

## 2023-2024 Annual Report



**First Unitarian Church of Omaha  
3114 Harney Street  
Omaha, NE 68131**

**[www.firstuuomaha.org](http://www.firstuuomaha.org)**

# In Memoriam

Bill Anderson  
Giniveve Louise Kohana Clemen  
Dixie Lemon  
Frank McKee  
Val Murray  
Roman Noriega  
Liz Stawycznyj

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## **Board of Trustees**

Mark Loscutoff, President  
Douglas Lee-Regier, President-elect  
Walt Jesteadt, Treasurer  
Diana Byrd (2024)  
Beth Conover (2025)  
Kim Dunovan (2024)  
Tricia Piatt (2026)  
Vanessa Timberlake (2026)  
Frank Wagner (2024)

## **Elected Trustees of the Capital Trust**

Joseph Schaaf (May 2024)  
Jennifer Larsen (May 2025)  
John Wagner (May 2026)

## **Nominating Committee**

Terri Lynn Brewer (May 2024), Diana Byrd (May 2024),  
Carol Ramsey (2025), Linda Parker (2025)  
Walt Jesteadt (2026), Dave Richardson (2026)

## **Right Relations**

Terri Lynn Brewer (2025), Kay Lyn Goldner (2024),  
Jean Wagner (2025), Elaine Wells (2024)

**Agenda of The One Hundred Fifty-Fifth Annual Meeting  
First Unitarian Church of Omaha  
May 5, 2024 at 10:30am, in person**

1. **Call to order and Confirmation of Covenant of Right Relations:** Mark Loscutoff, President
2. **Confirmation of Quorum:** Diana Byrd, Secretary
3. **Appointment of Parliamentarian** (G. David Richardson): Mark Loscutoff
4. **Approval of Minutes of 154th Annual Meeting** (May 21, 2023)
5. **Approval of Minutes of Special Congregational Meeting** (September 10, 2023)
6. **Annual Reports:** the authors will take questions from the floor regarding annual reports as printed in the meeting book, including those of the Minister, President, Ministry Team Council, Lifespan Director of Religious Education, Trustees of the Capital Trust Fund, and all team and committee reports.
7. **Presentation for vote: Proposed 2024-2025 Budget:** Walt Jesteadt, Treasurer
8. **Straw poll to guide our General Assembly delegates** on the question of whether the Unitarian Universalist Association should adopt the changes to Article II of the Bylaws that have been proposed by the Article II Study Commission.
9. **Elections** (Nominees selected by the Nominating Committee are listed after each position)
  - a. President: Douglas Lee-Regier
  - b. President-Elect: Sheri Conner
  - c. Board of Trustees: Kimberly Dunovan, Mark Loscutoff, Diana Byrd, Frank Wagner
  - d. Right Relations: Kay Lynn Goldner, Elaine Wells
  - e. Nominating Committee: Sarah Copeland, Jessica Eman, Carol Ramsey
  - f. Capital Trust: Tim Duggan
10. **Recognition of Completion of Terms:** Mark Loscutoff
11. **Volunteer Recognition:** Nominating Committee
12. **Adjourn:** Douglas Lee-Regier

# **PROPOSED LEADERSHIP SLATE FOR THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING**

## **Presented by the Nominating Committee**

President: Douglas Lee-Regier

President-Elect: Sheri Conner

Board of Trustees:

Kim Dunovan – 3 years  
Mark Loscutoff – 3 years  
Diana Byrd – 1 year  
Frank Wagner – 1 year

Nominating Committee:

Sarah Copeland – 3 years  
Jessica Eman – 3 years  
Carol Ramsey – 1 year

Right Relations Committee:

Kay Lynn Goldner – 2 years  
Elaine Wells – 2 years

Capital Trust: Tim Duggan – 3 years

### **2024 Nominating Committee**

Terri Lynn Brewer  
Diana Byrd  
Walt Jesteadt  
Linda Parker  
Carol Ramsey  
Dave Richardson

**Minutes of the Annual 154th Congregational Meeting  
First Unitarian Church of Omaha  
May 21, 2023**

Minutes by Bruce Godfrey, Secretary of the Board

1. **Call to Order** Harold Cruz-Sánchez at 10:30 am
2. **Confirmation of Quorum** Bruce Godfrey, Secretary  
Attendance: 12 on Zoom, 48 members, quorum confirmed
3. **Zoom Meeting Housekeeping** Catherine Plumlee, Zoom Coordinator, went over Zoom etiquette and functions
4. **Appointment of Parliamentarian** (G. David Richardson) by Harold Cruz-Sánchez accepted by Mr. Richardson
5. **Approval of Minutes of 153rd Annual meeting** (May 15, 2022) minutes approved by congregation
6. **Approval of Minutes of Mid-Year meeting** (January 8, 2023) minutes approved by congregation
7. **Ordination of Melissa Gibson**, as a wedding officiant.

Harold reviewed her resume and called the congregation to approve her as a wedding officiant, which would help further her education requirements and provide a potential source of income for her. The congregation unanimously approved this ordination

8. **Annual Reports:** All reports are available for reference in the meeting packet.

Harold noted that this has been a challenging year as we have promoted our stand on reproductive rights, but the State legislature passed a bill limiting abortion rights and transgender surgery on minors.

Took 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.

9. **Presentation & Adoption of Proposed 2023-2024 Budget** Walt Jesteadt, Treasurer

Walt presented a breakdown of our endowment funds and a budget overview. He presented pledge drive results from two years past (a \$17,000 deficit) and last year (a \$72,000 deficit due to high maintenance expenses relating to painting the front façade, organ repair and other projects on top of a pledge deficit of \$40,000). Last year's deficit was made up by withdrawals from non-endowment funds. He discussed challenges with 2023 pledge drive emphasizing difficulties reaching our pledge goal due to people moving away or passing away. Discussed areas where budget cuts were possible. See attached report. This year's budget deficit is built in and we will have a supplemental pledge campaign later this year. We still strive to reduce expenses when possible.

Budget approved by congregation: Motion to approve by Terri Lynn Brewer, seconded by Barb Herring  
The motion to pass the budget was approved unanimously.

Musical interlude and offering

#### 10. Elections:

President Elect: Nominations were requested from the floor. Discussion ensued on how to properly handle the situation of an empty slate in this position per the church by-laws. A motion was made by Catherine Plumlee to table this item until the end of the meeting. This motion was passed.

Further discussion about the by-laws determined that we do not need to elect a Pres. Elect today. The new Nominating Committee is charged with looking further for candidates to fill that position before the mid-year meeting. Another option is to call a special election.

Board of Trustees: Douglas Lee-Regier for one year, Tricia Priatt for three years, and Vanessa Timberlake for three years

This slate was approved unanimously by floor vote and Zoom poll

Right Relations: Terri Lynne Brewer and Jean Wagner

This slate was approved by floor vote and Zoom poll

Nominating Committee: Walt Jesteadt and Dave Richardson

This slate was approved by floor vote and Zoom poll

Capital Trust: John Wagner

This nomination was approved by floor vote and Zoom poll

11. **Recognition of Completion of Terms:** Harold Cruz-Sánchez, Nellie Chenoweth, Neva Cozine and Bruce Godfrey

#### 12. Awards Nominating Committee — Annual Awards:

Social Justice: Kim Callaghan; Religious Education: Amanda Burton; Youth of the Year: Seth Conner; Young Adult of the Year: Colin McDonald; Heritage Award: Bob Perrin; Keeping the Faith: Douglas Lee-Regier; Unsung UU: Jack Round; UU of the Year: Harold Cruz-Sanchez

13. **Adjourned** by Mark Loscutoff

**Minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting  
First Unitarian Church of Omaha  
September 10, 2023**

Minutes by Beth Conover, Board Secretary

Mark Loscutoff, UU Board President, called the meeting to order.

Beth Conover, Board Secretary, indicated there was a quorum.

The minutes of the previous meeting (the regular annual meeting on May 21, 2023) were not read or approved.

Mary Kay Peters gave an update on the upcoming stewardship campaign.

Motion 1: John Wagner moved to Amend the Articles of Incorporation to add the following:

“In the event of dissolution of the Church, any remaining assets would go to an exempt purpose organization (that is, another 501(c)(3) IRS approved organization, whose purpose is religious, charitable, educational or scientific).”  
Previous notice of this motion was given to the congregation in accordance with Bylaws II.C. Here is the text of the previous notice:

***Special Congregational Meeting Event  
Sunday, September 10 at 11:30am (After Sunday’s Service)  
Location: Sanctuary & Zoom***

1. *Announcement of fall stewardship campaign.*
2. *Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation is necessary in order to apply for 501(c)(3) tax status. The change will allow the church to apply for grants that are currently unavailable to us. The cost is a lengthy application process, which Jack Round and Walt Jesteadt have been working on, and a \$600 filing fee, which the Board has approved. In the event of dissolution of the Church, any remaining assets would go to an exempt purpose organization (that is, another 501(c)(3) IRS approved organization, whose purpose is religious, charitable, educational or scientific).*
3. *Approve the spending of Preserve Our Building funds to repair and re-paint the steeple, estimated to cost to be announced. The steeple is severely deteriorated. Some pieces have fallen off. This presents a potential safety hazard, as well as aesthetic and durability issues.*

*Please attend this meeting and help position our church for a bright future. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the board at [board@firstuomaha.org](mailto:board@firstuomaha.org) or the minister at [minister@firstuomaha.org](mailto:minister@firstuomaha.org).*

Motion 1 carried with majority vote after debate and discussion.

