

# ANNUAL REPORT

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## 2012–2013



Respect  
for the  
interdependent  
web of all existence  
of which we  
are a part.  
— UU principle



**Unitarian Universalist Church  
at Washington Crossing**



Join the Journey.  
Open to You

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**Church Staff 2012–2013**

Transitional Minister	Rev. Jennifer Brooks
Director, Lifespan Religious Education	Robin Pugh
Director, Music Ministry	Caryl Tipton
Office Administrator	Susan Irgang
Accompanist	Wendy Feaver
Sexton	Jon Holcombe

**Board of Trustees 2012–2013**

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## MINISTER'S ANNUAL REPORT

It has been an honor to serve the Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing during the first year of this two-year interim ministry. Despite natural feelings of loss and grief on the retirement of Rev. Charles Stephens, who for 15 years loved and served this congregation, UUCWC welcomed me warmly and with tolerance for my inevitable differences. Although change is a constant in our lives, the arrival of a new minister is one of the most unsettling. It affects everyone at the same time. No one is immune.

I specialize in transitional ministry. Although I served eight years in settled ministry and loved it, I've been drawn to ministry focused on the dynamics of transition from one settled minister to the next. This is a peculiar calling. It promises that I, myself, will suffer abrupt and constant change: in geographical location, in parishioners, in the congregational culture of the church I serve. I know that transitions have their challenges.

Our shared task is to meet those challenges and *thrive* as we move ahead.

### The Work of the Transitional Period

The Unitarian Universalist Association, based on extensive study and reflection, has set five tasks for a church to accomplish during the transitional period. These tasks, carried out well, enhance the likelihood that the next settled ministry will be successful and enduring. The congregation is to:<sup>i</sup>

1. Claim and honor its past, engaging and acknowledging its griefs and conflicts.
2. Recognize its unique identity and its strengths, needs, and challenges.
3. Understand the appropriate leadership roles of minister, church staff, and lay leaders while navigating the shifts in leadership that may accompany times of transition.
4. Make appropriate use of District, UUA, and other outside resources.
5. Renew its vision, strengthen its stewardship, and prepare for new growth and new professional leadership, becoming ready to embrace the future with anticipation and zest.

Here at the halfway mark of UUCWC's transitional period, these tasks are in progress—often in ways not yet visible. As Marge Piercy says,<sup>ii</sup>

Connections are made slowly, sometimes they grow underground.  
You cannot tell always by looking what is happening.  
More than half a tree is spread out in the soil under your feet.

During this first interim year, there have been changes as obvious as the autumnal turning of leaves from green to yellow. But at midpoint, the deeper work of transition is found in that less-visible half of the tree under our feet: the roots that anchor and nourish this beloved community.

### Blessings and Opportunities

The Church at Washington Crossing began 2012-13 blessed in numerous ways that support the

church's ministry during this transition and that will offer a strong foundation for the congregation's new ministry in partnership with the next settled minister.

- The past 15 years of stable, loving ministry in partnership with Rev. Charles Stephens.
- The membership's commitment, expressed in UUCWC's vision statement, to be "an inclusive faith community focusing our energy and resources on spiritual deepening" with the consequent challenge "to become a dynamic and recognized force in our community(s)."
- UUCWC's incredibly talented and dedicated staff, a blessing the like of which few churches experience.
- The congregation's thoughtful, dedicated lay leadership, which may be this faith community's deepest blessing.

Hand-in-hand with these blessings are several important opportunities.

- *The opportunity to clarify governance.* The newly adopted Strategic Plan, developed in consultation with members, encourages the development of more effective governance. This invitation dovetails with the transitional task of understanding leadership roles and with the Board's recent efforts to clarify roles and responsibilities through written policies.

*Background:* When I arrived at UUCWC an organizational chart did not exist, which is tough for any newcomer, and especially challenging for a new minister. UUCWC now has a tentative draft "org chart" that attempts to identify existing roles and relationships. This transitional period presents a much-needed opportunity for clarification of responsibility, authority, and accountability in UUCWC's governance and organization.

- *The opportunity to avoid unnecessary but recurring conflicts by clarifying responsibility.* The emotional and spiritual maturity resulting from UUCWC's commitment to spiritual development has empowered members to rise above their occasional interpersonal conflicts and "begin again in love."<sup>iii</sup> Yet these sorts of minor conflicts occur often and are disruptive to our beloved community.

*Background:* In the past, the Committee on Ministry and especially the Rev. Charles Stephens took on a central role helping members transcend disagreements. These small-scale conflicts regularly erupt. Each one sparks a flurry of emails, whispered triangulating conversations, and anxious scurrying—thankfully culminating, most of the time, in mediated reconciliations. Although these modest conflagrations may appear purely interpersonal, the pattern signals overlapping responsibilities and a lack of clarity as to decision-making authority.

*Initial Steps.* Over the past year, we've identified several "overlap areas" in which multiple committees, teams, or people have ongoing but overlapping authority:

- Storage
- Signage
- Grounds

For storage and signage, “stakeholder” meetings gathered representatives of the overlapping groups around one table to hear each other’s perspectives. The stakeholders made recommendations for clarification of responsibility, authority, and accountability in the overlap areas. The Board incorporated these recommendations into a Storage Policy and a Signage Policy. For grounds, where five entities have overlapping responsibilities (Grounds Ministry, Earth Ministry, Memorial Garden, Building Committee, and Sexton), meetings this summer will begin developing ways to clarify responsibility, authority, and accountability, including the obligation to consult with one another.

- *The opportunity to create more meaningful ways for volunteer service within UUCWC.* A church can’t carry out its mission and ministry without the work of member-volunteers, yet developing leaders and finding volunteers is a challenge.

*Background:* At the start of the year there were vacancies in two committee chair positions (Fellowship and Caring). Soon there was a Board vacancy. As 2013-14 begins, we have a vacancy in the important area of Stewardship. These vacancies, and consultation with former and current leaders, reveal an opportunity to develop a different framework for service and leadership.

*Initial Steps.* Over the past year, the Fellowship Committee was replaced with ministry teams: Community-Building Ministry (led by Heidi Dalzell), which organizes fellowship events; and four Hospitality Teams (nurtured by Maria Baratta), which as of September will organize Sunday coffee and refreshments. Philo Elmer took up the mantle of the Caring Committee as it was reconstituted as the Caring Ministry Team. Earth Ministry emerged from the orphans of Green Sanctuary and Sustainability with renewed energy from a broader mission and vision. This sort of experimentation allows us to reconfigure volunteer service roles to match members’ gifts and passions. During the past year, the Transition Team’s Volunteer Project (led by Mike Dalzell, Transition Team 2012-13, and Michele Downie, Transition Team 2012-14) compiled information on how UUCWC members serve this beloved community. A congregational workshop this fall will help members further discern how we can create more meaningful, more satisfying volunteer and leadership roles.

## **Where We Stand on the “Five Tasks” of Transitional Ministry**

1. *Reclaiming our history.* The Transition Team has convened a “History Project,” a group that is laying the groundwork for this task. The Project is developing an interactive display showing the church’s history from 1916 to the present. The display, using a series of posters recalling the church’s challenges and how it responded, will welcome members into the sanctuary in September. Members will be able to share memories and comments on post-it notes. These notes will form the basis of a congregational workshop that invites long-term and new members into a shared understanding of how this congregation steps up to obstacles and setbacks, crafting responses that strengthen and shape UUCWC’s ministry today and into the future. The History Project’s interactive display will also serve as the rough draft of a display to be used during UUCWC’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary year in 2016. Project members are Bonnie Ruekgauer (Transition Team 2012-14), Andrew

Conrad (Transition Team 2012-13), Bert Wolfe, Jane Shafer, Lori O'Neil, Mary Kay Mitchell, Paul Tuerff, Maria Baratta (Transition Team 2012-13).

2. *Recognize our unique identity.* During the development of the Strategic Plan, it became clear that UUCWC members are committed to building the beloved community within and outside our walls. The History Project will help members, especially newcomers, to develop a better understanding of UUCWC's identity and purpose. Work within the Council for Faith in Action (CFA) on integrating social justice efforts broadly into church life will encourage collaboration and synergy among the groups under CFA's umbrella. Over the past year, the quarterly Church Council meetings engaged committee and team leaders in collaborative, creative conversations that offered helpful insights on UUCWC's unique identity and purpose.
3. *Clarify leadership roles, especially responsibility, authority, and accountability.* During the past year, "overlap area" stakeholders and the Board worked to identify and clarify governance and organizational structure, and these efforts represent significant steps toward completion of this task. Ahead for the coming year are congregational conversations and workshops on governance and leadership roles, with the goal of ensuring that members have shared expectations for the Board, committees and teams, church staff, and the new settled minister.
4. *Tap UUA resources.* This year, UUA resources supported training for the Ministerial Search Team as well as supporting the Transitional Minister's attendance at two workshops. UUCWC's Growth and Vitality Team concluded a three-year series of workshops with other congregations in our region, resulting in new ideas to nurture and grow our community. UUCWC's delegates to the 2013 General Assembly attended workshops that opened up new vistas for understanding how to meet our challenges at home. In the coming year, we will continue to seek UUA and other resources that make UUCWC's ministry more effective.
5. *Renew our vision, strengthen our stewardship and become ready to embrace the future.* This year UUCWC's stewardship drive was the most successful ever - but at year-end we still lack a Stewardship leader. This is a signal; despite UUCWC's evident progress toward completion of the five transitional tasks, work remains.

## **Weaving Real Connections**

If we stretch our spirits and minds, together we can (as Marge Piercy says) "weave real connections" that allow UUCWC's members to share an inspired understanding of UUCWC's mission and ministry. If we reach out to one another, if we "keep reaching out, keep bringing in," seeking to draw the circle of love and insight wider, then members can reclaim and *re-frame* this church's amazing history in a way that acclaims UUCWC's identity and purpose. If we honor the beloved community and together "build real houses," we can clarify responsibility and authority so that zest and enthusiasm expand without the disruption of unnecessary conflict.

We have accomplished much together in one short year. Of course there is work ahead. But, dear

ones, go softly: “Live a life you can endure.” We must be gentle with one another. We must tend to our hearts and spirits. If we center ourselves in love the way vines twine toward sunlight, we can be confident that what is planted here will flourish.

“For every gardener knows that after the digging, after the planting, after the long season of tending and growth, the harvest comes.”<sup>iv</sup>

*Transitional Minister Rev. Jennifer Brooks*

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<sup>i</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association, *Transitional Ministry Handbook* (Appendix A).

<sup>ii</sup> Marge Piercy, “The Seven of Pentacles,” in *Circles on the Water: Selected Poems of Marge Piercy*. New York: Knopf, 1982. available at <http://www.utexas.edu/staff/hfsa/pdfs/HFSASummerWritingWorkshopSession3Reading1.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Rob Eller-Isaacs, “A Litany of Atonement,” Reading No. 637 in *Singing the Living Tradition* (our UU hymnal).

<sup>iv</sup> This and the quotations in the preceding two paragraphs are from Marge Piercy’s “Seven of Pentacles.”

## PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Transition. That is the keyword for UUCWC this past year. Transition will mean a new minister. It means a new organizational structure and new policies and new procedures. Transition means a strategic plan, a new mortgage, a new way of administering our building and grounds and becoming a “Safe Congregation.” Transition means change.

The Board usually holds an annual retreat in the summer to develop goals and objectives for the current year. This past year we waited until September to have our retreat after the arrival of our Transitional Minister, the Rev. Jennifer Brooks. From her experience at several UUA congregations, we were hoping to learn new ways of doing things at UUCWC. The Board recognized that we must be partners with her for there to be a successful transition to a new settled minister.

For several years, the Board had recognized the need for structural change at UUCWC, but we needed a new paradigm. Jennifer introduced us to Dan Hotchkiss’s book, *Governance and Ministry*. This book provided the Board a model for transforming, or should I say “transitioning,” from our historical structure to a more adaptive structure that enables UUCWC to utilize our talent and resources in ways that respect each other and the environment.

Below is a brief update of this year’s goals and the current status.

**Goal** – *Increase institutional leadership capacity within UUCWC, engaging more members as leaders and promoting a better understanding of leadership roles and skills.*

**Outcome** - This is a goal in progress, one that the current Board did not complete this year. Some preliminary work examining leadership needs and trends was begun.



**Goal** – *Encourage regular dialogue with the congregation on matters of interest to bring clarity to issues and promote fruitful communication.*

The Board strived to increase communication throughout the UUCWC community. There were several information-sharing opportunities, including discussion of the revised budget and the Five Year Strategic Plan, prior to the plan's approval at the congregational meeting in January. More importantly, members of the Board have personally worked diligently to be available for personal communication with members and friends regarding any concerns or suggestions.

Outcome - For this goal, there is still more work to be done.

**Goal** – *Enhance the clarity, transparency, and overall effectiveness of church governance.*

Several policies have been approved and others are in development. Procedures have been written to implement policies. Approved policies and procedures are reviewed with Council and are available in the Administrative office.

The Board, along with Rev. Jennifer, is using stakeholder meetings to clarify responsibility, authority, and accountability in unclear areas of church governance. A draft version of our current structure in an organizational chart was posted on our website and comments were solicited.

Outcome – Additional policies and procedures need to be written and a formal structure should be adopted to provide clarity and transparency.

**Goal** – *Provide any required support to the Settled Ministry search process and continued support to the Transitional Minister.*

The Board and Rev. Jennifer completed a mid-term UUA evaluation for Transitional Ministry. The Board invited Rev. Jennifer to serve UUCWC during the 2013 – 2014 church year.

The congregation elected a Settled Ministry Search Team. They meet on a weekly basis and have a full agenda of tasks that need to be done.

Outcome – The Rev. Jennifer Brooks accepted the offer to serve as our Transitional Minister for the 2013 – 2014 church year. The congregation commissioned the Settled Ministry Search Team at our annual meeting on May 19, 2013.

**Goal** – *Support the roll out of the Five Year Strategic Plan and endorsement by the Congregation.*

As the work of the Five Year Strategic Plan Task Force approached its final stages, the Board collaborated with the task force by reviewing the documents and providing feedback on the proposals. The Board supported the Task Force's plan to post the strategic plan documents on the UUCWC website and to hold a Town Hall meeting to answer questions and make final changes.

Outcome - The congregation endorsed the Five Year Strategic Plan Task at the January 27th congregational meeting.

### **Other Initiatives**

Four task forces have completed their work during this past year. The Board has utilized the knowledge gained and the recommendations made by these task forces. The Board is very appreciative of their hard work and dedication. At the annual meeting, the congregation recognized the members of the task forces. UUCWC is already being rewarded with the fruits of their labor.

The first task force formed was the Facilities Task Force. Their discussions led to many specific proposals, several of which have been implemented. A sexton was hired. Some processes were streamlined and became staff responsibility. A Facilities Management Team has been formed, and has started its work under the guidance of the Rev. Jennifer Brooks.

The Five Year Strategic Plan Task Force has developed a five year strategic plan, the first strategic plan that UUCWC has seen in the past twenty years. The work done by this task force will guide us through the next five years and has provided our community with a useful path that will lead us into our next one hundred years.

The work of the Mortgage Re-Finance Task Force is done. UUCWC needed to secure refinancing of its mortgage, which had a balloon payment due on November 1, 2013. That meant that we would have had to pay off the remaining principle of about \$375,000 in one lump sum. After a thorough analysis of our debt obligations and options on refinancing terms, a new loan was signed with Sun National Bank in March 2013. Our monthly mortgage payments are now \$1,152 lower per month than under the previous loan, or almost \$14,000 less on an annual basis.

The Safe Congregations Task Force presented its findings to the Board. The Board has approved a Safe Congregation Policy. Procedures for this policy have been written by the task force and are being reviewed by the congregation.

The Board wishes to thank all committee chairs and their members for the ongoing work during this transition period. We thank our staff, and most importantly, YOU, the members and friends of UUCWC.

The Board wishes to recognize and thank a member who is leaving the Board, Vice- President Holly Bussey. Her hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm will be missed. In addition, I will be leaving the Board. I am thankful for having the opportunity to serve the UUCWC community. The Board will be in good hands, with the guidance of Steve Fishbein as President.

There is tremendous buzz and excitement at UUCWC. So, what is it all about? TRANSITION!

With gratitude to all who work to support UUCWC in meeting its mission,

*Jerry Scheick, President, Board of Trustees*

## **ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (ENRICHMENT)**

Adult Religious Enrichment /Education (ARE) is a committee whose primary purpose and mission is to “support the vision of UUCWC by offering programs that encourage individual members – and the community-at-large – to explore their religious and spiritual odysseys.”

Program offerings by ARE, both alone and in cooperation with other committees and/or groups in the church community, allow individual members and friends to increase their knowledge of UU history and theology, to deepen their spiritual development, to be empowered to be leaders of the community, and to put their faith into action. Under the direction of the DLRE, this committee creates programming, initiates partnerships with other UUCWC entities, and ensures the quality of the ARE program through training, oversight, and solicitation and reporting of participant and facilitator feedback.

### **Goals/Accomplishments 2012-2013**

- Produced a Fall ARE brochure, a Winter/Spring brochure, a Summer flier and various other flyers to publicize program offerings.
- Publicized ARE offerings through the UUCWC website and *Crossings* newsletter with updates in *Crossings II* and the Weekly Events emails.
- Held a one-day ARE “Workshop” in July.
- Worked closely with the Membership Committee to obtain frequent visitor and new membership lists.
- Communicated with frequent visitors and new members to create awareness of ARE offerings.
- Had ARE representation at UU101 classes to familiarize participants with the vision and purpose of ARE and to encourage registration for UU201.
- Held a successful inaugural Samstone Lecture event in November featuring Carol Lynn Pearson as the first Samstone Lecturer.
- Held a Facilitator Training Workshop, an all-day Saturday event to train current and future facilitators.
- Increased the list of trained ARE facilitators to 27.
- Continued to collect suggested donations of \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members (\$20 for year-long courses) to support ARE programs.
- Implemented the 10-month UUWellspring curriculum in three groups facilitated by participants in last year’s “pilot” UUWellspring group.
- Continued to offer weekly yoga sessions led by Annemieke Hermans.
- Sent out an all-church email of the upcoming semester’s ARE offerings and registration procedures to ensure that all members and friends have the opportunity to register for courses.
- Initiated the congregational Common Read for 2013 (*The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander).
- Held several information sessions on UUWellspring at UUCWC and opened registration for the 2012-2013 program to the entire congregation.
- Pilot tested the revised Participant Feedback Form.
- Drafted, revised, and finalized the Biennial ARE Survey for distribution. (Postponed distribution until the fall semester due to the Ministerial Search Committee’s survey.)

- Applied for and received a grant from the Endowment Committee for \$630 for the purchase of an LCD projector with capabilities to project from both a laptop computer and a flash drive to be used by ARE classes as well as by other committees and individuals of UUCWC.
- During the course of the church year, and in addition to weekly yoga and the UUWellspring groups, ran the following courses/workshops: UU201, Jesus and the Gospels, The Teachings of Jesus, What They'll Tell the Children (a Big History curriculum), A Taste of Ayurveda, The Doctrine of Discovery, a book discussion on *The New Jim Crow*, and *Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction*.

### **Goals and Future Strategies (2013-2014)**

- Continue to explore opportunities to coordinate ARE and the Religious Education Committee for Children and Youth (multi-generational).
- Begin development of “core” courses for each of the four threads of the ARE curriculum as noted in the Five Year Strategic Plan.
- Continue to encourage people to be facilitators, especially for UUA curricula.
- Continue to reach out to new members and frequent visitors to encourage participation in ARE offerings.
- Seek still better methods of involving the congregation with ARE.
- Find better methods of reaching out to the community beyond our walls when appropriate.
- Conduct and analyze the Biennial ARE Survey in the fall semester.
- Use information from the survey in program development for the upcoming semesters.
- Continue to work with Communications Committee to make the UUCWC website more user-friendly for ARE registration and ARE Workshop Applications.
- Make better use of the ARE blog on the UUCWC website.
- Present the Second Samstone Lecture Event on November 1 and 2 and evaluate same.
- Evaluate portfolios, and revise the roles of members as needed.
- Seek additional volunteers for the ARE Committee to fill specific and essential roles as determined through the evaluation process.
- Develop Leadership Training as specified in the Five Year Strategic Plan.
- Maintain and continue to create working relationships with Standing on the Side of Love, Denominational Affairs, Council for Faith in Action and other UUCWC entities, as well as with other UU Congregations, to carry out the mission of Adult RE.
- Implement the UUWellspring II© curriculum and conduct evaluation of same.
- As specified in the Five Year Strategic Plan, work with our Transitional Minister, Rev. Jennifer Brooks, to plan, train facilitators for, and implement a Covenant Group/Chalice Circle program for UUCWC based upon the “circle of trust” model.

Thank you to the following individuals for their participation and input as we worked together to fulfill our mission this year: Holly Bussey, Terry Caton, Susan Colket, Heidi Dalzell, Diane Knights, Connie Rafle and Michelina Thornton. In addition, our deep appreciation for the facilitators who made our ARE offerings possible, including our DLRE Robin Pugh who facilitated a section of our UUWellspring program this year.

*Kathy Frey, Chair*

## **BUILDING COMMITTEE**

Andrew Kidd was the Building chair and committee for the 2012-2013 church year.

The goal of Building is to keep up with routine maintenance, while responding to congregation requests to smarten the place up and to do whatever major repairs are budgeted. Building's responsibilities haven't changed this year, but it has been rolled into a Facilities Management Team, led by the Minister and including Grounds and Earth Ministry.

In October 2012, UUCWC employed its first Sexton and terminated its contract with the cleaner who had performed that service for several years beforehand. The sexton reports to the minister but has non-cleaning duties assigned by Building. Jon Holcombe applied for the job and was accepted. He performed the aforementioned cleaning duties as well as doing whatever was needed to maintain the building. We were able to improve general cleanliness and deep-clean the sanctuary, two of the classrooms and the corridors. Having a sexton has also allowed us to attend to maintenance issues much more rapidly. Jon had to resign in the spring; Ed Whittman joined us as Sexton at the end of June.

