team members at volunteer fair.
- Staffed Welcome/Visitors Table every Sunday with volunteers from the team during coffee hour to approach visitors and answer membership-related questions.
- Updated Welcome/Visitors Table with current issues of *The Flame*, pamphlets, pictures of new members and information about church activities.
- Team members investigated and discussed adoption of the *Soul Matters* program by interested and relevant church groups/teams and staff.
- Drafted and presented to the Ministry Team Council, a proposal to establish a church-wide Soul Matters Sharing Circle program which was approved.
- Provide Membership Team support to the newly authorized Soul Matters team.
- Added and organized new content and pages to the church website for first time visitors. Organized the pages around a "First Time Visitor?" button located at the top of the church home page.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Connections Group

Leader: Terri Lynn Brewer

Beginning on July 5, 2017 the NAMI Connections support group was held at the church once a week. The group was for persons living with mental health challenges to assist each other in recovery. In the first four to five months each weekly meeting averaged four to eight people. Over the last four months, attendance declined and the NAMI group has been moved to a local rehab center. I would like to thank the church for their continued support of NAMI.

Neighborhood Ministry “Midtown Helping Hands”

Leader: Catharine Dixon

Members: Rae Barry, Royal Carleton, Catharine Dixon, David Rosser and many others from our church and from the community who support this work.

Activities — 2017/2018

Blessing Bag Day, held on September 8, 2017, was once again a success. Thank you! More than 100 blessing bags were made, and will be handed out to those in need who come to our church door. The bags contain various personal care items, socks, snack bars and bottled water. Half of all the hats, gloves and scarves, collected on the holiday mitten tree during December, were shared with our team so they can be offered to visitors. Assistance in the form of restaurant gift cards and bus passes, totaling \$500, were given out. Assistance in the form of providing payment for various services was made, totaling \$220. Omaha Gives! (the one-day online giving event) and the change for change funds help keep this team going. This important work continues to fill a vital need, and helps close a gap in services to those in our neighborhood.

Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee Members: Molly Dewell, Kathi Oliver, David Olson, Carol Ramsey, Marie Sedlacek, and Ben Wallace. As last year's President, Jackie Anderegg convened the Nominating Committee in January 2018.

Consistent with our by-laws, the Nominating Committee solicited congregational input to identify members qualified and willing to serve in elected positions, and then selected candidates. The committee thanks those who have expressed a willingness to serve in these positions:

President 2018-19: **Maria Wallace**

President-Elect: **Joseph Schaaf**

Members, Board of Trustees: **Sharon Piehler, Tom Seguin, and Carol Ramsey** (1-year term)

Trustee of the Capital Trust: **Bob Hess**

Members of the Nominating Committee: **Royal Carleton and Kate Godfrey**

Further nominations will be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting immediately preceding the election by qualified members of the congregation.

The Nominating Committee also solicited congregational input to award and recognize volunteers, and to select the Unitarian of the Year. The Unitarian of the Year is revealed at the Annual Meeting. Last year's recipients were: **Jack Perry and Frank Norris (both posthumously)**

Annual Awards:

Heritage Award — For significant contributions to preserving, understanding, and celebrating our Unitarian Universalist history: **Janet West**

Religious Education Award — For outstanding achievement and excellence in religious growth and learning: **Geoff Erickson**

Keeping the Faith Award — For keeping the UU faith alive in the community and touching the lives of congregation and community members in a positive way: **Nellie Chenoweth**

Social Justice Award — For witnessing to the ideals of social justice and responsibility so important to our UU heritage: **Jeri Thurber**

Youth of the Year Award: **Erin Stokes**

Young Adult of the Year Award: **Collin and Becca Hatcher**

Unsung Unitarian Universalist Award — For a lifetime of actions that inspire, support and express Unitarian Universalism: **Kay Lynn Goldner and Carolyn McNamara**

Thank you to everyone who helped in this process with suggestions and preparation of materials.