Regarding item no. 3 on the notice of the meeting, Jack Round of the Building Committee stated that they do not yet have a proposal ready for the congregation to vote on. He asked the congregation to postpone consideration of the question until further notice.

The meeting adjourned around 12:30 pm.



# **Annual Reports**

**Minister, Board of Trustees, Ministry Team Council,  
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 2023-2024**  
 Submitted by Rev. Shari Woodbury, Settled Minister

“A playful mind-set allows you to master whatever is in front of you, to form symbiotic alliances and partnerships, to adapt successfully to any challenging situation, and above all, to find a sense of fun that makes the whole shebang intrinsically satisfying.” ~ Martha Beck

In the 2023-2024 church year, the ministry of First Unitarian continued to be guided by a Vision of Ministry articulated the prior year. This vision invites:

- A People of Purpose* that serves all ages, and participants old and new
- A Living Building* where people thrive and serve, enriched by the arts, in a cared-for facility
- Spiritual Deepening* for heart, mind, body and spirit, including deepening UU identity
- Ideals in Action* – caring for each other and for the wider community

Last summer I chose **Play & Purpose** as a theme for this church year. We had come through a period of disconnection and mental health strain during the pandemic years, once-in-a-lifetime national crises – like the racial justice push after George Floyd’s murder (and pushback for the status quo), the January 6 insurrection on our capitol, and the overturning of Roe v. Wade – as well as international turmoil via the war in Ukraine plus the ongoing climate crisis... and this year, a new crisis period in the long-simmering Israel-Palestine conflict. People are lonely, tired, and overwhelmed. FUN, community-building and reconnection are a balm and can help re-establish the cornerstone of religious community, which is relationships of care.

We are also in an era of so much change—and such deep change—that I see play as essential for becoming an effective religious community for the present and future. As the opening quote in this report suggests, play goes hand-in-hand with cultural and spiritual evolution. Technical work can be straightforward and sometimes dry. Adaptive work requires a different mindset—playfulness opens the way to the curious, participatory, experimental ways of being that can carry us successfully into the future.

The graphic here, from the Kansas Leadership Center, gives a sense of this. For an excellent, four-paragraph intro to adaptive work for congregations, check out this blog post: <https://mministry.org/maybe-its-time-to-crank-up-the-pressure-cooker/>.

Paired with Play, Purpose is our other focus. Because in a time of change, knowing why we are here as a church is the foundation for effective adaptation.

*DISTINGUISHING TECHNICAL AND ADAPTIVE*

	TECHNICAL WORK	ADAPTIVE WORK
THE PROBLEM	...is clear	... requires learning
THE SOLUTION	... is clear	requires learning
WHOSE WORK IS IT?	experts or authority	stakeholders
TYPE OF WORK	efficient	act experimentally
TIMELINE	ASAP	longer term
EXPECTATIONS	fix the problem	make progress
ATTITUDE	confidence and skill	curiosity

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I believe the most important work I have done for the church this year has been behind-the-scenes with church leaders, particularly the Board of Trustees. We started the year embroiled in complicated conflict, and worked our way through that with patience, care and commitment over a period of months. I believe we came out the other side with stronger relationships, greater role clarity, and an improved capacity to set and hold appropriate boundaries for the health of the church, as well as to live into our Covenant of Right Relations.

I have also continued to engage in conversations with the Board of Trustees around questions of Purpose, exploring the larger cultural and religious landscapes in which First Unitarian operates, and getting a better handle on the position of our congregation in terms of facilities, resources, staff and programs that support our mission.

I am grateful to be working with perhaps the strongest board I have ever had the privilege to work with in my church and non-profit career. And I am curious to hear input from the congregation as your elected leadership engages members in the process of assessing where we are, and clarifying priorities and Purpose for the future. Against that backdrop, I share some highlights from the areas of ministry where I most focus my time and skills in the day-to-day life of the congregation.

*Worship* remains a place of creativity, connection, and inspiration for me.

- This year has included many services in the spirit of Play and/or Purpose, including those on: Ten Reasons Not to Join (or Stay In) This Church (done playfully as a dialogue), Called to the Sea (intergen, participatory), a 2-part process theology series, Playing with Purpose, and The Spirit of the Child (with a unicorn, hide and seek, and even bubbles).
- At least once a month I explored one of the proposed new Article II values in worship: Can UUs ‘All Get Free Together?’ (pluralism), Joking with Nazis (justice), Pink Dreams (equity), The Third Law of Love (love), To Hold One Another in Love (love / accountability), Tell Me A Story (generosity), Mutual Presence (generosity plus peace and reason), and The Promise of Citizenship (interdependence).
- I introduced a new ritual-based service Honoring Our Ancestors, incorporating participation into a Harvest Celebration service too. Traditions of flower ceremony, water-ingathering, and fire communion continued as well.
- I piloted a new mode of worship, the Soulful Songs Sunday, which is music-centered and participatory (with themes of Yes!, To Sing Awake the Light, and For the Beauty of the Earth). Other ideas I brought to the worship team led to rich new experiences in worship, including a Vibrational Sound Healing and a two-part, artistic series on Willa Cather.
- We began experimenting with new ways to enhance worship with the installation of the UU Big Screen in the fall: images, video clips, Time for All Ages story books or puppet shows made more visible to the whole congregation, an occasional responsive reading or song lyrics, and even bringing the UUA President into our sanctuary to preach on the screen.
- It was a pleasure to support others and emcee services like our annual intergenerational Procession of Gifts service in December, and a service on Courageous Women of First Unitarian, which ended with the installation of a plaque honoring Grace Holdredge.
- Efforts are underway to try out another new format: brunch church, an all-ages Sunday morning gathering at the church that combines food, fellowship, spirituality, and ritual.
- Special services beyond Sundays have included the Transgender Day of Remembrance, hosted again at First Unitarian in collaboration with trans colleagues, including Rev. Meadows from Second Unitarian; and putting on a production of Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* as part of our Christmas Eve service.

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**Caring work**, ongoing, has included

- pastoral visits in homes and hospitals; contacts by phone-email-text-Zoom with people facing challenges; the “drive-by” pastoral care that happens on Sundays, in meetings and other church gatherings
- premarital counseling and wedding planning with a church couple who will wed in the fall; rites of passage including a child dedication, new member ceremonies, and support for Celebration of Life services (including those I led for Frank McKee, Giniveve Clemen, Roman Noriega, and Dixie Lemon, as well as initial contact and liaising for the service for Judith Wright)
- holding space and nurturing connection in worship, through Joys and Concerns, meditation or prayer times, and even shifting worship focus during a period of intense loss, to preach on Abide with Me

**Communications and outreach** work is ongoing and has included

- Monthly meetings of our core staff for team-building, learning, planning and coordination
- Special videos, eblasts, social media posts, fliers to help engage people in congregational life; a new video station in the Common Room to make participating that way easier
- Working with staff to make the most of Common Room bulletin boards, digital bulletin boards (screens with announcement slideshows), the garden entry area, the gallery wall in the Common Room and building locations that lend themselves to fliers
- After almost 2 years and hundreds of views, updating the minister welcome video on our home page
- Connecting with potential members at Pathways to Membership and First Steps gatherings
- Visiting one-on-one with various members and leaders
- Attending church social events including the Heart & Hand Auction and Sarah Joslyn Society gathering
- Relationship-building in the community, including attending a luncheon at the Malcolm X Foundation, United We Walk at Tri-Faith, a Women’s Fund event, the Brooks Clergy Luncheon and clergy meetings
- Relationship-building within the UU world, including convening ministers and religious educators from a multi-state area to collaborate on youth conferences
- Work with the Ministry Team Council, including for Teams Meetings

**Administration** has included

- Individual staff supervision; hiring and onboarding a new AV Tech Coordinator; transitioning Judi Unger from Interim Music Director to Music Director
- Active participation/leadership in: Worship Arts Team, Caring Team, Board of Trustees, Ministry Team Council, Stewardship Team
- Consultation and support as requested to: techies, Right Relations Com., fundraising team, Sarah Joslyn Society / planned giving team, sharing circles, Nominating Com., Side with Love, Welcoming Congregation
- Forming a Sabbatical Team and beginning to develop options for both church coverage and minister renewal during my sabbatical in 2025
- Professional development included going to G.A. and Ministry Days, taking a doctoral course on congregational leadership, attending a regional UU ministers’ retreat, participating in several peer groups that share resources and support, and intensive independent study related to spiritual abuse, high control groups, trauma, healing, and safe seeking.

Faithfully,

*Shari*

## **Board of Trustees Report**

Submitted by Mark Loscutoff

It has been my honor to serve as President of the church for the past year. Like all years, this one had its share of joys as well as concerns.

The Board of Trustees last year experienced some dysfunction. The Board lost sight of its covenant with the Minister and of governance structures. As a result, a conflict was allowed to grow and was not managed well. This conflict engulfed the Board, Board members, and the Minister. This was stressful for everyone involved. Two trustees resigned before the end of their terms. Besides the two just mentioned, two other trustees resigned early for personal or health reasons.