We did not do any painting this year because we have managed to get ourselves more or less up to date and looking respectable.

Major works:

- There was no budget for major work in 2012-2013.
- Roof: The leak in the Sanctuary roof persists, but incidents seem to be fewer and further between. Despite the very wet spring and early summer, the leaks in the lobby seem to have subsided, too. Both seem to be manageable.
- In April, the Earth Ministry applied to the New Jersey Direct Program, which provides funds to organizations to pay for improved energy efficiency. In May, we were approved for a major replacement of all our elderly heating and cooling systems and also all our florescent light bulbs. The latter will be replaced with significantly more efficient T8 tubes and electronic ballasts. The Program pays for 70% of the cost and should result in lower electric and gas bills. We believe that we will see a capital saving of approximately \$25,000 once it is all done.

The 2013 – 2014 church year is shaping up to be a very busy year.

*Andrew Kidd, Chair*

## **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

The Committee on Ministry (COM) comprises six members and the Minister. COM promotes peaceful and constructive dialogue in line with UUCWC's Covenant of Right Relations. When needed, COM acts as a facilitator towards resolution during interpersonal conflicts and addresses concerns about disruptive or inappropriate behavior. COM seeks to understand the congregation's overall ministry, and makes recommendations to the Board and Minister when

areas of congregational life are in need of development and care. Members of COM are available to listen with an open heart to congregants who have a need to share concerns.

Current members of COM are Andrew Conrad, Geri Estren Brown, Marty Friedman, Peter Rafle, Nina Todor and Jayme Trott. Andrew and Geri are going off, and Heather Edwards and Scott Umlauf are coming on.

This past church year starting July, 2012 was a time of transition for the church and for COM. The beginning summer period between the retirement of Reverend Charles Stephens and the arrival of the transitional minister, Reverend Jennifer Brooks, as well as the transition in leadership of COM, presented some challenges in responding to UUCWC-related concerns and issues. Reverend Brooks's arrival was warmly welcomed and her support much appreciated.

There were a few issues that were referred to COM: we facilitated one meeting of parties in conflict, which resulted in a positive resolution, and we are currently actively working on one outstanding issue.

In August, COM held the annual retreat at church at which time a self-assessment was conducted and review of COM's mission and policies and procedures was begun. Incoming COM members were provided with the most updated version of this document and were urged to become familiar with them. Revisions are in process.

Over the course of several meetings, Rev. Brooks presented about Adaptive Challenges and holding stakeholder meetings.

In the quest for letting the congregation know about COM's role and members, our bulletin board was updated to include photographs of current COM members. An article was written for *Crossings* and in March 2013, COM members held a service dedicated to the Covenant of Right Relations. A description of COM is included on the UUCWC website; this description is now being revised to provide greater clarity about COM's role in the church.

*Geri Estren Brown, Chair*

## **COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

**Mission:** The Communications Committee is responsible for external communications and selected internal communications that advance internal and external awareness of UUCWC and its mission. We work to ensure that communications within the church are maintained and disseminated to the congregation in a timely manner, and we publicize UUCWC and its news, events, and activities to the greater community.

### **Objectives and goals for 2012–2013**

Our objective during 2012–2013 was to make our many communications vehicles (website, weekly e-mails, *Crossings*,) more efficient and reduce work. This goal is much the same as the year before.

We know from email data, the SAGE survey, and observation that:

- Fewer than half of those who receive *Crossings* read it
- More than half of the congregation does not visit the website frequently
- About 5% of the congregation use the Facebook page
- About 75% of committee chairs and other church leaders do not place news online, but instead rely on *Crossings* and the weekly e-mail to get word out

From a marketing standpoint, we know that, after word of mouth, the primary way visitors find UUCWC is online. A continually fresh website shows potential visitors that we have an active, vibrant congregation. A lively Facebook page gives them insight into the people who make UUCWC their spiritual home. From an internal standpoint, wider use of these tools would connect the congregation more deeply to the church because the immediate nature of this type of communication encourages people to check the website frequently. Reducing internal reliance on *Crossings* and the weekly e-mail for news reduces the work burdens of the committee and the front office.

### **Selected Accomplishments**

We updated the website, enabling it to re-size to fit the device one is using, such as a smart phone.

We worked with the Treasurer to install a button for Amazon on the website, so that purchases from members that start at uucwc.org will generate funds for the church.

A plan was developed for reorganizing the bulletin boards and is being implemented.

We made a decision to change *Crossings* into a feature magazine. The decision is well documented and is being communicated to church leaders and members. The first installment of the new *Crossings* will be in November 2013.

We decided to invest in an electronic bulletin board for the lobby. It will function much as an exhibit at a museum, providing current relevant information about events, as well as information about UUCWC and its history. The electronic bulletin board will be installed in the summer and should be fully functional by the fall.

We applied for and received a grant from the Endowment Committee that will enable us to experiment with advertising using specially made banners for specific Sunday services throughout the year.

We have provided this additional support to UUCWC:

- Graphic support for a wide range of events, including the Samstone Lecture and the Auction.
- Editorial service for all communications that are externally focused.
- Blog training and individual blog coaching so that members could more effectively use the UUCWC website to communicate with their teams/committees or with the entire congregation.

*Richard DiGeorgio, Chair*

## COMMUNITY-BUILDING MINISTRY

In March of this year, UUCWC launched the new Community-Building Ministry. This “inside the walls” Ministry has been joyously carrying out one part of our UUCWC mission statement: to create a welcoming, caring community. Although responsibility for Sunday morning fellowship hour is still lodged with the Fellowship Committee, attention to other community-building activities now falls to the Community-Building Ministry Team. Heidi Dalzell is the team’s founding leader.

This new team has been taking on many of the wonderful activities previously assigned to the Fellowship Committee - but not Sunday morning coffee hour. Maria Baratta and other leaders within our congregation are exploring creative ways to run coffee hour through “hospitality teams” and other innovations. The Community-Building Ministry has a different focus, the other-than-Sunday-coffee special events that bring zest and connection to congregational life.

In April the team began doing Community “Monthlies,” monthly events designed to engage a broad range of congregants in something interesting and friendly.

### Highlights

- Facebook Community-Building group developed to inform members of events
- Publicizing of events in *Crossings*, *Crossings II* and on Community-Building bulletin board
- March - Scandinavia Travelogue featuring trips by several church members and a scrumptious potluck
- April – Spring potluck brunch deliciously followed the service
- May – Bagel brunch allowed hungry Annual Meeting-goers to nosh prior to the meeting
- June – Supported dual fundraising/community event UUCWC Night at It’s Nutts restaurant in Titusville
- June – Dual event with the Earth-Based Spirituality Circle featured *The Secret Life of Bees* and delicious honey snacks including honey wine and honey cake

While the Ministry will take a hiatus during the summer months, our creative energies are already planning several events for the next church year, including a Welcome Back Picnic and a Doctrine of Discovery Potluck.

## COUNCIL FOR FAITH IN ACTION

The mission of the Council for Faith in Action is to facilitate and support the commitment of the Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing to be a force for justice, equity and compassion. We seek not to be the conscience of this faith community but rather to be the medium that engages and encourages that conscience to manifest change through education, directed giving, social witness, advocacy, and direct action in our communities.



Since its inception, the Council for Faith in Action's charge has been to: be an "umbrella" for all UUCWC's groups involved in social justice efforts; increase communication among these groups; and facilitate their efforts. The Council for Faith in Action (CFA) is the fiscal steward of the church's social justice funds and is responsible for the distribution of the UUCWC Sunday plate's social justice allocation.

We seek to inspire people and to enable people to create a culture of social justice within UUCWC. Please consider putting your faith in action by joining us on our journey to support UUCWC's efforts to increase justice, equity and compassion in our community. Your participation would be most welcome.

Many UUCWC members and friends continue to be involved in projects sponsored by the Social Justice Committee. These include Monday night tutoring for HomeFront youth (with Wacky Wednesdays in the summer), Loaves and Fishes, providing backpacks to children in need to start the school year, a continuous food drive, turkeys for TASK, and furnishing UUCWC's room at HomeFront's Family Preservation Center in Ewing.

Standing on the Side of Love at UUCWC "harnesses love's power to stop oppression," including coordinating the participation of UUCWC members and friends in the annual New Hope Pride Parade. Re-imagining Valentine's Day as a social justice holiday has evolved into a month-long spiritual journey and commitment to action. Each week for four weeks, SSL at UUCWC asked us to consider one area where our willingness to stand on the side of love can make a difference and provided resources for doing so. Last year they finished a two-year "Living the Welcoming Congregation" program in which 25% of UUCWC's membership participated, and are planning future related programs.

The Green Sanctuary and Sustainability Programs at UUCWC are now under one umbrella – our new Earth Ministry. This change brings us into alignment with UUA recommendations and with the related programs at [uuministryforearth.org](http://uuministryforearth.org), and is a more proactive name. April was Earth Month, with a series of activities – something for everyone - throughout the month.

UUCWC's Food Ministry celebrated two years of providing nutritious meals to children and adults affected by homelessness and to low-income senior citizens. Since April 2011, the Food Ministry has provided 2,561 meals with a total value of \$5,588; made possible by the efforts of the Food Ministry team and the generous support of the UUCWC community. And they continue to expand their outreach. Read more about this in an article in the April 2013 issue of *Crossings*.

A Care Giver Support Group for those caring for persons with Dementia/Alzheimer's began meeting at UUCWC in May. Lori Rahn established, and facilitates, this group under the auspices of the Alzheimer's Association. It is open not only to members and friends of the congregation, but to the community at large.

The offerings of the JTW Library have been the most effective way over the past years of educating the congregation about racism and other oppressions. It is also much appreciated that congregational members recommend or give donations of books and/or videos, as that participation has significantly enhanced our library.

Following her spring internship at the UU-United Nations Office, Keziah Groth-Tuft organized a screening of a 45-minute version of the *Half the Sky* PBS series, inspired by the widely acclaimed book of the same name by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. *Half the Sky* touches on different issues women face globally including death related to pregnancy, human trafficking, limited access to education, domestic abuse, and lack of financial opportunity in six locations in the world where discrimination against women is most severe. *Half the Sky* has the message that women are the solution to global issues, not the problem, and are agents of change. Keziah led a discussion of the issues raised in the film, and offered ideas for taking future actions.

At the 2012 General Assembly delegates passed a resolution repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery and called on UUs to study the Doctrine and eliminate its presence from the current-day policies, programs, theologies, and structures of Unitarian Universalism. *Hundreds of years* of decisions and laws that have invalidated or ignored the rights, sovereignty, and humanity of indigenous peoples in the US and around the world can be traced back to the DoD. It is still the basis used by US courts to violate existing treaties with Native peoples and take away their mineral and water rights. Educational efforts around this issue have started at UUCWC; look for more in the coming church year.

UUCWC continues to work as part of several coalitions: the UU Legislative Ministry of NJ, the UU PA Legislative Action Network, and the New Jersey Regional Coalition. UUCWC hosted UULMNJ's annual meeting in April.