Office Team

Church Administrator: Catharine Dixon

Leader: Carolyn McNamara

Members:

Kim Callaghan	Volunteer Coordinator /Coffee Supplies
Kim Dunovan	Wayside Pulpit
Linda Hruska	Orders of Worship
Clyde Kramer	Accounting
Charlie McMahon	Sound System
Carolyn McNamara	Orders of Worship/Office Shopper
Bill Ross	Information Technology
Dave Rosser	Office Assistant/Sound System
Vanessa Timberlake	Attendance Records
Seth Wingert	Information Technology

Friday Volunteers: Kim Callaghan, Kay Lynn Goldner, Linda Hruska, Debbie Hunsberger, Frank McKee, Roman Noriega, Peg Pidgeon, Evelyn Whitehill, Pat Will

The Flame Proofreaders: Lana Hammel, Debbie Hunsberger, Scott Kemper, Lois Norris

The Flame Folders: Kim Callaghan, Linda Hruska, Debbie Hunsberger, Lois Norris,

Activities & Projects — 2017/2018:

In addition to the ongoing commitments listed above, team members staff the office when needed, undertake special projects, organize, file, design, research, edit, proofread, revise, reformat, enter data, copy, recycle, and clean as time permits.

Kim Callaghan does a great job performing as Volunteer Coordinator. She schedules and trains a team of dedicated volunteers who come in on Fridays to assemble the orders of worship, restock and organize pew racks, and prepare the sanctuary and foyer for Sunday service. The volunteers also fold, seal and prepare the monthly *Flame* for mailing. We are very grateful for such a devoted volunteer staff.

Linda Hruska now prepares the slides for the streaming of the service on Sunday mornings. Catharine uploads a PDF of the order of worship each week to the church website here: <http://www.firstuuomaha.org/orderservice>. In addition, Catharine prepares the YouTube channel and streaming services webpage each week for Sunday morning.

We have welcomed two new members to the Office Team. Charlie McMahon is helping Dave with the sound system and Seth Wingert is assisting Bill with the computer system.

We now have over 740 people who receive the weekly enews and the emailed monthly newsletter.

The office team is saddened by the passing of Barb Ross, former office team leader and database extraordinaire. Her spirit and laughter are truly missed.

Partner Church Team

Leader: Janet West

Members: Nadine Keith, Anne Knapp, Ron Knapp, Evy Rosser, Dave Olson, Val Murray, Bob Hess, Mike and Mary Jo Stoll, Deb McAtee, Sharon and Pete Piehler

The goals in 2017/2018 were to:

- To raise \$1,320 each year for the Unitarian church and village in Firtosmartonos, Transylvania, Romania. This money is used by the village minister, Rev. Katalin Szasz-Cserey, to help maintain the 110-year-old village church and to help with various church/village activities such as the Sunday school and the women's needlework group.
- To raise \$2,400 to provide scholarships to some of the village youth who are either attending high school or college. In 2016/2017 this money was distributed to 10 village young people. Since there is no high school close to the village, the youth must board in the cities in which the high schools are located. We received completed questionnaires from all of the scholarship recipients which asked what courses they were taking, what their academic and career goals are, and what the scholarship money was used for. Two of the scholarship recipients have been attending professional schools—one in medicine and the other in law. The Women's Alliance provides \$400 of the \$2,400 that is sent to provide scholarships.
- To provide information to the members and friends of First Unitarian Church about our partner church and village and Transylvanian Unitarianism.
- To recruit members and friends of First Unitarian Church to travel to Transylvania and our partner village.

Activities — 2017/2018

The Partner Church team presented the Sunday morning worship service on Sunday, January 14, 2018. The focus was on the celebration of Torda 450.

The Partner Church was the recipient of Share the Plate funds for the month of February, 2018.

Several articles about the Partner Church and the history of Transylvanian Unitarianism were included in *The Flame* newsletter throughout the year.

In March, 2018 the Partner Church Team brought Rev. Roger Bertschausen, Executive Director of the UU Partner Church Council, to Omaha for a weekend of activities. He met with the young adults group, conducted a workshop on refreshing the partner church experience, and preached the Sunday morning sermon. Following the worship service, Rev. Bertschausen met with current and new team members to lay plans for continuing the "refreshing" process.

A meeting of Partner Church Team members is planned for April 21, 2018 to begin work on our relationship with the church in Firtosmartonos.

Plans are being made for a group of members and friends to travel to Transylvania in July, 2018.