The Nominating Committee worked diligently to fill the empty positions on the Board. We have renewed our covenant with the Minister, and we have reviewed the Bylaws and Board Policies. The Board is now fully staffed and functioning well, in partnership with Rev. Woodbury. Most current Trustees have committed to continue on the Board for at least 2024-2025. Douglas Lee-Regier has accepted nomination as the next President. Sheri Conner has accepted nomination as President-elect.

The Board is reviewing the “Destructive Behavior Policy” and has encouraged the Right Relations Committee to provide leadership to the congregation in effective conflict management.

Budget deficits have been an entrenched reality for at least the past several years. They have caused us to dip into capital reserves regularly. This reduces our income from investments and increases our dependence on pledging and fundraising. See the Treasurer’s report for more about this.

Early results from this year’s stewardship campaign are encouraging. If we meet our pledging goals, pledges and recent bequests may make budget cuts this year unnecessary. The Board is working to better define our longer-term financial picture, and to develop strategies to align income with expenses.

As our climate changes, severe storms are becoming a greater risk. We are just one of many churches that are not able to find affordable insurance to protect our finances from damage to the building. Even the diligent work of an insurance broker for many hours has not resulted in an offer, and as of this writing, we are not insured against damage to the building. The flat roof over the R.E. Wing and the asbestos-composite ‘slate’ roof over the original building are nearing the end of their lives. The steeple and the sanctuary windows are deteriorated and need extensive, specialized repair and restoration work. The elevator is obsolete and parts for repairs may not be available.

The fragile condition of the roofs and windows increases the risk of damage to the interior in the event of a severe storm. If we replace the roofs, insurance companies may be more willing to insure us. The Board is in the process of gathering data to guide decisions about what investments in this building make the most sense. We also seek input from the congregation about how well this building serves our current and anticipated future needs.

- Our staff members have been underpaid to varying degrees. The Board reviewed compensation levels relative to UUA guidelines for fair compensation and has approved pay increases. The raises are the first step in a multi-year process and are progress toward the goal of fair compensation.
- The Board made plans to engage the congregation in a process to define our church’s mission more clearly.
- The Treasurer, Walt Jesteadt, moved 15 years of financial reports to the church’s shared Drive, where church leaders can easily gain access. This increases our financial transparency.
- We installed a large display monitor in the sanctuary. Now, even the people in pews can enjoy the pictures during the Story for All Ages and other important information.

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- The audio-visual station is moving to the back of the sanctuary. That will reduce distractions during church services.
- When our AV Technology Coordinator, Oliver Coffman, moved on, we hired a new coordinator, Caenis Bryan.
- We added the position of Music Director and hired Judi Unger to fill it. She coordinates staff and volunteers in our diverse, multi-platform music program. This frees the minister to focus on ministerial work.
- The Unitarian Universalist Association recognized our renewal as a Welcoming Congregation.
- We continue to attract new visitors, and the attendance at Sunday services (on-line and in-person) has grown steadily since the depths of the pandemic. Our church has higher participation by children and youth than many churches. See the LDRE report for more about this.

We have much to be thankful for, and much to offer our community as we head into another year together. It has truly been one of the great honors of my life to serve this congregation, in partnership with Rev. Woodbury, the Board of Trustees and the many thoughtful and caring volunteers and staff of our church.

In gratitude,

Mark Loscutoff



*Church members had a bake sale in December to help raise funds for religious education.*

## Ministry Teams Council Annual Report 2023-2024

Current members: Douglas Lee-Regier (President-elect), Rev. Shari Woodbury, Joshua Burton, and Jack Round; Lori Schaaf's term ended in November 2023; Mark Loscutoff, board president, continued his term until December 2023; other meeting attendees include Walt Jesteadt, church treasurer, Melissa Gibson, membership coordinator, and Christina Strong, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

The Ministry Teams Council (MTC) can be described as the "Operations Team of the Church," entrusted by the Board of Trustees with supporting, coordinating, and directing the work of the Ministry Teams, and to put board policies into effect.

The MTC consists of four members: The President-Elect of the Board of Trustees, ex-officio; the Minister of the Church, ex-officio (the Minister's term shall be continuous); and two members, each having a two year term. One of these is elected by the Board, the other by the Ministry Teams.

The Ministry Teams include all of the individual staff and church teams that operate the church. Each team must understand and support the overall goals of the church that are documented in the Board of Trustees' Policies, Annual Vision of Ministry, and other sources.

The MTC hosted meetings of the teams' representatives, approximately quarterly, to improve communication and coordination between teams. To increase attendance at the teams meetings, the MTC included giveaways and potlucks.

Recruiting leaders for teams that became leaderless was one of the most important jobs of the MTC. The MTC supported specific church policies, for instance deciding Share the Plate recipients and assisting with the Stewardship Campaign.

The MTC made many executive decisions such as:

- Set up a video station with staff assistance from Melissa Gibson
- Assist with supplemental fall pledge campaign and spring campaign
- Help to organize social events such as the New Year Midtown Crossing Gathering
- Determine next steps for the Chalice Guild Team
- Approve installation of new fiber network to improve internet connectivity
- Investigate next steps after attending online UU conference, Threats from Without, Care from Within, and another online webinar about Digital Safety
- Schedule and approve non-church and church events and groups and review building practices
- Convene a task force to investigate the accessibility of the building
- Reorganize the building's space for maximum use and help with the creation of teen space
- Organize a Team Fair to find new volunteers – scheduled for Sunday, May 19, 2024

For more information about the activities of specific ministry teams, please see the annual reports from those teams.

## **Lifespan Director of Religious Education**

Submitted by Christina Strong, Lifespan Director of Religious Education

### Multigenerational Worship and RE Activities

Weekly Time for All Ages during Sunday service led by DRE or adult or youth volunteers  
Monthly CommUnity Nights  
Monthly Family Game Nights  
Bonfire at Bellevue Berry Farm (Sept. 2023)  
Heart & Hand Auction and Halloween activities (Oct. 2023)  
Special [Time for All Ages](#) - *Barbie & the Fair Play Picnic* - original skit (Dec. 2023)  
Procession of Gifts Service - *The Quest to Save Yuletide* - original skit (Dec. 2023)  
Children's Spring Festival/Egg Hunt (April 2024)

### PreK/Kindergarten/Childcare (Birth-Kindergarten + some school-age childcare)

Sunday morning childcare averaged 5 participants per week  
One new childcare staff hired and 4 childcare staff retained from last year  
Introduction of Sunday morning curriculum days for preK (new hire enthusiastic about creating curriculum)  
Experimentation with alternate childcare model (several months of trying separate care for elementary and preK groups needing care before church)  
DRE attended Spirit Play training in Michigan and has begun the process of incorporating some of that educational method into our classes.

### Elementary Sunday School (K-5th grade)

Elementary Sunday School averaged 7 participants per week.  
This year the elementary class teachers sought to align their lessons with the Time for All Ages topics presented each Sunday (which are aligned with the sermon topics).  
Volunteer Teachers: Amanda and Josh Burton (average 3 Sundays per month), Sheri Conner (1 Sunday per month), Jody Petrow (occasional)  
Volunteer Assistants: Roman Noriega (May-Dec.), Amanda Burton (when she's not leading)

### Middle/High Sunday School (6th-12th grade)

Class attendance averaged 6 participants.  
Sunday School Teachers: DRE taught most weeks May-Dec., Kate Brien began teaching in Jan. 2024 (average 3 Sundays per month)  
DRE led discussion-based games and activities.  
DRE encouraged and facilitated youth efforts and planning to convert room into a dedicated Teen Space  
Kate Brien is utilizing the UUA's Building Bridges World Religions curriculum. She also worked with youth to plan a field trip and is currently working with them to plan a volunteering activity.  
Field Trip to TreeRush Adventures at Fontenelle Forest - April 2024

### YRUU (Middle/High School)

YRUU Youth Advisors: Ben Stallings, Jessie Stallings, Ryan Cook, Casey Horpedahl (Second UU), Lucy Horpedahl (Second UU)  
YRUU attendance averaged 9 youth per week.  
YAC (Youth Advisor Council) met once per month during the hour before YRUU and was open to any youth interested in taking a leadership/planning role with YRUU. YAC adult leadership was Ben Stallings, with DREs Christina Strong or Ashleigh Fuson attending most months.

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YRUU included educational sessions, field trips (recreational and educational), service/learning projects, and recreational/social opportunities.

The Simpsons (TV show based) UU curriculum was led by Lucy and Casey Horpedahl approximately two Wednesdays per month.

Recreational night at Papio Fun Park – Sept. 2023

Malcolm X Memorial Foundation Field Trip – Oct. 2023

YRUU Yardwork Service (fundraiser for First U Auction) – Nov. 2023

Baking cookies for First U Women's Bake Sale fundraiser – Dec. 2023

White Elephant Gift Exchange Dec. 2023

Spaghetti Cook Off Fundraiser – Jan. 2024

Talent Show Fundraiser (held at Second Unitarian) - March 2024

First U Neighborhood Care Assembly - April 2024

3 youths and 2 DREs attended the Sr. High Youth Conference in Columbia, Missouri

Field trip to Riverfront/Skate Ribbon - April 2024

The YRUU Youth Service this year is still in development as of mid-April 2024. It will be held at Second Unitarian and live streamed to First Unitarian and online.