Thanks to your support through the 50% of the weekly plate designated for social justice efforts, the following organizations have been supported by plate donations from 7/1/12 through 6/30/13:

- Anchor House - On behalf of the participation of Connie Curtis, George Desser, and Ben Thornton in the annual Anchor House Bike Ride for Runaways.
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Mercer County- plate share from Children's Service "Transforming Power of Love" 1/27/13
- Building One NJ - Annual Dues
- Coalition for Peace Action - annual conference support and donation
- HomeFront Garden Activities - plate share to Earth Ministry from the Earth Ministry Service on 4/7/13
- HomeFront Tutoring - expenses
- Journey Toward Wholeness - books and videos for congregational use
- Keziah Groth-Tuft - contribution towards her attendance at UU-UNO Intergenerational Spring Seminar in NYC
- Loaves and Fishes - expenses for meal prepared in March
- Migrant and Immigrant Community Action (MICA) Project
- Morrisville Food Center - 50% of "Stone Soup" service (11/18/12) and an additional donation
- NJ Transgender Support Group
- Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
- Standing on the Side of Love at UUCWC - expenses
- Trenton Area soup Kitchen (TASK) - 50% of "Stone Soup" service (11/18/12) and an additional donation

- Trenton Children's Chorus - plate share 4/14/13 – “Heart and Soul” service
- UU Legislative Ministry of New Jersey – annual dues
- UU Service Committee
- UU - United Nations Office

We would welcome new members to the Council for Faith in Action. Please contact any CFA member, and join us in our journey.

*Lynne Quinto, Chair*

### **DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

The responsibility of Denominational Affairs is to educate and disseminate information to our congregation regarding concerns, initiatives and activities of the Unitarian Universalist faith as a whole. This includes information at the District (NY Metro) and National (UUA) level. Additionally the goal is to help connect the UUCWC congregation to the larger faith.

I have completed my third year as chair of Denominational Affairs and am pleased to have Bud Johnson and Jim Sanders as members of the committee.

Our UUCWC website as well the UUA website continue to be great sources for UU news and happenings within our faith. I have encouraged all congregants to routinely check both websites to stay connected to both UUCWC and our larger faith community. In addition, I have posted information from the UUA, the NY Metro District and news of upcoming events such as workshops, meetings, and retreats on the Denominational Affairs bulletin board.

We were charged at Justice GA 2012 in Phoenix to bring back the Doctrine of Discovery to our congregations and lead an education effort. The Doctrine of Discovery is a Papal Bull dating back to the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, which remained the legal basis for European explorers to seize the lands of non-Christians in the name of kings and queens of Christian European nations. GA 2012 voted to repudiate this Doctrine and urged individual congregations to learn about the native peoples who were caretakers of the land before us and to repudiate the Doctrine. In that effort we worked with the Council for Faith in Action (CFA) and Adult Religious Education to educate the congregation. Colin Campbell taught a three-session course, information was made available during the Fellowship hour at the Journey Towards Wholeness Library and at a table staffed by CFA. Rev. Jennifer Brooks preached a sermon on the Doctrine of Discovery. The effort to educate the congregation about the Doctrine of Discovery will continue in the coming church year.

UUCWC participated in the Chalice Lighters Campaign for the start-up congregation **Original Blessings** in Brooklyn, NY. Original Blessings is the first new congregation in the District in twenty years. \$360 was collected to help grow the new church.

Prior to this year’s GA in Louisville, congregations were asked to consider the final draft of the Statement of Conscience (SOC): *Immigration as a Moral Issue* and make suggestions for

additional changes. Two meetings were scheduled, one after church on Sunday and one on a weeknight. A vote will be taken to accept this SOC in Louisville.

UUCWC was represented at the Unitarian Universalist New York Metro District meeting (May 3-4) in Morristown NJ. Rev. Brooks, Jim Sanders, Holly Bussey, Mary Kay Mitchell and Jim Bicksler attended. Annette Marquis, LGBTQ and Multicultural Ministries Program Manager for the UUA, was the keynote speaker. On Friday evening, UUA Moderator candidates Jim Key and Tamara Payne-Alex addressed meeting participants. Mia Morse was elected NY Metro District president.

Sallie Dunner, Lori Rahn, Lou Csabay, Mike Makowsky, Mary Kay Mitchell and Jim Bicksler were delegates to the Louisville 2013 General Assembly on June 19-23. Bobbye Galloway, Elliott Dunner, Rollie Rahn and Rev. Jennifer Brooks also attended. Highlights of the Assembly included Eboo Patel as the Ware Lecturer, Jim Key's election as moderator, passage of the Statement of Conscience, and a sermon by Rev. Dr. William Schulz, President and CEO of the UU Service Committee.

*Jim Bicksler, Chair*

## **EARTH MINISTRY**

We had a very active year - not the least of it being the "official" creation of the UUCWC Earth Ministry and incorporating Green Sanctuary and Sustainability under our new name; this better reflects our mission and the UUA and UUMFE guidelines.

We had an active committee of more than a dozen and many friends, led by co-chairs Philo Elmer and Al Johnson. We met regularly, and this is a partial list of our accomplishments on behalf of the Earth:

1. We did the initial work to apply for the Direct Install NJ State program, which will allow the church to put in new and more energy efficient HVAC and lighting and timers with a savings of 70 plus thousand dollars - work to be done by fall 2013.
2. Developed considerable coordination with other committees (Grounds, Building, Food Ministry, Fellowship and Council for Faith in Action) and have a representative on the FMT.
3. Ran a full Earth Month in April, as well as a successful Earth Service on April 7.
4. Continued to grow Allie's Garden for the community and our Children's Garden and worked with our HomeFront kids on these gardens, which are producing hundreds of pounds of vegetables for HomeFront and Food Ministry this season.

In addition we:

- Continued our Fair Trade and Book Sales, with funds set aside for our projects
- Ran nine hikes in NJ and PA
- Helped put in new plants and panels in the Memorial Garden
- Worked on the Meditation Trail and maintained and increased the meadow lands
- Applied and received a grant from Endowment to conduct an Energy Audit
- Restarted our potlucks

- Continued composting and recycling and helped with the UUCWC's annual yard sale
- Opened discussion with Earth-Based Spirituality Circle
- Implemented more energy saving measures
- Worked on the sanctuary and indoor plants
- Offered monthly Sunday Green tables
- Created our list for the Five Year Strategic Plan

Plans for 2013-14 include some concerted education and awareness efforts about what it means to be a Green Sanctuary and raising consciousness about the need to care for the Earth and encouraging the development of community and individual action plans.

We are also developing, with Grounds and the treasurer, a comprehensive list of energy and resource saving measures. We will be involved in more Earth-related services and programs and outreach efforts.

*Philo Elmer, Co-chair*

### **EARTH-BASED SPIRITUALITY CIRCLE (EBSC)**

**Mission/Purpose** - Inspired by the 7<sup>th</sup> Principle of Unitarian Universalism of respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part, members of the Earth-Based Spirituality Circle of the Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing unite to explore the Earth-based beliefs of our planet, to hold rituals that celebrate these beliefs, and to be a forum to participate in the wonder of the cosmos and the mystery of life.

#### **Goals for the Year**

The goals of the year were to meet regularly, to create a more dynamic monthly meeting that includes rituals rather than only planning meetings, and to celebrate all of the quarter and cross-quarter pagan holidays with rituals open to the members of our circle, the members of UUCWC and friends.

#### **Activities**

EBSC held monthly meetings and all pagan holidays (Lammas, Mabon, Samhain, Yule, Imbolc, Ostara, Beltane and Litha) except for the Spring Equinox that was cancelled due to a snow storm. We assisted with the Earth Service in early April. We also promoted our gatherings with regular blogs on the website and articles in *Crossings*.

#### **Members and Friends Involved**

Parker Cohen, Susann Mullins, Mike and Heidi Dalzell, Kelly Weber, Ocie Wolffe, Casey Quinto, Marybeth Carshaw-Stinson, Serita Scott, Carolyn Brooks, Marty Smith, Caroline

Charlese Zoe, Jessica Scheick, Jen Addo, Erica Gennarini, Melisa Tulotta, Janis Hottinger, Andrea Katz, Rev. Jennifer Brooks, Andrea Kalb, Sandy Merritt, Angela Sansone.

### **Future Activities/"Next Step"**

EBSC is in the process of restructuring. Parker Cohen has stepped down as leader/co-leader. The group is in the process of contemplating next steps, which may involve restructuring or taking a hiatus until there is increased congregational participation. More formal plans will be made in September 2013.

### **ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE**

In the past year, the UUCWC Endowment Fund had sufficient earnings in interest that allowed us, for the first time in several years, to solicit grant requests from the congregation.

Accordingly, the Committee is extremely pleased to announce that the four applications for funds we received have all been granted. They are:

- 1) Communications Committee for increased and improved signage to advertise UUCWC and encourage growing membership;
- 2) Adult RE Committee for a new LCD projector. This will be available to other committees for on-site church business and activities as well;
- 3) Jointly to the Building Committee and Earth Ministry for an energy audit; and
- 4) RE Committee for new fire-rated doors with windows for the RE classrooms.

Serving on the Committee are Barbara Drew, Karen DiGeorgio, Tony Panzetta, Joe Schenk, and Janet Hubbard.

*Janet Hubbard, Chair*

### **5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN TASK FORCE**

In May, 2011, the Board of Trustees charged our 5-Year Strategic Plan Task Force with exploring congregational needs and desires and preparing a plan prioritizing UUCWC's future actions and energies. We consulted past congregational surveys and assessments, coming up with possible areas to focus future congregational efforts on. We then conducted five focus groups in January 2012 with 78 members, using "Appreciative Inquiry" which focused discussion towards building on UUCWC's strengths. (A dyad communication technique was also used, giving every individual a voice on how UUCWC could better respond to his/her needs.)

Congregants and friends were then surveyed about ideas raised in the focus groups, with 178 people responding. Using the survey results, Task Force members next interviewed committees, groups, and staff, determining more detailed goals and actions for each owner group. Results

from other task forces (Growth and Vitality, Facilities, and Building Loan Re-Financing) were consulted when compiling our final report.

The draft report was reviewed by the board and then by the congregation (the latter in a town hall meeting) prior to the final presentation to the congregation in January, 2013. By the time the final report was presented, several owner groups had already begun implementing their sections of the plan.

Most people felt our current Vision and Mission statements were still relevant and that we are still in the process of fulfilling them. We found great enthusiasm and passion for this church community, with many areas of church life well-regarded and a desire to maintain them. Plans for change fell under three areas of 1) supporting the (spiritual and community) life of the church, 2) being a force for change, and 3) taking care of business – with one additional overall theme that our congregation wants to continue to grow in size (and thus ability to share Unitarian Universalism with more people and have a greater impact on our world).