Sarah Joslyn Society

Chair: Deborah Duggan

Luncheon Committee Members: Deb Duggan, Kay Lynn Goldner, Sandy Host, Louise Jeffrey, Dixie Lemon, Carolyn McNamara, Lois Norris, Diane Withem

The Sarah Joslyn Society was formed in 2004 by Dixie Lemon to encourage, enable and thank those who wish to leave a bequest to First Unitarian Church or otherwise participate in the Planned Giving Program. Sadly, one of our members passed away this year.

These are the dedicated church members who have planted a tree so that others may enjoy the shade:

Jaime Alexander	Wendy Hessler	Bob Perrin
Jacqueline Anderegg	Joe Hoagbin	Jack Perry
Anonymous I	Dick Holland	Yvonne Price
Anonymous II	Mary Holland	Cella Quinn
Anonymous III	Betty Holloway	Dave Richardson
Bill Bruns	John Hruska	Jim Rogers
Sandi Bruns	Debbie Hunsberger	Raija Rogers
Linda Buehlmann	Louise Jeffrey	Ellen Shurson
Eddith Buis	Walt Jesteadt	Jim Simon
Sharon Conlon	Bob Jones	Kim Simon
Carol Christensen	Diane Jones	Liz Stawycznyj
Dean Christensen	Dick Joslin	Gretchen Thomas
Deb Duggan	Anne Knapp	John Thomas
Tim Duggan	Ron Knapp	John Wagner
Olive Erickson	Dixie Lemon	Elaine Wells
Margot Fetrow	Harriet Major	Janet West
Richard Fetrow	Katherine Bester McClure	Evelyn Whitehill
Audrey Freyer	Carolyn McNamara	Jim Wigton
Dale Freyer	Donna Neff	Judy Wigton
Larry Goesser	Dave Nicklin	Pat Will
John Goldner	Ruth Nicklin	Edith Wilson
Kay Lynn Goldner	Christina Noriega	Sid Wilson
Megan Gustafson	Roman Noriega	Diane Withem
Lana Hammel	Frank Norris	Ron Withem
Jack Heidel	Lois Norris	Judith Wright
Shelton Hendricks	Linda Parker	

Taoism Discussion Group

Leader: Geoff Erickson

Members: About 53 people receive the monthly tao@firstuomaha.org email. The group size for our monthly meeting is around 8-10, on average. Geoff Erickson, Katie Zimmer, Vanessa Timberlake, Kim Dunovan, Dan Boster, Steve Davis, Bob Hess, Elaine Wells, Terri Lynn Brewer, Larry Goesser and Christopher Peters (Second Unitarian) are frequent attendees and we often have one or two new visitors each month.

Activities — 2017/2018

The plan each week is to have no plan. We check in with each other at the beginning and then just start talking about anything. My job is to lead the discussion back to Taoism or offer a Taoist perspective. We've talked about many topics, from death and mental illness, to science and meditation. We finish each week by sitting quietly and being mindful for a few minutes. For our April meeting we had a guest, Jonathan Woodside, from the Mindfulness Outreach Initiative.

Tech Team

Leaders: Geoff Erickson, Dave Rosser, Ben Wallace

Members: Geoff Erickson, Dave Rosser, Ben Wallace, Catherine Plumlee, Charlie McMahon, Joe Schaaf, Seth Wingert, and growing quickly.

Activities — 2017/2018

This is a new team that arose from board discussions about various technology-related topics including soliciting and tracking feedback to help guide decisions; standardizing tools and processes to help teams organize and document their work; and perhaps most importantly, working to enable smooth transitions of responsibility for those involved with technical systems. The team was approved March 3, 2018 by the Ministry Team Council. The current focus is on laying the groundwork for future work and gathering information about prior work from various leaders including Bill Ross, Dave Rosser, Ben Wallace, and Catharine Dixon.

Video Streaming Team

Team Leader: Bill Ross

During the 2017/2018 church year we made some progress...but not as much as we had hoped. The major disappointment was our failure to get more people to join the streaming team. We also failed to get a good training program in place. This was partially due to personal distractions on my part and partially by a larger learning curve than we expected. We discovered that we needed to master more technologies than we realized.

We did gain considerable insight into the process and our percentage of successfully streamed and archived services improved. We are ready to start basic training and to deepen our knowledge in the video processes. As we learned, the technology continues to change with regular updates to our Wirecast software and to YouTube's processes. Since we were behind the learning curve already, these changes were frustrating to keep up with. Competence is still a bit out of reach, but we are in a better place than this time last year.