#### Adult RE

*Spiritual Dive into the Proposed Article II* class and discussion group was led by Mary Kay Peters using UU Wellspring Curriculum (Winter/Spring 2024 - class series offered two times)

A book study of *The Evolution of God* by Robert Wright is currently being led by Jody Petrow

A Young Adults gathering was offered by Sarah Copeland once per month on Sunday at 9:30am. There was not consistent attendance at this event, and it was discontinued in the spring.

First U Book Club (nonfiction), led by Dave Richardson, continued meeting monthly.

3F Book Bonanza (fiction book club), led by Sheri Conner, continued meeting monthly.

Sharing Circles small group discussions met twice monthly, with each month offering 1 drop-in session and 1 go-deeper session, these groups were led by Mike McAtee.

Compassionate Communication, led by Suzanne King, continued to meet monthly.

First Steps (newcomer) and Pathways (membership prep) classes were led by Membership Coordinator Melissa Gibson (see Membership Coordinator's report for more details)

#### DRE Professional Development and Denominational Service

Attended UUA General Assembly virtually in June 2023

Co-led the younger elementary children's programming at the Building Bridges Conference on Star Island, New Hampshire in July 2023

Attended Spirit Play training at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Peoria, Illinois in Aug. 2023

Attended Mid-America Region Professional Day in Madison, Wisconsin in April 2024

Upcoming: Will co-lead infant-preK children's programming at the Building Bridges Conference on Star Island, New Hampshire in July 2024

#### Needs for the Upcoming Year

I would like to see more NEW volunteers for our Sunday School and YRUU programs. We currently have great people volunteering! A few people are volunteering a lot! Even fewer volunteers are covering *more* things than in 2022-23. I don't want to burn them out! This volunteer work is FUN, when it is not stressful... it becomes not stressful when there are plenty of helping hands.

If our congregation doesn't have the capacity for more RE volunteerism, we need to begin considering possibilities such as hiring paid part-time staff to meet the needs of our current programming OR reducing our current programming (example: Sunday school or YRUU only meeting twice per month)

## **Twenty Years Ago - 2003-2004**

Submitted by Dave Richardson

The 2003-04 church year was the sixth year of Reverend Richard Benner's tenure with First Unitarian. Reverend Benner announced he would be retiring in 2005. He noted that this should provide adequate time to find an interim minister and ultimately a new settled minister. Reverend Benner continued his extensive activities in community outreach. He chaired the Greater Omaha Clergy Association. He continued to serve on the Mayor's Ecumenical Clergy Board. He continued our connection with the Urban League of Nebraska which was originally headed by First Unitarian member Whitney Young in the 1950s.

Our Director of Religious Education, Cheryll Wallace, continued her outstanding leadership. Sunday School numbers increased as well as the number of adult volunteers. Cheryll also continued "the Gita Group." The class was a mixture of scripture study, personal story-telling, and religious exploration. The group continued under the title of "The Women's Religious Study Group" (WRSG), and ended in 2022. Cheryll also served as chair of the Prairie Star District's Committee on Religious Education (CORE.) Additionally, Jan Reardon began her third year as our Office Manager.

This year saw the founding of The Sarah Joslyn Society. Its purpose is to encourage members to leave a bequest to the church as part of their will. Dixie Lemon, the Society's founder, also gave us its motto "You won't miss the money." Each year since the founding, has seen the membership roll increase. Each year a dinner is held to honor the members of the SJS. This year's dinner held on December 2, 2023 was especially meaningful because of the passing of founder Dixie Lemon during the past year.

Our leaders during the church year included:

President: Dick Joslin

Secretary : Lois Norris

Treasurer: Bill Ross

UUs honored that year included: UUs of the Year: Bruce Godfrey and David Rosser

Henry Lemon Sermon: Ted Price – "Robert Shaw: A Memorial Tribute"

During the year, the demolition of the derelict building directly west of the church began. Under the direction of past-president Sandi Bruns and the generous donation of Dick Holland, this project gave us more parking, room for a garden, as well as a much better view of the church.

## **Archives/Library**

Team Leader: Linda Parker

The Archives/Library Team will re-organize for the 2024-25 church year. Team Leader is investigating free library catalogs as the first step in making the church library collection more accessible to readers. Possibilities include LibraryThing and TinyCat. Weeding the collection will continue. Two copies of the updated version of the *Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide*, edited by Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, were added to the collection.

## Beloved Community Team

Members: Kim Dunovan, Suzanne King, Linda Parker, Catherine Plumlee, and Dave Richardson  
Ex-Officio Member: Rev. Shari Woodbury

On July 8, 2024, thirty-one individuals from First Unitarian, Second Unitarian and Lincoln Unitarian gathered at First Unitarian Church to continue exploring together what it means to create Beloved Community. We engaged in small group discussions focusing on family, neighborhood and community. At the end of the day, participants were invited to share their take-aways from the day. This series began on April 8, 2023, with a field trip to the Durham Museum, the Malcolm X Foundation, and a conversation about racism at Second Unitarian Church. On September 23, Lincoln UUs hosted the third in a series, as we continued to grow beloved community among our three UU congregations in Omaha and Lincoln. In September, we engaged with a description of Beloved Community developed by a Deacon in the United Methodist Church. There was a strong consensus that there was value in being intentional about finding ways for our three congregations to connect.

In addition to these events, the team met three times in May and June, with plans to sponsor a workshop for team leaders focused on educating and building consensus around what it means to cultivate Beloved Community at First Unitarian Church. The workshop remained in the planning stage and the team went dormant for the remainder of the year.

## Book Club

Leader: Dave Richardson  
Members: Varies widely

The First Unitarian Book Club continues to read and discuss a wide range of books. This year we met on the last Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. Our discussions are informal and we encourage participation by everyone. We use a “rank order” system of selecting our books. This procedure has increased the number of books nominated and the number of people who vote. We do not meet in June, July or December. Below is the list of books we read in 2023-2024.

### 2023

May	<i>The Killers of the Flower Moon</i> by David Grann
June	No meeting
July	No meeting
August	Discussion of everyone’s summer reading
September	<i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> by Robin Wall Kimmerer
October	<i>Barracoon: The Story of the Last “Black Cargo”</i> by Zora Neale Hurston
November	<i>The Heat Will Kill You First: Life &amp; Death on a Scorched Planet</i> by Jeff Goodell
December	No meeting

### 2024

January	<i>The Coming Wave</i> by Mustafa Suleyman
February	<i>The Bill of Obligations</i> by Richard Haass
March	<i>The Light of Days</i> by Judy Batalion
April	<i>Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of America</i> by Heather Richardson

## Capital Trust Report

Submitted by John Wagner

Members (Term expiration date in parenthesis): Joe Schaaf (2024), Jennifer Larsen (2025), John Wagner (2026).

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 Capital Trust Agreement were debated and approved by the Board and the congregation at the 2018 annual meeting.

The most notable change with the Capital Trust and the funds it has been managing was the 2023 shift to investing all monies from the four accounts (the Capital Trust, the Board Investment Fund, the Women's Alliance Fund, and the Music Scholarship Fund) into the Common Endowment Fund of the UUA (the UUACEF).

The UUA disburses from the Capital Trust the congregation's agreed upon per annum percentage of 4%. The disbursements are scheduled to occur in April, July, October, and January. Accounts with valuations of less than \$25,000 (our Women's Alliance account) only have a July disbursement.

### Balance Sheet Valuations:

	Capital Trust	BIF	Music	WA
March 31, 2023	\$642,451	490,197	25,302	13,440
February 29, 2024	\$696,852	520,885	26,961	14,321

The above numbers do not reflect unrealized gains/losses for the Capital Trust and the Board Invested Funds (BIF), which per the most recent reports are (\$24,082) and (\$14,969), respectively, which include the 4% annual withdrawals noted earlier (no 4% withdrawals were made from the Music or Women's Alliance Funds given their small size). The last year has witnessed significant value increases in the capital markets, compared to the volatility of the previous year. So good news for now, but recognizing that the markets can be expected to fluctuate in the future as they have in the past. There was also a significant bequest which was specifically for the Capital Trust and was deposited in it.

One minor book-keeping detail is the delay in reporting our statements. Our figures will routinely be a month or so behind.

Joe Schaaf's term ends this May. The Nominations Committee has recommended Tim Duggan for a full new term for the congregation's consideration on our annual slate of nominees.

## **Caring Team**

Caring Team Co-leaders: Kay Lynn Goldner, Carol Ramsey, Debbie Burton

Co-leaders Memorial Services: Deb Duggan, Kay Lynn Goldner

Co-leaders Baby Welcoming: Denise Allain, Sara Switzer

Leader of Cards for Members: Terri Lynn Brewer

Members: Denise Allain, Terri Lynn Brewer, Debbie Burton, Della Bynum, Kim Callaghan, Sarah Copeland, Deb Duggan, Kay Lynn Goldner, Linda Hess, Erica Irwin, Chynna Jedlicka, Carol McCabe, Douglas Lee-Regier, Donna Neff, Bob Perrin, Carol Ramsey, Katrina Schmidt, Marie Sedlacek, Sara Switzer, Vanessa Timberlake, Sarah Voss, Diane Withem.

New Members: Kathryn Brien, Jessica Eman

Activities — 2023/2024: A hybrid meeting was held on June 29, 2023.