Supporting the life of the church included expanded work in such areas as membership, growth, fellowship, religious education, volunteer and leadership issues, a celebration of our 100th anniversary, caring ministry, communications, technology, music and summer programming for children, and exploring changing our name. Worship and issues related to ministry are separately being explored by UUCWC's Search Committee. Being a force for change included plans to expand our Social Justice programs, our Food Ministry, our Earth Ministry, our Council for Faith in Action, and our Denominational involvement. Taking Care of Business issues included recommendations for improving our approach to governance, building and property stewardship, administration, and finances.

In addition to better maintaining the facilities we already have, there was enthusiastic support for working on our Crossings Room and parking, especially so we could better serve the needs of a growing and vibrant congregation. There was also a desire to better support and reorganize our volunteers and paid staff – and our governance -- so our congregation can handle the workload of all we wish to accomplish in coming years.

Recommendations concerning how to pay for what we feel we need included refinancing/paying down our mortgage (already done), and exploring rental plan and capital campaign possibilities.

The report was in the form of recommendations and/or current plans – and will be updated and implemented by its owner groups as time goes on – with the Board of Trustees overseeing its implementation.

Task Force Members were as follows: Jef Buehler (Member at Large and Co-facilitator), Elliott Dunner (Committee on Ministry), Marty Friedman (Committee on Ministry), Lynn Hanson (Board of Trustees and Plan Author), Barbara Schroder Jensen (Member at Large), Bud Johnson (Board of Trustees), Robin Pugh (Director of Lifespan Religious Education), Bonnie Ruekgauer (Membership), Mike Hanson (Board of Trustees and Plan Author), Jennifer Rehbein (Member at Large), Rev. Charles Stephens (Minister), and Pam V'Combe (Member at Large and Co-facilitator).

## FOOD MINISTRY

**Mission:** To serve safe and nutritional meals to homeless or less privileged members of the general public and UUCWC members in need. This will be done on a regular basis in partnership with organizations whose mission(s) and purpose(s) are congruent with the mission and purpose of UUCWC.

**Goals of the Food Ministry:** As an outreach of social justice projects, the kitchen is to be used to provide meals for people in need of help in the local community and within our own church community.

- We have provided over 1,500 meals in the 2012-2013 church year. Our first project, providing meals one day a month to families who are homeless and are being sheltered in motels along Route 1, stopped in June of 2012 and never started up again. We went to HomeFront and asked how else we could help, and they came back to us with a few suggestions.
- We increased our meals to the Kinship project to two meals a month. The Kinship Program helps children who are being raised by family members other than their parents. Both the children and the caregiver are brought to the Lawrenceville Community Center every Thursday to share a hot meal. After the meal, adults attend a class on a variety subjects from nutrition to finances and the children are also involved with different activities. In September we started providing the Kinship Program with 30 meals on the first and fourth Thursdays of each month.
- A program for families that are in transition, moving from Managed Care Housing to living on they own, have a meeting on Mondays at the HomeFront offices. This program, Transitional Living Commitment, needed a hot meal to feed about 50 people, so we stepped up by providing one meal a month to TLC.
- We wanted to do more, so in March we started providing meals one Tuesday a month to the Tuesday night tutoring class that is held at the Lawrenceville Library. Because the tutoring was at the library, we could not provide a hot meal where the students could sit down and enjoy it before the tutoring started. So we did the next best thing and provided a lunch bag for them to have on the way home. The 30 bags each included a good sandwich, a juice box, a health bar and a fruit cup.
- We were also told about a tutoring group on Wednesday nights that could use 50 “to go snack bags.” These were made on Sundays during fellowship hour at church; all those present were invited to help pack the bags, which included a granola bar, juice box and a fruit cup. Almost all the food was donated to the Food Ministry by people in the congregation.
- We continued to provide lunch meals one day a month for the poorest residents of Luther Arms in Trenton. Luther Arms is a HUD apartment building, which houses low income people who are over 55. Some of these people live on less than \$500 a month and just run



out of money for food by the end of the month. To help out, the Food Ministry started providing 30 lunches on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

- The congregation has been very generous with donations of food, money and help with meals. We currently have over \$2,500 set aside for the support of the Food Ministry for the upcoming 2013-2014 church year.

The Food Ministry Committee is made up of the following functions and the people currently filling those functions:

- Co-Chairs: Rollie Rahn and Mike Muccioli
  - Coordinates operations of the Food Ministry
- Treasurer and Volunteer Coordinator: Bonnie Ruekgauer
  - Keeps track of all finances of the FM and sets up help for preparing the meals
- Secretary: Jackie Thomas
  - Keeps records of meetings, all FM associated documents and building use forms.
- Information Officer: Sue Smith
  - Provides information about FM to committee members, HomeFront (along with other partnering groups), UUCWC Board, Church members and the community.
- Food Collections Officer: Mike Muccioli
  - Tracks all food items in stock, donated items and dollar value, keeps current inventory and determines items needed for upcoming food service.
- Purchasing: Elliott Dunner and Bernie Ruekgauer
  - In coordination with food collections officer, shops for necessary food items and delivers items to the church.
- Liaison: Bernie Ruekgauer
  - Coordinates with HomeFront, Social Justice Committee, Kitchen Operations Team and Caring Ministry
- Member: Nancy Neff

The Food Ministry staffing on food preparation days is as follows:

- Chefs
- Team Scheduler
- Assembly Coordinator
- Food Assembly Team
- Food Delivery Drivers
- Cleanup Team

In addition to the FM Team, there are fourteen members of the Congregation who donate food, help to prepare and/or deliver the meals.

In the future the Food Ministry will continue to search for more opportunities to serve the needs of the general public by increasing the number of meals that are prepared in partnership with organizations whose mission(s) and purpose(s) are congruent with the mission and purpose of UUCWC.

*Rollie Rahn and Mike Muccioli, Co-Chairs*

## **FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Fundraising Committee is to plan and implement events, sales and other activities that raise money for the general operation of UUCWC. In the 2012-13 fiscal year, the revenue goal of the Fundraising Committee was set to help close a deficit in the proposed budget for 2012-2013 and represented a 17% increase over the amount budgeted in the previous year.

This committee has, for the last few years, been made up of a chairperson who provides organization, labor and support and temporary members who lead or contribute their time to individual fundraising events. These are often events for which they have a special talent or mission.

Fundraising events or efforts in 2012-13 included those on the following list in alphabetical order. For each, I have listed the leaders and/or the most involved people in planning the fundraiser. It often takes many volunteers to make an event successful, and it is impossible to mention everyone. All volunteers and participants are greatly appreciated, and I apologize in advance for not being able to list everyone by name. Without the outstanding work and dedication of so many people, fundraising at UUCWC would not be possible.

- Airport Transport - Bernie Ruekgauer and friends- over 60 trips taken
- Amazon Weblink - Susan Irgang
- Auction – Jayme Trott, Connie Schofer, Rollie Rahn, Sparky Morrison, Colin Unsworth, etc. etc.
- Musical Event – Wendy Fever and Sheila, Holly Bussey
- Cookbooks – Barbara Drew
- Holiday Plants – Donna Miller
- iGIVE – Susan Irgang
- UUCWC Jewelry – Barbara Drew
- Sock Hop – Barbara Drew, Karen DiGeorgio
- Spring Flower Sale – Donna Miller
- Karaoke – Barbara Drew, Connie Schofer
- Yard Sale – Connie Schofer, Nancy Cox, Karen Scheick and many others
- It's Nutts – Kathy Frey, Heidi Dalzell

*Connie Schofer, Chair*

## **Grounds Committee**

A few minor maintenance items were completed this past year. The Children's Garden was reworked with more durable materials, gated and edged by Colin Campbell. The Girl Scouts and Alumni have planted this garden with various flower and veggie seedlings.

The Children's Garden & Allie's Veggie Garden are continuing to be managed by Philo Elmer, to ensure Green Sanctuary's best practices are followed. The Memorial Garden is being managed by Bernie Ruekgauer and team.

Grounds has developed "Handy Hands," a list of minor repairs. It is posted periodically to congregants via the weekly church bulletin (as in fixing wheelbarrows and dumpster gate). We have an on-line mowing schedule for Church lawn cutting and are managing volunteers. The meadows have increased in size, as suggested by our Green Sanctuary policy.

We were lucky with Storm Sandy's clean up. The Osage orange tree underbrush by the driveway and mailbox was cleaned up by county/township workers, and we had a "lone soul" work on the pin oaks by the driveway entrance as well as the pine trees.

Minor improvements to the wooden swing set and playground have been made. We acquired a replacement gym/swing set, via a donation. Sandy Muccioli is currently working on a CADD design/plan for the future playground's site. We have established a picnic area for our staff by the fellowship hall. We acquired by donation a table and chairs. Sadly poison ivy remediation in this area has slowed completion. Adopt-a-garden-bed has the same people as last year.

The garden shed has been thinned out and will have shelving installed to house boxed seasonal items. Painting and repair of the outside lower edging will be done over the summer.

Future improvements include:

- Main entrance garden which houses birdbath and Peace Pole/Fellowship wall and parking lot islands,
- Weeding has become too extensive to keep up with. Need low-maintenance, heat tolerant plantings in these areas.
- Need to increase volunteer involvement.
- Looming: concern for the asphalted areas and longevity of ride-on mower.

*Kathleen Konopka, Grounds Committee*

### **UUCWC – HomeFront Community Partnership**

The Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing continues to support the outstanding work and progress demonstrated by the HomeFront organization in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. Our church has been involved with HomeFront for over 14 years, giving support when and where needed – weekly tutoring, summertime enrichment programs, meals for a variety of programs for both adults and children. We fully support their efforts to secure funding from all sources to help cover various expenses. The HomeFront effort to provide support for children and low income families is so needed in the area of Mercer County. We feel they truly have their goals and mission in the right place.

The cooperative relationship between HomeFront and UUCWC serves as a model for other organizations to join together in making a difference. We hold HomeFront responsible for providing us the guidance and opportunity to help those in need. Our joint efforts can be summarized as follows:

- Monday evening tutoring services for approximately 30 students (Grades 1-10), which includes one-on-one tutoring. Supplies and equipment, plus a healthy dinner, are provided by the church.
- Opportunities for local college and high school students to do direct tutoring of the children who are bused to our site.
- Summer program of 6-8 Wednesday night enrichment activities on site or at an appropriate place (farm visit, hiking trails, guest speakers, and special learning activities).
- Providing student backpacks in September.
- Winter holiday gift certificates to each child in the tutoring program for them or their families.
- Donations of household furniture for HomeFront to distribute to needy families.
- Meals provided directly to various HomeFront programs to support their efforts to serve all ages:
  - The Kinship Program at the Lawrence Community Center (meals for children and supervising adults)
  - Transitional Living Commitment (a family support program)
  - Joy, Hopes and Dreams Tutoring Program at the Lawrence Library
  - Wednesday night tutoring program held at the HomeFront Center

The church continues to support HomeFront and their efforts. They are the key resource in helping the homeless and low income people. Not only do they give children the opportunities listed above, but they also provide training of parents, assistance to families in finding a place of their own, stability in family, special financial support, food pantry opportunities, childcare, homeless prevention programs, and safety as a family. The specialists at HomeFront know how to make positive things happen.