Several people have shown interest and I now consider the following folks to be either members of the team or interested enough to help as needed: Daniel Byrd, Beth Conover, Dick Flebbe, Bob Hess, Christina Noriega, and Liam Wiig. Office stalwarts Catharine Dixon, Linda Hruska, and Carolyn McNamara help with setting up YouTube events and preparing titles for the Wirecast software.

Disappointments: We have found that we will need more capability for creating graphics and editing video than we originally thought. We often have partial streaming successes that we can improve by replacing the "streamed video" archive with a local copy that was saved separately. Training was not successfully implemented.

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Progress: We implemented an HDMI output from the MacBook Pro to provide the video feed down to the common room in case of an overflow crowd. Several people have joined us in the organ loft to see the operation and that has proved to be a decent overview. We did a forum presentation on April 8th and that forced us to get at least some of our overview prepared. A good overview is critical for training.

Women's Alliance

Chair: Catherine Plumlee

Co-Chair: Abby Borgmann

Treasurer & Reservations: Jeri Thurber

Publicity: Kathi Oliver

Food: Sheri Conner, Louise Jeffrey, Donna Neff

Fund Raising & Bake Sale: Vanessa Timberlake (and all the volunteers who help it a success)

Programs: Peg Pidgeon and Katrina Schmidt

Education Fund Committee (7 members): Catherine Plumlee, Vanessa Timberlake, Janet West, Nellie Chenoweth, Nadine Keith, Kathi Oliver, Jeri Thurber

Readers: Denise Allain and Nadine Keith

Set-up: Carolyn McNamara, Mary Kay Peters, Marie Sedlacek and countless other volunteers

Clean-up: Carol Cronin, Val Murray, Vanessa Timberlake, Ann Van Hoff and countless other volunteers

Table Decorations: Darelynn Egger

Wine Bearers: Barb Henney, Janet West, Judith Wright

Activities — 2017/2018

The Women's Alliance invites all women to a monthly get-together that includes social time, dinner, and a program/presentation. Again this year, our presentations were outstanding and informative. We saw a steady attendance throughout the year; about 25-35 women attended regularly with new attendees visiting monthly. Each month Women's Alliance members welcomed a speaker from within the congregation and outside community organizations.

September:	The History of Women's Alliance by Dave Richardson
October:	The Art of Divination by Barbara May
November:	Annual Thanksgiving Bake Sale; Care Consultants for the Aging
December:	Annual White Elephant Gift Exchange
February:	Juan Carols Veloso from the Omaha Area Sanctuary Network
March:	Worm Condos and Composting presented by Adam Sagert
April:	English Country dancing presented by Peg Pidgeon

Women's Alliance raises money for educational purposes for men and women of First Unitarian Church. This year we are supporting members of First Unitarian Church to attend General Assembly in 2018.

Please consider joining us next year for more exciting presentations!

Worship Arts Team

Leader: Maria Wallace

Members: Nellie Chenoweth, Nadine Keith, Dave Richardson, Denise Allain, Megan Gustafson, Kathy Alexander, Erin Stokes, Peg Pidgeon, Katrina Schmidt, and Molly Dewell, with Rev. Frank Rivas.

Activities — 2017/2018

After eight years of stellar leadership, Megan Gustafson passed the torch of Worship Arts Team Leader to Maria Wallace. Megan is a leader who exudes wisdom, strength, and compassion, maintaining organization while fostering the creativity of her team members. The team continues to run smoothly as a result of Megan's stewardship.

Lay voices have continued to be showcased through personal odysseys and justice pulpits, as well as sermons. Collin Hatcher gave two memorable sermons, and also showcased Young Adult poets Chynna Jedlicka, Klyde Warren and Jen Castello-Scott. The CUUPS group periodically leads beautiful, meaningful earth-centered worship services.

A highlight of the year was the “New Voices in Unitarian Universalism” series planned by Rev. Frank Rivas. We hosted seminarians Connie Simon from Meadville-Lombard, Sarah Fritsche from Harvard Divinity School, and Lauren Way from Starr King. We also look forward to hearing guest ministers who are members and friends of our congregation this summer.

The mission of the Worship Arts Team is to assure quality Sunday morning worship programming. We plan Sunday services when our minister is not in the pulpit and provide lay-leaders to assist in Sunday worship for both the minister and guests. The Worship Arts Team is proud to partner with worship and music leaders to help provide cohesive worship experiences here at First Unitarian Church.

