



## Annual Report 2017 - 2018

Towson Unitarian Universalist Church  
1710 Dulaney Valley Road  
Lutherville, MD 21093  
Office phone: 410-825-6045  
Office email: [churchoffice@towsonuuc.org](mailto:churchoffice@towsonuuc.org)  
[www.towsonuuc.org](http://www.towsonuuc.org)

Services: 9:30 AM and 11:15 AM early September through May  
10:30 AM June through early September  
Office hours: Monday – Friday, 10 AM – 3 PM

## **Vision Statement of TUUC**

*Our Vision is to be an intentionally inclusive community engaging with each other and the world in a heartfelt search for truth and meaning.*

## **Mission Statement of TUUC**

*Our Mission is to deepen our ethical and spiritual lives together as we work for racial, social, and environmental justice.*

## **Covenant Statement of TUUC**

As we endeavor to achieve our vision and mission, we do so in a spirit of mutual acceptance, openness and friendship. We make these promises as we carry out our work.

- To respect one another
- To learn from one another
- To nurture an environment of direct and positive communication
- To appreciate that we can accomplish together what we cannot accomplish alone
- To serve the free church tradition
- To maintain a strong commitment to community outreach
- To build hope through understanding
- To practice the principles that transform individual lives and realize beloved community

## **Minister**

Rev. Clare L. Petersberger

## **The Board of Trustees**

President	Jasmine Faelyn (2017 – 2018)
President –Elect	Neil Porter (2017 – 2018)
Treasurer	Vacant (2017 – 2019)
Secretary	Karyn Marsh (2016-2018)
Members-at-Large	Sue Walker (2016 – 2018) George Harrison (2016 – 2018) Carol Watkins (2017 – 2019) Luke Williams (2017 – 2019)
<b>Monitor</b>	Jay Herzog (2016 – 2018)

## **Standing Committees**

Committee on Ministry	Robin Sinn, chair
Endowment Committee	Bill Ward, chair
Nominating Committee	Karin Symonds, chair
Personnel Committee	Paul Konka, chair

## **The Operations Team**

President-Elect (Chair)	Neil Porter (2017 – 2018)
Communications Council Head	Scott Shane (2016 – 2018)
Finance Council Head	Monica Sweidel (2016 – 2018)
House and Grounds Council Head	Todd Robertson (2016 – 2018)
Inner Life Council Head	Jeanette Anders (2017 – 2019)
Outreach Council Head	Janet Schollenberger (2016 – 2018)
Religious Education Ministry Council Head	Jen Larson (2016 – 2018)
Sunday Services Council Head	Andrew Hager (2017 – 2019)
Director of Religious Education	Joyce Duncan, CRE (staff)
Church Administrator	Kai Aiyetoro (staff)
Music Director	Tracy Hall (staff)

## **Staff**

Director of Religious Exploration	Joyce Duncan, Credentialed RE
Director of Music	Tracy Hall
Church Administrator	Kai Aiyetoro
Administrative Assistant	Nancy Hannah
Bookkeeper	Mary Kay Baker

## Thank you to ALL of Our Volunteer Committees

(Our apologies to anyone missed in these lists.  
Please inform the office staff.)

### **2017 – 2018 Volunteers**

#### **Adult Religious Exploration Committee (ARE)**

Michael Magrogan, chair  
Jeff Savoye  
Amy Faelyn  
Art Starr

#### **Chalice Circle Committee**

Robin Sinn, chair  
Michael Magrogan  
Marcia Brooks  
MaryBeth Brizzolara

#### **Personnel Committee**

Paul Konka, chair  
John Mattingly  
Luke Williams

#### **Committee on Ministries**

Robin Sinn, chair  
Jen Larson  
MaryBeth Brizzolara  
Pat Mahoney  
John Barry  
Art Starr

#### **Nominating Committee**

Karin Symonds, chair  
Patti Barry  
Ben Gitelson  
Janet Kuperstein  
Nancy Mears

#### **Endowment Committee**

Bill Ward, chair  
Tim Boniface  
Jane Selewach  
Paul Konka  
At large members:  
Treasurer (vacant)  
Finance Chair (Monica Sweidel)

#### **Youth Religious Exploration Committee (YRE)**

Larry Magder, chair  
Melissa Reuland  
Patricia Lott  
Jen Larson  
Christy Clark  
Sarah Liske, Nursery Coordinator

#### **Audio Committee**

Jason Hauf, chair  
Andy Peterson  
Mike Tierney  
Michael Klapp  
Jason Braspenickx  
Mark Moseng

#### **Lay Worship Associates**

Andrew Hager, chair  
Timothy Boniface  
Karyn Marsh  
Jasmine Faelyn  
Tara McIntyre  
Josh Lindinger

#### **Caring Ministry Committee**

Lisa Lubomski, chair  
Jen Larson

#### **Caring Committee continues**

Iris Park  
Spice Kleinman  
Michael Magrogan

#### **Social Action Committee**

Lorraine Sorbello, chair  
Jane D'Ambrogi  
Janet Schollenberger  
Lavina Valesco  
Lois Hybl  
Marti MacKenzie  
Nancy Mears  
Sallij & Bill Ward  
Sheila Moore Malenski  
Stephen Brown-Pearn  
Sue Royer  
Sue Shankroff  
Lynn Davidson  
Christopher Croft  
Jeffrey Arnstein  
Wendell Finner  
Margee Bailey  
Monica Sweidel  
Jeanette Anders  
Jackie Wayland  
Nina Della Vecchia