*Bernard Ruekgauer, Chairperson, Homefront Tutoring Program*

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Membership Committee comprises eleven members as of June 2013. This committee welcomes visitors, enables the path to membership, supports new members, and contributes to database management of members and friends and other duties that support this community.

Current members include Chris and Mary Blaydon, Nancy Cox, Penny Gardner, Frank Holstein, Richard Knight, Sparky Morrison, Rollie Rahn, Lynda and Roger Shapiro (co-chairs), and Colin Unsworth. Others on the committee this past church year include Deb Couch, Linda and Denis Jensen, Arlene Naber, Bonnie Ruekgauer, and Paul Tuerff.

As a committee, we support the UUCWC mission by:

- Recognizing the importance of each person entering our congregation.
- Being a gentle presence, guiding newcomers and welcoming them as they transition into our liberal religious community.
- Acknowledging and celebrating the commitment that membership implies.
- Supporting members by helping to develop connections within our caring community.
- Respecting and encouraging the development of personal spiritual exploration, realizing that each individual's spiritual quest is different.

Our goals for the church year 2012-2013 focused on a few areas, mostly involving efforts to build on the successes of the committee from the previous years. Goals included:

- Recognize, greet and make welcome every visitor.
- Engage people during hospitality events to expand upon the communal feelings people enjoy.
- Seek ways to encourage more visitors to explore UUCWC.
- Ensure people understand our paths to membership and communicate the value of membership to help people best decide if this community is right for them.
- Support the overall goals and objectives of the Board.

### **2012-2013 Accomplishments**

As of June 30, 2013 our membership roster includes 234 adults; this is a reduction from 265 as of June 30, 2012. This decrease reflects, in part, our work with Stewardship to update files and member lists following the canvass.

The committee has completed numerous activities, both one-off actions and those requiring a continuous commitment. A recap is highlighted here.

- We successfully recruited and maintained a team of greeters and ushers who play a crucial role at every service. This work involves substantial coordination, with a special focus required for special events and "fifth Sundays."
- We committed to each other to particularly make a point of attending fellowship hour to facilitate introductions, welcome visitors and encourage engagement.
- We continued the long-standing practice of sending personal notes to all visitors who sign the registration book.
- We conducted UU101 every fourth Sunday, offering lunch and conversation to those exploring UUCWC.
  - While everyone is welcome at UU101, we particularly invite frequently returning visitors.
- We managed UU201 and held a full program in the fall. The spring session was canceled because we didn't have enough participants. This came after we attempted to increase participation by changing the structure to fewer sessions, but more hours per session.
- We recognized new members during services throughout the year and particularly focused on a year-end service in May. This was followed by the committee hosting a new member brunch. About 30 people attended.
  - We send notes to new members, recognizing their 3, 6 and 12 months of membership.

- We maintained the photo version of the membership directory, ensuring new members are photographed and uploaded to the web site. Photos of new members are also posted on the bulletin board ASAP after their signing.
- We regularly tracked visitor activity and reasons members leave UUCWC.
- We conducted First Sundays during fellowship hour in the fall, creating a focused setting for visitors to ask questions. In the second half of the year, we elected to cancel the table top approach and strengthen our members' efforts to "work the room" during coffee hour.
- We updated the new member welcome kits to reflect new UUCWC leadership and continued to resupply the office as needed throughout the year.
- We maintained a full library of UUA brochures dealing with the UU views on various issues (i.e. Interfaith Marriage, Jesus, The Bible, God and Gay & Lesbian issues to name a few). We introduced a UUCWC-specific brochure to support those with questions about our community.
- We supplied name tags to all congregants, particularly focusing on supplying new members as soon as possible. This is done in conjunction with Communications, with Lori O'Neil designing the tags and Membership producing them.
- We produced the church's annual certification to UUA.
- We produced quarterly reports highlighting membership changes throughout the year and distributed the reports to all leadership groups.
- We participated in every Council Meeting, as well as special task force meetings regarding signage, storage, etc.
- We produced five newsletter articles for *Crossings* and several blog entries.
- We tested the idea of promoting Sunday services in the free Hopewell newspaper, which did trigger an increase in visitors. We will look to expand this in the new year.
- We served as witness at new member "book signings."
- The committee worked closely with the chair of the Stewardship Committee to track those who have not pledged or who have not honored their pledge. We then contacted those people to determine if the reason they are not pledging is due to a hardship, or if they wish to be moved to friend status or simply be removed from membership.

*Roger and Lynda Shapiro, Co-Chairs*

## **MEMORIAL GARDEN**

The UUCWC Memorial Garden continues to serve the needs of our church community. During the past year, we have added the ashes of June Vogel (November 2012) and reserved one site for future use. As of June 2013, we have officially identified and recorded 28 sites for individuals, interments or reserved locations.

It appears that at this time, we will need to turn our attention to the upkeep of the Memorial Garden and the constant landscape issues. Challenges and enhanced beautification are being planned for the 2013-2014 church year.

1. The cedar panels that were installed along the east side of the garden last summer will need to be reinforced with concrete footings.
2. Consideration is being given to adding a second row of cedar panels to fill in the space between the original inside row. This will function as an additional visual and sound barrier.
3. No new memorial benches have been added to the church property in recent years. We need to explore options for adding a few more around the church grounds.
4. The grass seems to have filled in nicely, thanks to help from much rain during the spring of 2013.
5. The south side of the garden has seen a new pathway to the Meditation Trail. The upkeep of this entrance way will become part of the mowing schedule. A new sign will be placed in an appropriate location.
6. Around the church grounds, one will find several memorial trees. We are exploring ways to mark each of these trees, without harming the trees or interfering with the grass cutting. Memorial trees are noted on the Grounds site plan.
7. There is much record keeping and paper management to be done. A system to record fees, maintain a file on each individual, and make sure all records are complete, needs to be established.
8. Time permitting, we hope to display brass name plates on a large wooden entrance gate to the Memorial Garden.
9. On a personal note, I have been chairing this committee for over 12 years, so the issue of identifying and training my replacement is now due.

*Bernie Ruekgauer, Chair*

### **NEW PERSPECTIVES ANXIETY/DEPRESSION/BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP**

New Perspectives is a non-sectarian group for the support of individuals with depression, anxiety, and bipolar conditions. The group is open to members and non-members of the church.

- While the total group size is about 35 members, the usual attendance is about 5 due to the nature of the illness and conflicting commitments.
- The group has been in existence for twelve years and meets every other Monday, including holidays.
- All information and group membership is strictly confidential except for the identity of the two facilitators.
- There are no costs to the church associated with attending the group (the facilitator pays for the Web site ([www.hughes13.com](http://www.hughes13.com)) annual registration and maintenance.
- New Perspectives is listed with the NJ Self-Help Clearinghouse ([www.njgroups.org](http://www.njgroups.org)).
- Patients receiving treatment at Princeton House are often referred to New Perspectives.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Nominating is a free-standing committee, elected by the congregation. Its task is to nominate candidates for all open positions on the Board, Chairs of Committees and all members on Nominating, Endowment and the Committee on Ministry.

Members of the Nominating Committee: Dianne Ross (Chair), Pam Shadzik, Bud Johnson, and Bruce McIntyre.

Goals for the 2012-2013 church were as follows:

- Met twice monthly
- Sought candidates who the committee chairs or others have deemed to be leaders
- Interviewed potential candidates
- Encouraged all committee chairs to be developing leadership within their committee
- Attempted to name diverse people to the annual slate to achieve balance from the standpoint of gender, age, length of membership, race and culture
- Educated the congregation about the nominating process
- Creates and gathered applications and bios for the Settled Ministry Search Community
- Gathered job descriptions from committees to provide information during interviews (received half)

Filled following positions: Board President, three Board Trustees, Nominating member, RE chair, Community-Building Ministry facilitator, Fundraising coordinator, Grounds Ministry leader, Caring Ministry Leader.

Future plans:

- Fill positions for Stewardship and Finance for this church year
- Gather remaining job descriptions from Building, Council for Faith in Action, Denominational Affairs, Finance, Endowment, Community-Building Ministry, Grounds, Social Action, Technology, Worship Associates

Positions to fill for the 2013-2014 church year: Secretary, Adult RE, Building, Denominational Affairs.

## OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

The Office Administrator increased hours for this part time position to 30 hours per week, reporting to the minister and responsible for weekly production of the *Crossings II*, Orders of Service, church-wide emails, maintenance of office and website calendars, maintenance of membership database, and supporting the work of the Minister, Board of Trustees and various committees and groups in their mission, particularly Rentals, Building, and Communications.

Two major responsibilities were also assumed with the additional hours. First, the office now provides complete administrative support for the rental function, coordinated by Mike Muccioli.



The office's responsibility for this task includes handling initial contacts with the public, scheduling, contract preparation and execution, as well as maintenance of all records and collection and tracking of payments. Working with Mike, all forms, contracts and supporting documentation were updated and organized this year, and an increase in rental rates was recommended and approved. The second responsibility assumed with the extra hours was support of the work of the Treasurer by learning and using QuickBooks to pay expense reimbursements from committees and staff, and other invoices that are not paid online.

Other projects included:

- Worked with Ken McAlister to upgrade the office computer with increased memory, a solid state drive, a new disc drive and USB 3.0 port as well as Adobe Acrobat software; this upgrade should significantly extend the life and improve the functionality of the office's computer.
- Sourced and made recommendations to the Treasurer for a change in trash removal service which will also include timelier pickup of recyclables and will bring the church a cost savings. The changeover will occur when the current contract expires in August 2013.
- Worked with Membership, Stewardship and RE to better welcome and track visitors and others who are not yet Friends or Members of the UUCWC community.
- Created and/or contributed to creation of policies for Office Communication, Inclement Weather, and Key Usage.
- Worked with new sexton(s) to source and order green supplies for the church as well as to set up inventory tracking system for supplies.
- Worked with Transitional Minister Rev. Jennifer Brooks to improve signage in the lobby, set up stakeholder meetings and other tasks.
- The fiscal year also started with a renovation to the church office last summer, including new carpeting, painting, and replacement furniture. The entire office space was reconfigured, packed and unpacked by the Office Administrator with help from Holly Bussey and Nancy Neff, with the work done by the ROMEOS, Building's Andrew Kidd, and Jon Holcombe.

*Susan Irgang, Administrator*

## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Personnel Committee is to promote the quality of the services delivered by the church staff, and act as advocate for staff salary, benefits and working conditions. The committee acts to hire, promote and retain staff in accordance with sound human resources principles, UUA ethics and policies, applicable federal and state labor laws and budgetary resources.

Committee Members: Lou Csabay (chair), Jeana Bateman, Scott Drew, Sandy Manning, Jane Shafer.

The present committee was established in August, 2012, consisting of the above-named members, adding Bill Cox as the Board Liaison, and George Faulkner and Pam Shadzik as consultants on an as-needed basis.