Young Adult Group

Leaders: Collin and Becca Hatcher

Members: Taylor Eman, Jessica Eman, Sarah Copeland, Laura Giesecking Thomas, Jennifer Dillon, Drew Dillon, Klyde Warren, Mia Siebrasse, Nick Swingle, Neil Thorne, Jen Castello-Scott, Jeff Castello-Scott, Stephen Switzer, Sara Switzer, Nathan Smith, Sarah Monaghan, Grant Langdon, Mike McCaughan, Caitlin McDevitt Seguin, Tom Seguin, Nolan DeVries, Kandy Scott, Kerri Wingert, Seth Wingert, Spencer Pereira, Colin McDonald, Chynna Jedlicka, Molly Dewell, Darlene Gill, Ronald Gill

Activities & Projects – 2017-2018:

- Volunteered twice with Community Meals
- Coffee & Coexistence: Monthly tours to significant interfaith sites in the metro began March 2018.
- Online discussion forums (social media)
- Monthly discussion group: Completed the book *Becoming: A Spiritual Guide to Navigating Adulthood* by Kayla Parker, published by Skinner House Books.
- Hosted Fondue Night for the Heart and Hand Auction (17 guests)
- Monthly game nights: Increased from 5 attendees to 25. Opened to entire church in fall 2017.
- Taylor and Jessica Eman affirmed as new leaders, replacing the Hatchers on March 25, 2018.

The year 2017 was one of fantastic growth for the 18-35 demographic, known as the Young Adults. A notable percentage of new church members came from this exciting group! We look forward to 2018 being a year of growth and outreach as we hope to add a UNO campus presence and a more robust programming schedule.



Young Adult Event in May 2018 (photo by Becca Hatcher)

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU)

2017/2018 Annual Report submitted by Geoff Erickson and Justin Short

Leaders/Coordinators: Geoff Erickson (First Unitarian) and Justin Short (Second Unitarian)

Youth Advisors:

Second Unitarian: Carolyn Miller

Youth Members:

Seniors: Sabrina Short

Juniors: Izzy Short, Erin Stokes, Emily Higgins and Connor Mahood

Sophomores:

Freshmen: Lily McEvoy, Izzy Coonfare, Miles Godfrey

Eighth Graders: Liam Wiig and Cameron Short

Seventh Graders: Xander Wiig and Sophia Godfrey

Guests also joined the group occasionally.

Group Summary:

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU) is for youth in grades 7-12 and is a joint youth group between First and Second Unitarian Churches of Omaha. They meet on Wednesday nights at First Unitarian Church. The YRUU year runs in conjunction with the school year (September through May).

The goals of YRUU are to:

- Grow life-long Unitarian Universalists.
- Provide worship, celebration and rites of passage for UU youth.
- Learn about the traditions and heritage of Unitarian Universalism.
- Develop personal growth, relationship building & leadership skills for youth.
- Help youth to develop a social conscience and learn to be agents of change, as a group and individually, in the world.
- Develop continuity and foster communication between age levels of youth within the program.
- Foster tolerance, understanding and acceptance of diversity.

2017 – 2018 YRUU Activity Summary:

This year was again a time of transition in leadership as Adam Sagert left First Unitarian and Geoff Erickson became the leader for First Unitarian. Justin Short also became the leader for Second Unitarian with Carolyn Miller serving as an advisor in a support role. YRUU followed a curriculum this year that was largely driven by youth and leaders who presented about different religions. Topics covered include: Taoism, Paganism, Satanism, the Mennonites, and Unitarian Universalism. There have been fewer outside group activities this year, aside from the bonfire early in the year, but this school year we still have an overnight activity planned, a service in May, along with a day trip to General Assembly in Kansas City in June.



First Unitarian Church of Omaha

**3114 Harney Street
www.firstuuumaha.org
(402) 345-3039**

All couples and non-members welcome!