The caring team assisted with the following memorial receptions:

Judith Wright July 29, 2023

Frank McKee October 1, 2023

Giniveve Clemen February 15, 2024

Roman Noriega March 2, 2024

Bill Anderson March 23, 2024

Dixie Lemon April 7, 2024

The Caring Team provided support through cards, emails, texts, calls and visits to several members who were coping with illnesses and recovering from injuries. Team members also provided groceries, meals, and meal cards. Sarah Copeland has been responsible for setting up the meal trains.

The caring team has a group of members who provide rides to medical appointments and to church services and events.

Kay Lynn Goldner provided leadership in organizing the delivery of the holiday poinsettias to members who are homebound.

The caring team provided support to Kai Clemen and Telia Colbert, Christina Noriega, Brian Callaghan, and Diana Byrd who were grieving the loss of their beloved family members. The team also provided support to the family and friends of Frank McKee.

## **Compassionate Communication**

Leader: Suzanne King

Members: Neva Cozine, Steve Gurney, Priscilla LaCroix, Donna Neff

The Compassionate Communication group was formed in 2018. Our nonviolent communication (NVC) compassionate communication group generally meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month in the Common Room from 7:00-8:30 pm. Sometimes when weather, schedule, and holiday conflicts arise, we may vote to skip a Tuesday or meet online.

Group facilitation is voluntary and rotates among members. Through church announcements and our listing on the Nonviolent Communication Academy's list of practice groups, we have new or visiting members from time to time.

## **Choir: Sanctuary Singers**

Director: William Miller

Accompanist: J Gawf

Librarians: Kay Lynn Goldner and Christina Noriega

Members: \*denotes first year member/debut season

Connie DeFazio, Kay Lynn Goldner, Daryl Hansen, Beth Hoyt, Grant Langdon, \*Charlie McMahon, Christina Noriega, Clacy Olson, Lloyd Olson, Peg Pidgeon, Carol Ramsey, Gary Randall, Daniel de Riancho, Marie Sedlacek, \*Elyse Thompson, Elaine Wells.

Activities — 2023/2024:

The group met for the first rehearsal on September 6<sup>th</sup> and sang for the first time during the September 17<sup>th</sup> service. Rehearsals are held Wednesday evenings 7:00-8:30 and the group sings the first and third Sundays of the month. The group welcomed new members Elyse and Charlie with open arms.

Rehearsals are structured to include vocal warm ups, movement and technical exercises before singing music commences. William enlisted various members to present topics to the group, including a series on what skills you gain from being in a choir. It's been fun and gives the choir a chance to learn in a relaxed way. Anthems are selected to support the Sunday themes whenever possible and new anthems have been added to the music library that offer challenge to the singers.

William maintains the Sanctuary Singers 'members only' webpage. Recordings of anthems for rehearsal purposes along with educational articles, an absence calendar tool, schedules, member roster and other items are housed there.

We are blessed to have J Gawf as our accompanist, providing outstanding support to the choir from the keyboard. Kay Lynn Goldner continues to be a librarian that can be called on at the drop of a hat to get materials ready for a rehearsal. She and Christina Noriega volunteer to review the music cabinets over the summer to be sure everything is accounted for, and music is in good order.

We look forward to resuming our annual "Choir Sunday" service on May 19, 2024.

## **Finance Team**

Leader: Walt Jesteadt

Members: Daniel Byrd, Gary Emenitove, Jennifer Larsen, Tom Prenosil, Joseph Schaaf, Christopher Schmidt, Peter Solfest, John Wagner

Activities & Projects — 2023/2024:

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 2024-2025 year will be presented in more detail in a separate report. The Sarah Joslyn Society, Stewardship, and Capital Trust also are covered in separate reports.

- We continued to contract with Cheri Cody, Treasurer at Second Unitarian, to serve as our accountant for the year. She handled bank reconciliations, payroll issues, journal entries, and the creation of monthly reports from PowerChurch.

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- Most Finance Team members continued to perform specific functions as in the past. Walt Jesteadt handled monthly reports to the Board, updates to the home page for the Donate button, and budget development. Tom Prenosil handled automatic pledge payments through Vanco, but resigned from that position mid-year due to family obligations. Peter Solfest handled the checking and mailing of contribution statements. Walt Jesteadt, Peter Solfest, and Jennifer Larsen worked on the Stewardship campaign. Joseph Schaaf, Jennifer Larsen, and John Wagner served as trustees of the Capital Trust.
- Several entries or tiles were added to the home page for the Donate button to make it possible for people to make credit card contributions to the Preserve Our Building Campaign, memorials in honor of church members, and other worthy causes.
- Contribution Statements were mailed in August, November, February, and April. We continued to email contribution statements to 75 households that gave us permission to do so and to send separate emails to the same list so that we can attach letters associated with the contribution statements.
- John Wagner and Carolyn McNamara hosted a meeting of the Sarah Joslyn Society for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic.
- Forty-five members now pay their pledges by monthly automatic deposits handled by Vanco, with total contributions of approximately \$73,000. As in the previous year, 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 works well. Contributions can now be made from credit cards as well as direct transfers from bank accounts using a Donate button on the church website or the Vanco Mobile app. The majority of Vanco users have agreed to cover their own processing fees. Several current users created their own accounts using the Donate button.
- We created a Finance Google drive and moved many key documents including bank information, budget summaries, insurance applications and policies to the drive. It was made read-only accessible to the Finance Team, Board, and MTC.
- Jack Round and John Wagner submitted an application to the IRS for approval as a 501(c)(3) organization.
- Walt Jesteadt and Jennifer Larsen developed a written policy for the Preserve Our Building fund that requires written proposals and multiple bids before expenditure of POB funds can be approved by the congregation.

## **FUNdraising Team**

Leaders: Donna Neff (Chair, Heart & Hand Auction) and Sarah Copeland, Team Co-Chair.

Auction Team Members: Over 30 wonderful volunteers, listed on the auction website and catalog, plus extra help from Cat Dixon, Church Administrator

Activities — 2023/2024:

Our goal was to raise \$10,000 for the operating budget, which was accomplished with our fall Halloween Heart & Hand Auction in October. Thanks to donors of 158 items (53 more than last year), 82 bidders, and a large team of auction helpers, it was a big success both as a party and a fundraiser. Net auction income in March was \$10,781 (with \$422 in unpaid bills). This year the auction featured a week of on-line sales and bidding ending with an in-person Halloween party and silent auction on Friday, October 27 (our second year, post-pandemic, to hold the party). This structure helped include people not able to attend the in-person event and enabled us to squeeze all the physical items into the sanctuary for the silent auction. Items that didn't need to

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be seen (like social events, gift certificates, etc.) were offered for final sale on-line, with pre-bidding on physical items (highest pre-bid was starting bid at the silent auction). It caused a little confusion but seemed to work overall. Billing was again done post-auction. Stephen Switzer was our MC for the party, and winners of the costume contest were: Most Resourceful (recycled materials) — Mark Loscutoff, Most Colorful — Carolyn McNamara, and Fiend's Favorite — Mary Kay Peters (adult) and Joy Sparks (toddler).

A second all-church social event and fundraiser, headed by Sarah, was on November 10. Visiting guest minister, Rev. Dennis McCarty, performed “Servatus: The Radical Reformed Musical” followed by a reception and discussion. Net income was over \$300 and it was a fun and informative evening. We have several new ideas to try for raising funds but have not had resources to try them. That is a good goal for next year.

### **Garden Team**

Submitted by Sharon Conlon

Thank you to the gardeners who helped during the year: John Hruska, Kim Dunovan and Hank Strimple. Lee Helmsberger donated free loads of mulch. A Burr Oak was planted on the front east side of the church and a Sweet Bay Magnolia tree was planted on the front west side of the church.

### **Membership Team**

Submitted by Melissa Gibson, Coordinator

Team Members: Jaime Alexander, Beth Conover, Douglas Lee-Regier, Erica Irwin, Lois Norris, Katrina Schmidt, Vanessa Timberlake, Frank Wagner

Activities & Projects — 2023/2024:

Visitor Cards: After experimenting with a Connection Card for visitors, the staff decided to go back to a dedicated visitor form. These are available in each pew and in the foyer on Sunday mornings. Each pew has two clipboards that include a visitor form, a letter from the membership coordinator, the church brochure, a social media flier, and two pamphlets from the UUA. Joys and Concerns are now submitted via a binder in the back desk of the sanctuary.

Lanyards: Lanyards are still available but rarely worn. Melissa still thinks these are a good idea and will need to pursue getting them in consistent use. Have a question? Ask someone with a rainbow lanyard on!

New Church Brochure: Melissa created a new pamphlet for the church in July 2023. Lots of photos and colors featuring UUA branding.

Safety: Melissa attended “Threats from Without, Care from Within,” a day-long online workshop put on by the UUA. Mark Loscutoff and Gary Emenitove also attended. As many safety concerns would likely impact greeters, Melissa is working with church leadership to access and improve safety around the church.

Worship Service Involvement: Melissa's sermon in April, entitled “Why We Stay, Why We Go,” examined membership and received very positive feedback from members and friends (both in person and online).

First Steps: First Steps meetings took place in June, September, October, November, December, January, February, and March. There is an online-only First Steps scheduled for April. The average attendance is two people.