The Board of Trustees charged the committee with the following, in priority order:

1. Establish a position description and hiring protocol for a new church sexton, and hire someone by September 2012.
2. Provide members of existing staff with employment letters, detailing the elements of their salary, benefits and specific arrangements for the 2012-2013 church year.
3. Establish a conflict-resolution policy and expense reporting protocol for all staff positions.
4. Attend the annual staff retreat
5. Interview all staff members personally and confidentially regarding their positions and problems/improvements that can be made on their behalf.
6. Establish a database of all personnel policies and communication documents; provide access-to and/or files of them to the church administrator; so there is a parallel record of all committee activities and actions.
7. Review all existing position descriptions, bringing them up-to-date and amending as necessary.

As of this writing, these seven assignments have been completed.

In addition to these actions, the committee also:

- Acted on behalf of the DRE to bring our policies regarding that position into compliance with LREDA
- Established a part-timer paid holiday, pro-rated vacation, and sick time benefit
- Amended compensatory time policy in accordance with the Federal Labor and Standards Act
- Successfully settled an employee dispute over benefits entitlements
- Provided a workshop at the annual retreat for staff, establishing the elements of our culture and what could be improved
- Updated the UUCWC personnel manual to be in compliance with UUA guidelines consistent with our budgetary constraints
- Hired the church accompanist as an employee of the church, ending her tenure as a contractor
- Hired a second sexton
- Represented UUCWC at semi-annual meetings of Regional Leadership Leaves Committee
- In cooperation with the minister and treasurer, recommended and had approved staff raises for the 2013-14 church year
- Increased the minister's expense account to UUA standards

### **Summary of Observations and Challenges**

The staff of the UUCWC is competitively paid and treated fairly and ethically. Overall they continue to be happy employees and are navigating the "transitional" period well.

The chair of the committee has been elected to, and continues to be an active member of, the Ministerial Search Committee. This is especially positive, considering the staff is being interviewed by this committee and being given the opportunity to communicate what they want in a new supervisor.

The chair also acted on behalf of the UUCWC as a delegate to the UUA General Assembly this year. Another positive element is that he learned a great deal about sound UUA policies and procedures there.

The challenges for the staff in 2013-14 will continue to include those challenges associated with yet another change in their reporting relationship, that being a new settled minister.

Our ability as a congregation to provide raises for staff continues to be a major obstacle to staff satisfaction. We even went a full two years recently with no raises for staff. Resolving this should be a continued priority of the board.

Effective governance of the Committee and Board accountability for its actions should be a high priority of the committee and during the past year, the chair appeared before the Board on seven occasions. This relationship is critical to the committee's success.

The Committee plans on meeting as a whole this October, and prior to that will ask the Board president to provide the 2013-14 goals and objectives for it to continue its work.

*Louis J. Csabay, Chair*

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Membership: Robin Pugh (DLRE), Scott Umlauf (chair), Noelle Kahney (secretary), Jennifer Rehbein, Barbara Fernandez, Mike Muccioli, Barbara Schroeder-Jensen.

The Sunday Children's Religious Education program was well-attended this year: 94 children were registered. An all-ages class was taught at 9:15am, and pre-K through 8th grade was taught at 11:00am. In addition 32 adults and youth volunteered to teach classes, including 20 lead teachers, which is an excellent level of involvement. This year we were scheduled to offer OWL 7-8 but because we only had 4 students committed to attend, we decided to postpone OWL until 2013-14 when we could add additional students from the current 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

The Youth Group continued to be a small but strong program under the direction of Sallie Dunner, Susann Mullins and Colin Campbell. Youth Group met every other Sunday through most of the year and was well-attended. One member attended the annual UU- UNO conference for youth. The year ended with a Bridging Ceremony for four of our high school graduates.

In addition to regular classes, several Special Sundays were held in which classes were combined. Service projects were carried out during some of these classes, including preparing

lunches and bundling silverware for Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. Outside of regular programming, several events were held. These included:

- Family Game Night where board and card games were played
- HomeFront Holiday Craft Fair
- Christmas Pageant
- Two Teacher Appreciation Brunches (fall and spring)
- Easter Egg Hunt

The RE Committee applauds the work of the Safe Congregation Task Force for drafting a Safe Congregation Policy and accompanying procedures. The Board passed the Policy this year, and the procedures are expected to be adopted during the summer of 2013.

The Congregation's Five Year Strategic plan was passed this year by the Board. The RE Committee is working on implementing its part of the plan. This year we planned how to offer OWL K-1 in 2013-14 and to implement the Safe Congregation Policy in 2013-14.

All in all, the Children's RE program had an active year and continues to be a draw for families attending UUCWC.

*Scott Umlauf, Chair*

## **RENTAL REPORT**

The rental of our facilities, as an income activity, falls under the Finance Committee. It is coordinated by Mike Muccioli, Susan Irgang and Jane Shafer. This year the paperwork function was taken over by our Office Administrator, Susan Irgang. The Rental Policies and Procedures have been reviewed and updated. Rental fees, with the approval of the Finance Committee, have increased by 10% to cover the ever increasing costs incurred by the Church. Susan has implemented a new filing system and has created an electronic record of all rental contracts, forms and activities. We currently have four long-term renters who use our facilities during the year.

- Concerts at the Crossing - Scott Cullen continues to hold concerts on various dates during the year. These are well attended, and new people who attend our services will often tell us that their first visit to UUCWC was at one of the concerts.
- Hopewell Valley Chorus - This group of 80 voices uses the Sanctuary on a regular basis for rehearsals and concerts.
- The New Jersey Support Group (transgender support and education group) meets in our Church monthly and uses our facilities for their yearly picnic.
- Capital Singers of Trenton - a nonsectarian, nonpartisan, semi-professional mixed chorus that strives to promote the art of choral singing and enrich the cultural life of New Jersey. They have returned to our facilities for their rehearsals and concerts.

UUCWC has rented the Sanctuary, Crossings Room, class rooms and kitchen to various individuals and groups for weddings, training classes, educational classes and private parties scattered throughout the year. As always, the Rental facilitators will strive to ensure that the rental of our Church will not impact the availability of the building for use by UUCWC for meetings and events.

*Mike Muccioli, Susan Irgang and Jane Shafer*

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

The Social Justice Committee (SJC) organizes and implements social justice projects that enable the UUCWC community to serve the larger community. In addition, we offer assistance to others to implement their own projects. We also recommend to the Council for Faith in Action (CFA) deserving organizations to support from the 50% of the Sunday collection. Our projects and donations help UUCWC to become a dynamic, recognized force in our community by assisting those in need.

### **Loaves and Fishes**

Working with the UU Princeton congregation, we prepared 800 lunches for Loaves & Fishes on Friday, March 29 at UUCWC and prepared and served 800 meals on Saturday, March 30 at St. Mary's Cathedral in Trenton.

The Loaves and Fishes project is the largest Social Justice Committee undertaking each year. This year, 91 members volunteered to help. Tasks ranged from cooking and serving food at St. Mary's Cathedral to making brownies and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the attendees to take home. This is a great opportunity for families to get involved.

### **HomeFront Programs**

*Back to School Drive:* We again increased the number of children who benefited from the HomeFront back to school drive. Twenty-five children were able to start school with new clothing, shoes, school supplies and backpacks purchased by UCWC sponsors.

*Holiday Program:* UUCWC collected funds for the Holiday Wishes program that ensures holiday gifts for all of our HomeFront children.

*Mitten Tree:* The annual Mitten Tree was again decorated with hats, scarves and gloves for HomeFront children and their families.

*Preservation Center:* Susan Irgang, Juliet Marlier, and Ronnie Dobrowolski did the shopping this year and the CFA provided the funding. UUCWC sponsors a room at the HomeFront Family Preservation Center. Twice a year, we provide home furnishing such as linens, towels, lamps, and other items. The family takes these items with them when they are placed in permanent housing. The Family Preservation Center provides safe haven with private family

rooms. Comprehensive programs and services help homeless families break the cycle of poverty.

### **Morrisville Food Center**

The Food Center, housed in the Morrisville Presbyterian Church, supplies bags of groceries to the disadvantaged in Morrisville and Trenton. We are one of the center's largest cash donors with our annual contribution from the Sunday collection. In addition to our cash contribution, a contingent from UUCWC contributes time each week working at the Food Center taking on tasks that run from coordinating volunteers to loading shopping bags with food.

Many members of the congregation donated generous amounts of food to the "Don't Come to Church Empty Handed" Food Drive for the benefit of the Morrisville Food Center. Every week, George and Linda Faulkner transported the bags of food left in the lobby to the Food Center. Mary Kay Mitchell and Debbie West participated in the Center's annual "Hike Against Hunger," donating pledged funds they collected.

### **Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK)**

This year we more than doubled the number of frozen turkeys donated by delivering over 25 turkeys to the TASK facility. We also continued to make a monetary donation.

### **Recommended Donations**

UUCWC generously earmarks 50% of the Sunday collection to Social Justice causes. In addition to the contributions to TASK and the Morrisville Food Center, the SJC recommended and the CFA approved donations to the Coalition for Peace Action and the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.

### **Food Ministry**

The Social Justice Committee sponsors the Food Ministry, which prepares and delivers meals in cooperation with organizations such as HomeFront. Their activities are covered elsewhere in the Annual Report.

### **Social Justice Committee Transitions**

I have completed my first year (2012-2013) as chair and am indebted to Ronnie and Ed Dobrowolski for their guidance and support. I would like to express my appreciation to the Council for Faith in Action, dedicated committee members and the many members and friends of the congregation who have supported the UUCWC social justice projects. Current members of this committee are Jim Bicksler, Carole Erb, Jim Erb, Juliet Marlier, Bernie Ruekgauer, and Debbie West.

*Mary Kay Mitchell, Chair*

## STEWARDSHIP TWO YEAR SUMMARY REPORT 2010 – 2013

Stewardship overview: Responsible for managing and coordinating the overall Stewardship activities for the church and its ministries. Challenge members and friends to practice a stewardship way of life by sharing their Time, Talent, and Treasure with the focus on fulfilling the mission statement of the church.

### Stewardship 2011-2012 report to UUCWC

This was my third year leading your Stewardship Team as Chairperson. With the personal health issues in our home, I relied on Mike Hanson as my co-chair as we prepared for our first face-to-face all member canvass in at least five years. Other members of my team included George Faulkner, Holly Bussey, and Peter Raffle. Additional support was provided by our entire Finance Committee and over fifty trained canvassers, who were able to receive training from our professional Stewardship Leadership from the UUA.

I continued to provide writings on a monthly basis in the *Crossings* newsletter and on the church website presenting different aspects of stewardship in the life of a church community and to begin the conversations around annual pledge support in advance of any fund drive activity. This year we further refined and implemented the on-line pledge form which accounts for more than 60% of all pledge commitments received.

This year's pledge drive was set up as a face to face conversation; our theme was "Celebrating Our Abundance," which used personal testimonies from several constituencies of the congregation to show the need for 100% participation.

The campaign began at the end of January with a training session provided by Laurel Amabile, UUA's Director of the Annual Program Fund. Four weeks later, the first week of March, she returned to train us in the specifics of the face to face canvass. Over fifty members volunteered and each was assigned no more than three households to contact and in no more than ten days. The canvass period began after a March 17, 2012 Canvass Kick-Off Dinner, which featured appropriate "green" menu items in honor of the canvass and St. Patrick's Day. The dinner was organized by Jon Holcombe, ably assisted by Mike Muccioli, Rollie Rahn and the Kitchen Ministry.