Wedding advertisement
by Catherine Plumlee

Appendix Contents

New Members

Weddings and Unions Held in the Church

Staff

Bequests

Treasurer's Report

2018-2019 Budget

New Members since May 1, 2017

Ed Kelly 5/21/2017
Charlie McMahon 8/27/2017
Sara Switzer 10/15/2017
Stephen Switzer 10/15/2017
Jeff Castello-Scott 11/26/2017
Jen Castello-Scott 11/26/2017
Spencer Pereira 12/3/2017
Mia Siebrasse 12/3/2017
Nick Swingle 12/3/2017
Genevieve Lee-Regier 1/7/2018
Jessica Eman 2/25/2018
Taylor Eman 2/25/2018
Bill Braymen 3/18/2018
Bill Tull 3/18/2018
Sarah Copeland 3/25/2018
Teresa N'ha-Pagani 3/25/2018

Weddings and Unions Held in the Church since May 1, 2017

Krance/Schreck
5/20/2017

Lusk/Hagel
5/27/2017

Locke/Sherman
7/15/2017

Fraction/Gordon
8/5/2017

Harlow/Petersen
8/19/2017

Ogata/Star
8/26/2017

Turco/Howe
9/3/2017

Peterson/Stueve
9/30/2017

Coravett/Vincent
10/6/2017

Archer/Kelly
10/14/2017

McGowan/Tritiz
10/21/2017

Barcal/Bjornstad
11/11/2017

Romero/Bayle
11/25/2017

Gulzow/Hahn
12/2/2017

Staff

Rev. Frank Rivas, Minister	minister@firstuomaha.org
Jan Wilson, Director of Religious Education	dre@firstuomaha.org
Catharine Dixon, Church Administrator	admin@firstuomaha.org
Carrie Helmberger, Membership Coordinator	coordinator@firstuomaha.org
William Miller, Choir Director	choirdirector@firstuomaha.org
J. Gawf, Choir Accompanist	
Patricia Will, Organist	
Stan Harper, Early Morning Risers Director	
Judi Torneten, Musician	
Jenny Hastings, Nursery Manager	childcare@firstuomaha.org
Gale Callaghan, Nursery Assistant	
Robert Medrano, Custodian	

Bequests

Memorial bequests were given to First Unitarian Church this year by:

Shelton Hendricks

Barbara Ross

Comments on the 2017/2018 Treasurer's Report and 2018/2019 Proposed Budget

Results for 2017-18

We had an end-of-year surplus for the seventh year in a row. We started the year with a low budget for pledge contributions as a result of a poor outcome from the Spring 2017 stewardship campaign. To make up for finishing the campaign \$15,000 below our goal, we assumed significantly greater investment income as a result of investing money from recent bequests and we applied the entire surplus from the prior year to the 2017-2018 budget. We also assumed that the Membership Coordinator would continue to be supported from a non-budget growth account. Our end-of-year results show pledge contributions more than \$13,000 above budget but little improvement in investment income compared to recent years. We lacked clear procedures for making and implementing investment decisions and as of April 30, 2018 had only invested half of the \$300,000 authorized by the Board. The higher than expected pledge contributions and continued success of the Heart and Hand Auction, made up for the lack of investment income and reduced income from use of facilities.

We were below budget in expenses, in part because we used non-budget funds for a new air conditioner and a new dishwasher as well as for continued support of the new Membership Coordinator position. The net result is that we finished the year with a surplus of \$1,661. We received bequests this year totaling \$50,000.

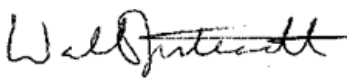
Stewardship Campaign

The goal for the stewardship campaign this spring was \$265,000, an increase of \$15,000 over the final result of last year's campaign, but only a small increase over the actual pledge contributions of \$263,039. Our stewardship campaigns include a contribution from the Holland bequest that decreases by \$5,000 every year as a way to gradually reduce our dependence on Richard Holland's annual pledge. The contribution for the year beginning May 1 is \$30,000. In addition to a smaller contribution from the Holland bequest, we had reductions in several large pledges as a result of illness or death. We were nonetheless able to reach the goal of \$265,000 for the coming year, from a total of 140 pledges. Both the pledge total and number of pledges increased significantly over the previous year.