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Pathways: Melissa offered the Pathways class in July and August (three, two-hour sessions). Three people attended and three people formalized their membership. Melissa also offered a Pathways class in November (three, two-hour sessions). Seven people attended at least one class with two people ultimately formalizing their membership. For both classes four people returned surveys regarding Pathways. All rated the class as “as expected” or “more than expected.” All content, including guest speakers and history and more, was rated as useful, informative, and worthwhile. Communication about the classes was also rated as “just right” by all respondents.

New Membership Model: Melissa is working with Rev. Woodbury on examining new membership models. While the current model provides a deep dive into our church, we both wonder if it’s too demanding on people’s schedules and if there is a good compromise between the current model and something that could fast-forward the membership path for more people sooner. A new model will be revealed in May/June! Melissa hopes this will also revive some energy and excitement for the Membership Team.

Sunday Greeters: The Membership Team has an online Google Doc with Greeter Responsibilities and a Sign-Up Genius link. Securing greeters has improved in the last year but is still a challenge. Very few people sign up more than a week in advance.

Bulletin Board: The Membership Team bulletin board will be redecorated in time for Team Fair (May 19, 2024).

Meetings: While Melissa did have the opportunity to attend a Board meeting and two MTC meetings (which was very helpful for institutional knowledge and current operations and being able to communicate it with visitors and potential new members), the Membership Team did not meet. Melissa plans to schedule quarterly meetings with the team and hopes to revive some energy with the new membership model being presented later this spring.

## **Morning Reflections**

Leaders: Sharon Conlon and Kim Dunovan

Attendees: Terri Lynn Brewer, Joanne Ferguson, Carrie Helmberger, Suzanne King, Mariah Lee, and Vanessa Timberlake

Activities — 2023/2024:

In September 2020, Morning Reflections began meeting weekdays, from 8:15 to 8:45 a.m., for a period of reflection and silent meditation/prayer. It started as an opportunity for support and connection in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. When in-person gatherings returned, Morning Reflections continued to meet online each Tuesday and Thursday. Each gathering opened with a short reading, followed by shared reflections and time for silent meditation/prayer.

Morning Reflections ended in February 2024, when the regular attendees made the decision to continue meeting as a private support group.

## Multi-Media Team

Members: Bob Bosco, Gary Emenitove, Marie Sedlacek

Improving the video display in our sanctuary has been a goal for years. Our unique building and its windows challenge the limits of technology against the need to respect its architecture and sacred space.

The Multi-Media Team was reorganized in 2022 with the goal of finding the right display option to show video in the sanctuary. The church had been using older systems which no longer were meeting the changing needs of our congregation.

After contacting a number of audio-visual companies, we received recommendations from two of the companies and shared the results with the congregation. Ultimately, Guy Sauer with AVI Systems, Inc. collaborated with our team to provide a solution. Rev. Woodbury gave her thoughts from experiences at other congregations. We worked with church AV Technology coordinator Oliver Coffman and church member Lloyd Olson to avoid redundant equipment. Thanks to support from the MTC and Board of Trustees, funding was established, and the go-ahead was given to finally solve this long-time need.

Our “big screen” is a commercial-quality 75” diagonal LCD monitor display unit, installed by AVI in November 2023. Thanks to its high haze technology that minimizes reflections, this display limits the effects of the window light which plagued other projection options.

It is mounted adjacent to the high pulpit and angled toward the congregation. This location is architecturally sensitive and visually compatible. Its horizontal orientation acts as a balance to the vertical orientation of the doorway below. When not turned on, its black surface echoes the black grand piano.

This location provides visibility to all parts of the sanctuary. It supports storytelling, music, and other worship activity without intruding into the sacred space of the chancel area. Our team is looking forward to seeing how the monitor will be used to augment worship services and other events in the sanctuary.

Picture below by Marie Sedlacek.



## **Music**

Submitted by Judi Unger, Music Director

### **Guest Musician Sundays**

On the second Sunday of months, guest musicians and congregational talent are often contracted to perform at First Unitarian Church, by Music Director, Judi Unger.

Some of our guests this year included:

Anne Nagosky's Violin Studio

Samara Sanchez and Ava Burton, singing a duet

Michael Fitzsimmons & Jimmy Standing Buffalo, Native American/folk musicians

Jason Johnson, UNO professor and Air Force band veteran

Bill Tulle, baritone

Connie Defazio, flute

John Lim, bass

Kyle Knapp, Singer/Songwriter

Katrina Schmidt, soprano

Elaine Wells, piano

Holly Gullen Stout, Omaha Symphony, cellist

Maria Harding, Omaha Symphony, flute

### **Offbeats 2023-2024 Year End Report**

Director: Judi Unger

Membership: Lloyd Olson, Mary Kay Peters, Connie Defazio, Bill Tulle, Peg Pidgeon, Skip Ciulla, Lita Magisana, Elyse Colbert

The Offbeats formed in the fall of 2022, and provide music for the fourth Sunday service monthly. Members all sing; other instruments are also performed by various members including piano, ukulele, guitar, flute, and various percussion instruments. In addition to performing two select numbers to compliment the theme of the service, the Offbeats also lead hymns during services.

Rehearsals: Group rehearsals run on Monday evenings in the Sanctuary from 6:45 – 8:00 p.m.

Repertoire: The Offbeats enjoy providing an eclectic mix of musical genres including rock, pop, gospel, reggae, calypso, and folk music from a variety of cultures.

Occasionally, musical guests join the Offbeats to supplement our music and services. This year, guest guitarist Markos Gutierrez joined the Offbeats on two occasions. Also, Nebraska Amma Satsang Bhajan group joined the Offbeats and performed Hindu Bhajans.

## **Nominating Committee Report**

Committee Members: Terri Lynn Brewer, Diana Byrd, Walt Jesteadt, Linda Parker, Carol Ramsey, and Dave Richardson

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.

### **PROPOSED LEADERSHIP SLATE FOR THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING**

President: Douglas Lee-Regier

President-Elect: Sheri Conner

Board of Trustees:

Kim Dunovan – 3 years

Mark Loscutoff – 3 years

Diana Byrd – 1 year

Frank Wagner – 1 year

Nominating Committee:

Sarah Copeland – 3 years

Jessica Eman – 3 years

Carol Ramsey – 1 year

Right Relations Committee:

Kay Lynn Goldner – 2 years

Elaine Wells – 2 years

Capital Trust: Tim Duggan – 3 years

### ***ANNUAL AWARDS***

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

Religious Education Award — For outstanding achievement and excellence in religious growth and learning: **Mike McAtee and Roman Noriega**

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: **Mark Loscutoff**

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

Youth of the Year Award: **Samara Sánchez-Soto**

Young Adult of the Year Award: **Kyria Spooner**

Unsung Unitarian Universalist Award — For a lifetime of actions that inspire, support and express Unitarian Universalism: **Lois Norris**

UU of the Year: **Kim Dunovan**

## **Office Team**

Church Administrator: Catharine Dixon

Team Leader: Carolyn McNamara

Wayside Pulpit: Kim Dunovan

Office Shopper: Carolyn McNamara

Office Helpers: Gary Emenitove, Kay Lynn Goldner, Linda Hruska, and Lois Norris

Paper Recycling: Lois Norris

Pew Volunteers: Kim Callaghan, Kay Lynn Goldner, Linda Hruska, Peg Pidgeon

The Office Team members helped with mailings, online shopping, and other jobs to support the administrator. The Office Team handled many different tasks when the administrator was out due to vacation or illness. This year we also welcomed Carol Ramsey to the team.

The office continues to send out the weekly enews and other emails as needed. See current enews at this webpage: [www.firstuomaha.org/news](http://www.firstuomaha.org/news)

Bobby Medrano, the church custodian for the last 13 years, resigned, but will continue as a wedding event host. The MTC and office are reviewing options for his replacement at the time of this report.

Catharine would like to thank the office crew for always coming through with their support and time.

## **Preserve Our Building**

Submitted by Jaime Alexander

Here are our First Unitarian Church of Omaha 2024 POB fund drive results: Twenty-three donations totaling \$3,289 were received. The number of donations compares poorly with the typical yearly donations since the POB fund inception in 2005. Compared with last year, donors and donations are down by about one-third. Possible causes to consider may be the current economy's financial pressures, this year's starting date too near the pledge drive, congregational distraction with other things, or whatever. Some considerations of how to proceed in the future are warranted. Thank you emails have been sent to the donors, and all get another huge "THANK YOU" in this report!

The POB balance is now \$86,591. The POB fund was specifically created for our church building's preservation needs that are above and beyond our typical maintenance budget. Several qualifying needs currently exist (steeple repair for instance) and will be voted on at the upcoming May 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. All voting qualified members may vote.