Over an 8 week period, March 1st through the Annual meeting on May 20, 2012, we were able to get pledges from 170 (out of 187) households, with a 5% increase in number of pledged dollars even though the number of households remained flat.

- As of Sunday, May 20, we had received pledges for the new fiscal year from 168 member and friend households.
- After close of the fiscal with the budget set, we raised an additional sum to close the canvass with a 3% increase over the previous years (5.8% increase).
- This was important in that this was the first year of our transitional minister and the need to fund our short term capital reserves was a big part of our pledge message.

THANK YOU to everyone who has completed this year's pledge.

2013 will be impacted by the work of the strategic planning group for the creation of our five year mission along with the search process.

I will be serving one more year of my second term as your Stewardship Chair and look forward to continuing to grow our generous hearts through our growing awareness of Stewardship and the importance of the whole congregation in the successes of this committee and its vision for the Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing.

### **Stewardship 2012-2013 Report to UUCWC**

This was my fourth and final year leading your Stewardship Team as its' Chairperson. Members of my team included: George Faulkner, Holly Bussey, and Mike Hanson. With over 35 members of our canvass team, this year's canvass, entitled "From the Heart" was another successful campaign season.

I continued to provide writings on a monthly basis in the *Crossings* newsletter and on the church website presenting different aspects of stewardship in the life of a church community and to begin the conversations around annual pledge support in advance of any fund drive activity. Quarterly statements were sent to all pledging households, 155 were through email and only ten were mailed the old fashioned way. With the addition of our ICON member database, running at full swing for the full year (began January 2012 – in the middle of the last fiscal year), we were able to track pledge activity closely and to monitor the month-to-month cash flow with the help of Beverly Railsback, our trusty Pledge Steward and George Faulkner, Treasurer. Collections in both the 2011 and 2012 fiscal years were a 94-95% of budget, a default rate of just over 4% which was close to our budgeted goal of 3% default.

The Stewardship Chair is a sitting member of the Finance Committee and it has been beneficial to Finance and Stewardship to share our perspectives in the budgetary decisions that need to be made and monitored.

This year we further refined and implemented the on-line pledge form which accounts for almost 70% of all pledge commitments received. In addition we refined the on-line materials to include a Fair Share Giving calculator that was developed by a statistician from Colorado, Stan Kidder, with whom I served on the APF Committee of the UUA for several years.

This year's pledge drive was, once again set up as a face to face conversation. Our theme was "From the Heart" – for which we used materials, stickers, buttons, and signage throughout the church building. The emphasis this year was even more stream-lined than last year with a request specifically to fund our Ministerial Search Committee's work and to fund on an annual basis the capital reserve fund (as outlined in our Five Year Strategic Plan).

Thirty-five members volunteered and each was assigned no more than three households to contact and in no more than ten days. The canvass period began after March 17, 2013. Because of a lower level of leadership to canvass this year vs. last year's 50 volunteers, we relied



additionally on a mailing, email follow-ups weekly and a phone-a-thon prior to Easter Sunday. All done, in hopes of having a very realistic number to work from through the budgeting process.

Here are some highlights to report:

- We were able to get pledges from 162 households out of 190 households, with a 5% increase in number of pledged dollars to date, in spite a net decline in households of eight.
- The final pledge total that is attainable for next year will reflect growth of 4%
- For the first time, all new members for the year (seven) have pledged for the 2014 fiscal year and many began pledge payments in the current year, which helps to keep our current income on target.
- A secondary pledge request was made based on the funds needed for the Ministerial Search, which to date raised 90% of the request.
- Reverend Jennifer Brooks delivered two sermons that spoke to Generosity, Community and Covenantal Relationships, which spoke directly to the financial support of our members and friends.

We are in a good position to finish out the year with a high level of collections (targeted email via ICON has been a wonderful tool in this regard). The rest depends on you.

We will continue to solicit pledges and gifts from friends and long time visitors who, for the first time, were invited to participate by mail.

I am completing my 2<sup>nd</sup> and final term as your Stewardship Chair. While I have been in conversation with several talented and competent members to succeed me, we end the year with the position open. I will continue to offer my support by maintaining the database and statements; hopefully will be able to offer some classes in the future on Family Finances, Stewardship and Philanthropy, topics that are close to my heart.

Wishing you all the very best as we move forward together.

*Jim Sanders, Chair  
May 19, 2013*

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

While our budgets always seem to be challenging, the past year was particularly so. At the May 2012 annual congregational meeting we presented and approved a 2012-13 budget that projected a substantial deficit. But we (the Board and Finance Committee) promised to come back in the fall with a revised and balanced budget. The revised budget was certainly “aggressive” or “optimistic” (choose your own adjective). Even so, we might conclude that the year was a success, since, though we finished with a deficit, it amounted to only 2.3% of the revised projected income. Total income itself was 1.7% short of the budget target and total expenses only 0.6% over the budget.

The highlights:

- Pledges deposited in the fiscal year were under budget by 4%. (Note: some pledges turned in late or at the last minute may have been deposited after July 1<sup>st</sup> and recorded as income for the 2013-14 year.)
- Fundraising, which carried a heavy burden, exceeded budget by 6%. In previous years, however, credit card processing fees associated with fundraising events were just offset from Fundraising income. But this past year we tracked those expenses separately under Operations. They included PayPal fees (mostly auction, but also for some pledge and other contributions), and fees (under Treasurer's expenses) charged by a credit card processor, that we have since terminated. We had paid this organization in past years amounts ranging between \$1,200 and \$1,900 per year. By switching to using only PayPal, we will save at least half that cost.
- With its popular programs, ARE's income exceeded budget, though its expenses were also higher by a lesser amount.
- Staff expenses exceeded budget, due to the overlap between our retiring minister and the transition minister and higher than budgeted expenses for the transition minister's health care coverage. However, the cost for the newly budgeted sexton position was below budget, due to the vacancy while we searched for a new sexton in the spring. (But as a result, cleaning service expenses were higher due to use of an outside service.)
- Building was under budget by a modest amount, but only because they had not had a chance to purchase certain items before the end of the year.
- Grounds was under budget, largely due to modest snow removal costs.
- Utilities (gas and electric) exceeded our budget by 9%.
- Total Operations exceeded budget by only \$936, while Program expenses were under budget by nearly \$300. However, Communications also wants to carry forward its remaining balance to cover previously planned purchases.
- Debt service (mortgage) was under budget, thanks to refinancing a new 10-year fixed-rate balloon loan.

While most of our income and spending appears in our operating budget, we also currently maintain several reserve funds for special purposes. In addition to contributing pledges and in other ways that appear as operating income, members and friends of UUCWC also make generous donations to such causes and outreach as the Food Ministry, HomeFront and Sustainability.

As Treasurer, I'd like to thank several people who have helped support this critical function and provided guidance. These include the Board and Finance Committee of course, but in particular Beverly Railsback (Assistant Treasurer), Jim Sanders (Stewardship), and Susan Irgang (Office Manager). During the past year, Susan has taken on paying many of the internal expense reimbursements and vendor bills. This not only splits up the work effort, but also enables each of us to review the other's transactions in our QuickBooks financial software, as we pass the working file back and forth through a "cloud" server. Further, it means we each have back-up copies in the event something happens to one of us or our computers. Finally, it allows me to take a vacation once in a while, though I make up for it during Susan's summer hiatus.

*George Faulkner, Treasurer*

## WORSHIP ASSOCIATE COMMITTEE

**WA Mission and Vision:** It is the mission of the Worship Associate Committee of UUCWC to facilitate and create worship services that support and enhance the vision and mission of this liberal faith community and of UUism. We work with the minister or guest speaker to plan and / or conduct worship services. It is the vision of the Worship Associate Committee of UUCWC to create and support communal worship that promotes our UU principles, values and history.

Current Members:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Start date</b>
Margaret DeAngelis	9/1/2008
George Desser	5/1/2010
Ben Thornton	5/1/2010
MJ Hansen (Chair-7/12)	9/1/2010
Rich DiGeorgio	7/1/2011
Bonnie Ruekgauer	9/1/2011
Penny Gardner	9/1/2011
Alex Dovgala-Carr	8/1/2012
Jim Bicksler	9/1/2012
Frank Holstein	9/1/2012
Sara Holcomb	9/1/2012
Terry Caton	2/1/2013
Marianne Alt	9/1/2013

Robin Pugh, DLRE, and Caryl Tipton, Director of Music Ministry, have been regular members of the committee. Rev. Jennifer Brooks joined us as our transitional minister starting in August, 2012 and attended her first WA meeting that month. Rev. Jennifer's first service was in September and the Sunday after the water service.

- Our WAs continue to assist in producing high quality Sunday morning Services.
- On October 26, 2013 we will hold our first retreat with Rev. Jennifer. This has been delayed twice due to Rev. Jennifer's scheduling conflicts.
- It has been requested that we begin (and continue) incorporating a focus on a single Candle of Fellowship once each month, having one or two individuals talk about what that candle means to them. This has not occurred yet but has been presented to Rev. Jennifer. This occurred in October, November, January, February and March of 2012
- Caryl Tipton did the analysis of the summer service questionnaire/feedback for Summer '12 - overall very positive. We will not have a summer service questionnaire for the years 2012-2013 since Rev. Jennifer is preaching two out of four Sundays throughout the summer.
- Service order has changed slightly.
  - Announcements have been moved to the beginning of the service rather than before the financial affirmation.
  - The prelude is played after the greeting and announcements.
  - The minister has chosen to walk out of the sanctuary, at the end of the service, before the congregation leaves.

- Minister has requested that we not read the fire exits or the silencing of cell phones.
- Not implemented from 2012: There was much discussion about how long to have the prelude, whether or not to allow congregants to come in to the sanctuary during the prelude and discussion about when to give announcements. This discussion continued into Spring '12 when it was decided to ask congregants to wait in the lobby until the prelude is over; the next time of entry is when the next hymn is sung.
- We would still like to have a better organization for our supplies – perhaps more permanent shelving or a cabinet for a specific area for WA supplies to not mix in with Choir supplies.
- We have made Google Docs the standard for depository of WA documents and spreadsheets
- We did not hold an end-of-the year social as we did last year (held at Margaret DeAngelis' home on June 16, 2012 attended by many Worship Associates, their family members and including Charles and Alison Stephens).
- The one service schedule began the week before Memorial Day and will end two weeks after Labor Day (9/15/13). 9/8/13 will be our water service
- Requirements for 2013 summer Order of Service preparation include securing an accompanist (Caryl has put together a list of willing accompanists for the summer), coordinating the service with the lay-led speaker or group, and sending the OOS to Nancy Neff who will prepare it. All will be the responsibility of the WA for that service.
- There has been a lot of discussion on who will operate the projector and be responsible for what is displayed during the service. WAs will not be taking on the additional responsibility but will need a schedule similar to the schedule provided by the sound committee.
- We are holding two service dates for beyond categorical thinking – requested by the search committee.

*MJ Hansen, Chair*