Proposed Budget

The proposed budget of \$340,000 is the same as last year's budget. It was possible to have a uniform budget because we will not have a minister this summer and we assume that the salary of the interim minister will be lower than the salary paid to Frank Rivas. We have included support for the Membership Coordinator in the new budget. The budget assumes pledge contributions of \$265,000 for the coming year and use of \$1,000 from the 2017-2018 surplus as additional income to balance the budget. The budget assumes investment income of \$26,000, approximately 3.5% of the market value of the Board investments and the Capital Trust as of May 1, 2018, the beginning of church fiscal year. We can obtain that income either by approving the proposed revisions of the Trust document or by adopting different rules for the Board investments.

Respectfully submitted,

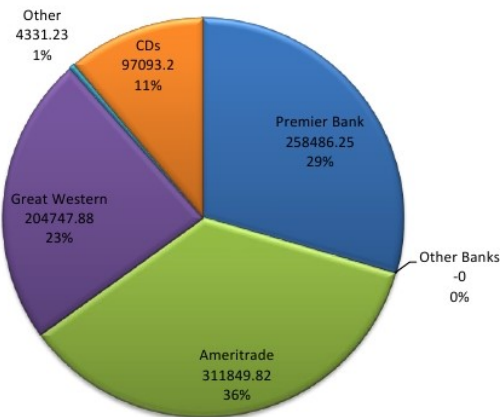


**FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH TREASURER'S REPORT
ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING - MAY 20, 2018**

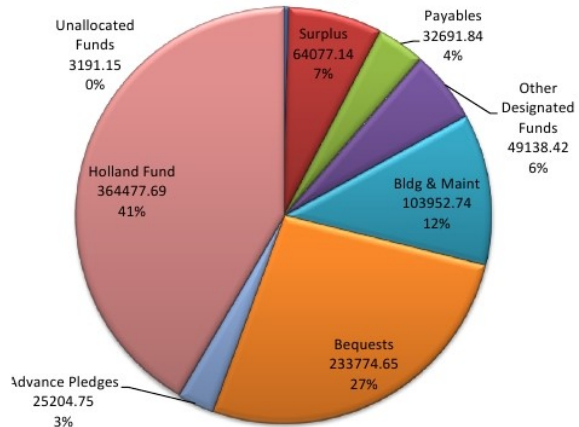
	2018/2019 Proposed Budget	Change From Last Year's Budget	2017/2018 Last Year's Budget	2017/2018 Actual Results
Income:				
Pledged Contributions	265,000	15,000	250,000	263,039
Investment Income	26,000	(3,114)	29,114	13,147
Fund Raising	15,000	-	15,000	17,647
Use of Facilities	13,000	(2,000)	15,000	9,920
Plate Collections	5,000	-	5,000	3,776
Non-Pledged Contributions	7,600	(400)	8,000	6,114
Other Income - Interest	1,200	400	800	1,426
Other Income - Misc	900	200	700	827
Change For Change	300	(200)	500	-
Share the Plate	5,000	-	5,000	4,025
Carry Forward from Prev Year	1,000	(9,886)	10,886	10,886
Total Income	340,000	-	340,000	330,806
Expenses:				
Minister	104,708	(12,543)	117,251	112,505
Office & Administration	78,758	(2,830)	81,588	82,394
House & Grounds	37,793	(666)	38,459	35,055
Religious Services (incl music)	31,692	3,713	27,979	27,592
Religious Education	44,765	2,756	42,009	42,346
Denominational Affairs	20,984	1,720	19,264	19,040
Discretionary & Team Funds	21,300	7,850	13,450	10,213
Total Expenses	340,000	-	340,000	329,145
Surplus or (Deficit)	(0)	(0)	(0)	1,661

Summary of Non-Budget Accounts as of April 30, 2018

First Unitarian Church Assets



Church Liabilities and Designated Funds



Total = \$878,508



Pictured above: **The Early Morning Risers** (photo by Ben Wallace), and on the right, **The Choir with Choir Director William Miller** (photo by Maria Wallace). Pictured directly below: First Unitarian's Award as The Readers' Choice: **Best Church of Omaha** (photo by Maria Wallace), and on the right, **Bebe & Rob McCammond**, winners of the Chili Cook-Off Costume Contest (photo by Carolyn McNamara). Bottom row (left to right): **Joe Schaaf** helps serve during the Stewardship Brunch (photo by Scott Kemper) and Coffee Hour on April 29th (Photo by Dorene Claybaker).





Sunday School
Photo by Jan Wilson



Jan Wilson and Judith
Wright with the
Sunday School
children.

Cover photograph by Sarah Hamilton