## Sarah Joslyn Society

Chair: John Wagner

Co-Chair: Deborah Duggan

Founder: Dixie Lemon

The Sarah Joslyn Society was founded 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. The membership has grown from 32 original members to 84 who have named the church in their estate planning. There is a yearly recognition gathering, usually in the fall, which began as a luncheon but has since morphed into a cocktail reception. Sadly, we had to say goodbye to three members this year, including our founder Dixie Lemon. Thirty-three of our members are deceased. Five new members were added since last year's report. These are the dedicated church members who have planted a tree so that others may enjoy the shade:

Jaime Alexander	Anne & Ron Knapp
Jacqueline Anderegg	Jennifer Larsen & Joe Sisson
Bill & Sandi Bruns	Harriet Major
Linda Buehlmann	Carolyn McNamara & John Wagner
Eddith Buis	Christina Noriega
Daniel & Diana Byrd	Lois Norris
Sharon Conlon & Jack Heidel	Dee Otte
Deb & Tim Duggan	Linda Parker
Margot & Richard Fetrow	Bob Perrin
Larry Goeser	Dave Richardson
John & Kay Lynn Goldner	Ellen Shurson
Megan Gustafson	Jim & Kim Simon
Wendy Hessler	Gretchen & John Thomas
Joe Hoagbin	Elaine Wells
John Hruska	Jim & Judy Wigton
Debbie Hunsberger	Pat Will
Walt Jesteadt & Donna Neff	Diane Withem
Bob Jones	Anonymous IV
Scott Kemper	Anonymous V

### Deceased Members

Mary Holland – 2006	Audrey Freyer – 2018
Raija Rogers – 2007	Ruth Nicklin – 2018
Diane Jones – 2010	Sid Wilson – 2018
Anonymous II – 2011	Dick Joslin – 2018
Carol Christensen – 2011	Olive Erickson – 2019
David Nicklin – 2011	Dale Freyer – 2019
Edith Wilson – 2011	Ron Withem – 2020
Betty Holloway – 2014	Lana Hammel – 2020
Katherine Bester McClure – 2014	Jim Rogers – 2021
Yvonne Price – 2014	Anonymous III – 2021
Kop Ramsey – 2014	Evelyn Whitehill – 2023
Dick Holland – 2016	Janet West – 2023
Shelton Hendricks – 2016	Liz Stawycznyj – 2023
Franklyn Norris – 2016	Judith Wright – 2023
Jack Perry – 2017	Dixie Lemon – 2023
Dean Christensen – 2018	Roman Noriega — 2023

## **Side With Love Social Justice Team**

Participants: Kim Dunovan, Mark Loscutoff, Carol Ramsey, Dave Richardson, Sharon Conlon, Kay Lynn Goldner, Linda Hess, Suzanne King, Linda Parker and Lin Thompson

Mission: To create more pathways for members to live our values through civic engagement with local, national and international issues, initially focusing on anti-racism and equity for LGBTQIA+ people and engage in UU the Vote activities to increase participation in the democratic process.

In response to the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack and overwhelming Israeli military response, the Side With Love Social Justice Team took a stand in support of the de-escalation of violence in Israel and Gaza, asking the congregation call or email our congressional delegation with this simple message: "I urge you to call for an immediate ceasefire, de-escalation, and restraint to prevent further civilian harm in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories."

The team did not otherwise meet during the year.

## **Friends of Clair Memorial Methodist Church**

(Formerly known as **Sister Church Team**)

Submitted by Jack Heidel, Team Leader

Team Members: Rae Berry, Della Bynum, Sarah Copeland, Neva Cozine, Jack Heidel, Mark Loscutoff, Mary Kay Peters, Carol Ramsey, Bill Tull, Rev Shari Woodbury

The main activity of the Friends of Clair Memorial Methodist Church team has been providing donations to Clair Memorial Methodist Church for its monthly neighborhood food pantry which is held on the third Saturday of each month at Clair. Non-perishable food items can be left, at any time, in the donation box located under the coat rack adjacent to the Common Room at First Unitarian. The team then takes these items to Clair on the Thursday before the third Saturday of each month, between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Alternatively, large donations can be taken directly to the basement of Clair at 5544 Ames Avenue during these same hours. In May and December, clothing items are also collected and distributed by Clair.

On July 23, 2023, church member Bill Tull gave a concert at First Unitarian, with proceeds going to Clair. Team members helped organize and carry out this event. Over \$800 was donated by concert attendees.

Although First Unitarian considers Clair to be its sister church, Clair considers First United Methodist Church to be its own sister church. Therefore, it is suggested that we rename the Sister Church Team as Friends of Clair Memorial Methodist Church, to reflect the reality of our relationship. This means we would continue to provide food items for their monthly food pantry, and seasonal clothing donations, as well as other occasional contributions, without expecting this relationship with Clair to be reciprocal.

## Stewardship Team

Leaders: Gary Randall and Douglas Lee-Regier

Members: Sandi Bruns, Cat Dixon, Erica Irwin, Walt Jesteadt, Jennifer Larsen, Carolyn McNamara, Mary Kay Peters, Jack Round, Peter Solfest, and Rev. Shari Woodbury

### Activities & Projects — 2023/2024:

The Stewardship Team organized and conducted the campaign to obtain pledges for the 2024-2025 church year, with a pledge goal of \$290,000 from 130 pledges. We made a concerted effort to build a new team with new leadership with the goal of taking new approaches to the campaign. The campaign began with a stewardship service on March 3 where Rev. Shari Woodbury emphasized the “Tell Me a Story” theme. In an effort to increase our contact with individual members and pledging friends, letters were individualized with the names and addresses of specific members as well as information on the amount of their current pledge. A group of team members agreed to recruit three or four others to call all members and pledging friends to get their stories about the church and to encourage them to pledge.

Twenty-two callers were each given contact and pledge information for six or seven members or friends. The caller list included John Goldner, Sandi Bruns, Jaime Alexander, Daniel Byrd, Walt Jesteadt, Jack Round, Jack Heidel, Lloyd Olsen, Elaine Wells, Jennifer Larsen, Susan Thomas, Douglas Lee-Regier, Harold Cruz-Sanchez, Lin Thompson, Jean Wagner, Mike McAtee, Erica Irwin, Grant Langdon, Hope Lancaster, Gary Randall, Kay Lynn Goldner, and Lois Norris. To increase the odds that people would answer their phones when they were called, Jaime Alexander suggested sending email about the call in advance, including the phone number of the caller. This strategy worked well, but making contact by phone still proved difficult.

Catharine Dixon created the individualized letters and organized their mailing by the office team. She also maintained the stewardship web page, tracked pledges, and sent out thank you notes to those who pledged. Walt Jesteadt created and distributed the lists for callers and created a sheet for tracking pledges that could also be used to generate email lists of those who had not yet pledged. Douglas Lee-Regier recruited members to provide stewardship messages at the March services. These included Douglas Lee-Regier, Lita Magisana, Suzanne King, and Sarah Voss. Peter Solfest created an Excel workbook for analysis of pledges and mailed contribution statements at the beginning of April showing pledges that had been recorded.

Documentation for the campaign was maintained on a stewardship Google drive. A master Excel sheet showed contact information and pledge status, but the values of old and new pledges were available only to Catharine Dixon and the church treasurer, Walt Jesteadt.

The main recommendation for next year would be to start earlier on recruiting callers and assigning names of those to be called so that is in place before March 1.

As of April 30, 2024 we have 112 pledges with a total of \$274,912.68.



## Welcoming Congregation Renewal

Participants: Carol Ramsey, Kim Dunovan, Neva Cozine, Cyndi Nather, Gary Emenitove, Mark Loscutoff, Douglas Lee-Regier, Dave Richardson, Barb Herring, Kay Lynn Goldner, Dee Otte, Bill Tull, and Lin Thompson

Members of Side with Love expressed an interest in renewing our commitment to our original pledge to be a Welcoming Congregation, highlighting for new members what that means and learning more about the current needs and concerns of the LGBTQ+ people in our church and the broader community.

A sub-team of Side with Love, Welcome Renewal, was then formed in order to plan and complete the UUA's Five Practices of Welcome Renewal.

Our team successfully completed the steps which are described below in the congratulations letter from Reverend Michael Crumpler, LGBTQ and Multicultural Program Director:

Dear Carol and Members of First Unitarian Church of Omaha,

Congratulations!

You have successfully completed the Five Practices of Welcome Renewal for 2023. Sincere congratulations on your ongoing commitment to LGBTQ+ welcome and inclusion in and beyond Omaha, NE.

It was a pleasure to read about all you have accomplished and the powerful work you have done to ensure that FUCO is meeting the needs of queer and trans congregants and the wider community in the following ways:

***I. Becoming a Welcoming Congregation – 2001***

***II. Welcoming Worship***

- *LGBTQ Allyship – 6/12/2022*
- *Welcoming Spaces for All People 10/23/2022*

***III. Welcoming Days of Observance***

- *International Transgender Day of Visibility*
- *Day of Silence*
- *International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, Biphobia*
- *Pulse Night of Remembrance*
- *Stonewall Riots Anniversary*
- *Transgender Day of Remembrance*

***IV. Welcoming Religious Education***

- *Welcoming Spaces for All People – 10/23/2022*

***V. Support a Welcoming Project***

- *Donated to Omaha Arms Trans Social, OATS Support Group*

For more information on all of our LGBTQ programs and activities, please visit: [The Five Practices of Welcome Renewal](#), subscribe to the quarterly [UPLIFT newsletter](#), and read the [UPLIFT blog](#). We also invite you to join the new Welcoming Congregations of Unitarian Universalism Facebook Group and follow UPLIFT Twitter and Instagram @uua\_lgbtq.

You can expect to receive two newly designed Welcoming Congregation posters in the mail.

In the meantime, you have approval to use the attached new Welcoming Congregation logo on your website and other materials. Thanks again for your congregation's life-giving, essential work!

With appreciation,  
Michael

Reverend Michael Crumpler, LGBTQ and Multicultural Program Director

## Young Adults Group

Leader: Sarah Copeland (position vacant for next church year)

Members (Active and Inactive): Alec Colgan, Chris Stecker, Peter Solfest, Mary Anderson, Chynna Jedlicka, Taylor Eman, Jessica Eman, Spencer Pereira, Kai Clemen, Sarah Copeland, Amy Carnes, Lillian McEvoy, Izzy Coonfare, Sarah Monaghan, Colette Kraft, Machaela Player, Grant Langdon

Activities & Projects — 2023/2024:

- Young Adults “Before the Service” A casual get together every second Sunday of the month at 9:30 a.m. in the Common Room. (discontinued due to lack of participation)
- Attendance at CommUUnity Night.
- Create Young Adults flyer to increase reach.
- Planning session for future:
- Discussion Group (Building the World We Dream About Young Adults) (paused due to lack of participation)
- Co-Lead with Younger Young Adults to facilitate move from YRUU to YA and cover more interests and life experiences. (paused due to lack of participation)

## Youth Emergency Services (YES) Meal Prep Team

Leader: Kim Callaghan

Assistant: Diane Byrd

Members: Linda Hruska, Lois Norris, Kay Lynn Goldner, Lynne Porter, Russell Porter, and Tricia Piatt

Regular contributors: Wendy Buchholz, Vanessa Timberlake, and Diane Withem

YES has returned to full service, and so have we! Currently we provide meals for 30 youths, up from 15-20 people. Our team prepares this monthly meal in the church kitchen, and then the meal is delivered to YES. We also collect items each month, depending on the need, and solicit for donations on the church social media pages and in the weekly e-news. We have collected laundry detergent, socks, and personal care items this year. Pictured below: the YES Team in April 2024 in the church kitchen.



# Appendix Contents

New Members

Staff

2024-2025 Budget

2023-2024 Balance Sheet

Treasurer's Report

## **New Members since May 1, 2023**

5/14/2023:  
Jessie & Ben Stallings

8/20/2023:  
Russell & Lynne Porter

9/10/2023:  
Jessica Collins

12/3/2023:  
Kate Brien

12/17/2023:  
Scott Kemper

4/14/2024:  
Krissa Lee-Regier

## Staff

Rev. Shari Woodbury, Settled Minister  
Christina Strong, Lifespan Director of Religious Education  
Melissa Gibson, Membership Coordinator  
Catharine Dixon, Church Administrator  
Caenis Bryan, A/V Technology Coordinator  
William Miller, Choir Director  
J Gawf, Choir Accompanist  
Judi Unger, Music Director  
Sara Switzer, Childcare Coordinator  
Rev. Dr. Sarah Voss, Affiliated Community Minister

minister@firstuomaha.org  
dre@firstuomaha.org  
coordinator@firstuomaha.org  
admin@firstuomaha.org  
avtech@firstuomaha.org  
choirdirector@firstuomaha.org  
choirdirector@firstuomaha.  
music@firstuomaha.org  
childcare@firstuomaha.org

## **Comments on the 2023/2024 Treasurer's Report and 2024/2025 Proposed Budget**

### **Results for 2022-23**

Last year was unusual in that we had high building expenses that were not covered by transfers from the Preserve Our Building fund. To cover the expenses, it was necessary to withdraw an additional \$35,000 from the Board Investment Fund (BIF) over and above the amount budgeted. This resulted in total income of \$427,972, compared to a budget of \$420,000 and expenses of \$464,812. We had budgeted for a deficit of \$40,000, but after correcting for the use of \$35,000 in additional BIF money, the true deficit was \$71,840. We had final results available at the time of last year's report and additional detail is given there.

### **Results for 2023-24**

Our stewardship campaign in 2023 had a goal of \$300,000. The preliminary budget assumed UUA dues would continue at the reduced rate of \$11,828, with increased medical insurance and utility costs, but minimal salary increases and a deficit reduced to \$20,000. As of May 15, 2023, we had pledges of approximately \$250,000, a full \$50,000 below our goal and below the total pledges for 2022-23. The proposed budget of \$414,630 therefore limited salary increases to a total of \$4000, to be distributed as merit increases to be determined by Rev. Woodbury, the Board, and the MTC. The budget included no money for capital projects or for replacement of Pat Will as an organist. Despite these reductions, the budget again assumed a deficit of \$40,000 as well as an additional \$30,000 in pledges to be obtained in a supplemental stewardship campaign. The campaign resulted in a pledge total for the year of \$266,729 with 129 pledges. Income for the year was augmented by \$156,828, however, in bequests and a one-time contribution of \$50,000. The additional income allowed us to transfer \$35,000 to the Board Investment Fund to replace the money withdrawn at the end of the previous year and to replenish reserve funds on the Balance Sheet that can be used to cover the anticipated deficits for 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.

Our insurance policies with Church Mutual were not renewed in mid-December, 2023. With some effort, we were able to obtain worker's comp and liability insurance at reasonable rates, but we have been unable to obtain property insurance for the building. The market for property insurance has tightened as a result of more extreme weather events and it appears that insurers are concerned about the age of the roofs on the two sections of our building. We have delayed capital projects until we resolve the property insurance problem.

### **Proposed Budget for 2023-24**

The proposed budget assumes expenses of \$424,500, with continued use of a \$4000 fund for salary increases and payment of 50% of our assessed UUA dues. Income of \$374,500 will be supplemented with \$50,000 from our newly replenished reserve funds. The income assumes \$275,000 in pledges. At the time of this report, we have \$271,681 from 109 pledges and are in the process of contacting 12 households who have pledged \$4220 in prior years. Income assumptions in most other categories are conservative.

The practice of covering large deficits with reserve funds accumulated from bequests means that the bequests are not being invested or used to address building needs such as steeple repair or potential roof replacement. We also have no assurance that we will receive large bequests in the coming years. The Board is committed, therefore, to addressing the deficit problem this year through increased income, reduced expenses, or both.

*(continued on next page)*

## **Balance Sheet**

The balance sheet shown in this report is based on data available at the end of March, 2024. To simplify the report, we have grouped several accounts, such as YRUU, OCUUPs, and the Women's Alliance, on a single line.

Current values of the Capital Trust and the three funds managed by the Capital Trust are shown in the balance sheet. As explained in the Capital Trust report, all four funds are now managed by the UUA Common Endowment Fund.

**Respectfully submitted,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "W. J. J. J. J.", is positioned below the "Respectfully submitted," text.

**FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH TREASURER'S REPORT  
ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING - MAY 5, 2024**

	<b>2023/2024 This Year's Budget</b>	<b>Change From This Year's Budget</b>	<b>2024/2025 Proposed Budget</b>
<b>Income:</b>			
Pledged Contributions	280,000	(5,000)	275,000
Investment Income	43,752	3,903	47,655
Fund Raising	12,100	3,550	15,650
Use of Facilities	11,500	(1,000)	10,500
Total Plate Collections	7,000	2,000	9,000
Non-Pledged Contributions	4,000	1,000	5,000
Memorial Gifts	4,000	(2,000)	2,000
Other Income - Interest	478	2,922	3,400
Other Income - Misc	3,500	(505)	2,995
Holland Fund Contribution	5,000	(5,000)	
Transfer from Reserves	40,000	10,000	50,000
Transfer from Restricted Funds	3,300	-	3,300
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>414,630</b>	<b>9,870</b>	<b>424,500</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>			
Minister	141,190	2,558	143,748
Office & Administration	103,745	4,359	108,104
House & Grounds	37,800	(1,736)	36,064
Religious Services (incl music)	38,242	590	38,832
Religious Education	60,261	1,630	61,891
Denominational Affairs	11,828	418	12,246
Discretionary & Team Funds	6,600	1,950	8,550
Misc and FICA	14,964	102	15,066
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>414,630</b>	<b>9,870</b>	<b>424,500</b>
<b>Surplus or (Deficit)</b>	<b>(0)</b>		<b>(0)</b>



## Balance Sheet (as of 3/31/24)

### ASSETS

Premier Bank	48,210
Savings	169,352
Capital Trust Endowment	696,852
Board Investment Fund (BIF)	520,886
Music Endowment	26,961
Women's Alliance Endowment	14,321
Office Petty Cash	190

<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,476,772</b>
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### LIABILITIES

Minister's Discretion Fund	2,019
Retirement	(141)
Deposits - Building Rent	150
Sabbatical Fund	10,533
Prepaid Pledges	37,122
Holland Contribution	1,250
Preserve Our Building Fund	86,567
Partner Church/YRUU/OCUUPs/WA	7,303
UUA Common Endowment Fund	1,259,020
YES/Comm. Meals/Caring/Financial Aid	3,822
Music Donation Income	2,607
RE Donation - Nather 2014	586

<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,410,838</b>
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### NET ASSETS

Curr Yr's Surplus/Deficit	64,147
Operating Reserve	1,787

<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>65,934</b>
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<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>1,476,772</b>
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*Booklet Cover “Open Doors” photo by Jack Round*

*Above photo by Melissa Gibson capturing  
Dirt Communion on Sunday, April 21, 2024 with  
Rev. Woodbury and congregants in the Sanctuary.*





***A Tribute:** A Red Bud tree was planted in the church garden in April 2024 to honor church member Dixie Lemon, who created the Sarah Joslyn Society for First Unitarian Church. The society encourages members and friends to leave a bequest to the church. Dixie's memorial service was held at First Unitarian on April 7th. Special thanks to Carolyn McNamara. Pictured: the new tree and the plaque.*