#### **Lay Pastoral Associates**

Reverend Clare Petersberger, chair  
MaryBeth Brizzolara  
Andrew Hager  
Mimi Marks  
Art Starr  
Sue Walker

**Special Gifts**

Sue Shankroff, chair  
Herbert Shankroff  
Sue Royer  
Karin Symonds

**Membership Committee**

Karyn Marsh, chair  
Jane Selewach  
Andrew Hager

**Gallery Unicorn Committee**

Emily Tarsell, chair  
Bonnie Fous Reynolds  
Michael Magrogan  
Dianne Hosmer  
Dorothy Hosmer  
Carol Horst  
Mary Beth Brizzolara  
Joe Whitehill (deceased)

**Green Sanctuary Members**

Samantha Saalfeld, chair  
Catherine Morris  
Carel Hedlund  
Janet Schollenberger  
Kristel Donner  
Lois Hybl  
Lynn Davidson  
Marilyn Carlisle  
Barbara Conrad  
Michael Magrogan  
Rob Leighty  
Charlene Rossi  
Bill Ward

**Usher Members**

Claudia Sumler, chair  
Sue Walker  
Len Proctor  
Michael Magrogan  
Omi May  
Lois Hybl  
MaryBeth Brizzolara  
Usher Members continues  
Ken Kirchhofer  
Helen Reichel

**Music Committee**

Donn Teubner-Rhodes, chair  
Rick Bader  
Judi Clague  
Casey Mashburn  
Janet Kuperstein  
Sharen Camille

**Stewardship Committee**

Anita Cox, co-chair  
Monica Sweidel, co-chair  
Sue Royer  
Jason Braspennickx  
Neil Porter  
Marie Razulis  
Claudia Sumler

**Fellowship/Hospitality Committee**

Mimi Marks, co-chair  
Amy Faelyn, co-chair

**Where will you serve in the  
new fiscal year?  
For more info, contact the  
committee chair.**

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## FROM YOUR MINISTER – The Rev. Clare L. Petersberger

As your minister, this year it was an honor to conduct or participate in the following  
rites of passage:

### Child Dedications

- Hal Christopher Hewitt
- Greyson Oran Decoteau Toia

### Weddings

- Amelia Rose Citerone and Jacob Carl Wilson
- Joana Olson and Stephen Royal
- Kathy Tripp and Joe Tumbler
- Anastasia and Bethany Ward (renewal of vows)
- David Mattingly and Bilal Askaryar

### Memorial Services

- Honored one-year anniversary of the death of Brian Basik
- Helen Barshay
- Charlie and Ellen Culbertson
- Waheeb Dajani (graveside service)
- Deborah Digges
- Virginia Duncan
- Marilyn Ham
- John Hannaway
- Harriet Quandt
- Joe Whitehill

Bridging worship service on June 10 honoring graduating high school senior

- Zinnia Epps

## ORDINATION

It was an honor to participate in the ordination of The Rev. Diana Davis at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Baltimore on December 4.

## WORSHIP

This year, we engaged theme-based ministry in a new way. We joined with over 145 Unitarian Universalist congregations that subscribe to a program entitled "Soul Matters." In addition to offering monthly packets with resources for worship, religious education, and small group ministry, this program hosts monthly Zoom meetings to brainstorm ways to engage the spiritual question more deeply. It was a joy to brainstorm a month of Sundays with colleagues in different parts of the United States! And Soul Matters even hosts a Facebook page with a Spotify song list to enhance exploration of the themes:  
<https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

Our spiritual questions this year included "What does it mean to be a people of..."

September: Welcome

February: Perseverance

October: Courage

March: Balance

November: Abundance

April: Emergence

December: Hope

May: Creativity

January: Intention

June: Blessing

It was a pleasure to work with Emily Tarsell on the worship service preceding the third annual Gallery Unicorn Juried Art Show on the theme of "Beginning;" to work with Tracy Hall and Joyce Duncan on the December 17 multi-generational worship service that was a paragon of hope: Revels!; and to work with Al Muehlberger on a worship service on balance!

In this election year, it was a pleasure to welcome to our pulpit candidates who took seriously our themed-based ministry questions. Ben Jealous spoke about how our commitment to displaying Black Lives Matter banners in spite of repeated vandalism was an act of courage.



Jim Brochin spoke of our perseverance in lobbying for marriage equality over many years in Annapolis. Johnny Olszewski addressed balance in public education. Michele Guyton spoke of her experience of emergence through pain and heartache. And Rich Madaleno is scheduled to address creativity in terms of spiritual nurture on Mother's Day.

My thanks to our dedicated Lay Worship Associates: Andrew Hager, Tim Boniface, Karyn Marsh, and Kat Moseng. We are delighted to be welcoming back Sean Mackey as a Worship Associate!

And my thanks to Darla Tewell for reformatting our worship services to post on the TUUC website.

One TUUC member shared that they got tired of hearing about hope in December---since hope was our theme in December last year. I did not know that there could be too much hope. After conducting six services on the theme this year due to Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday, it gives me hope that Christmas Eve will not be on a Sunday again until 2023!!

Great gratitude to Anita Cox for volunteering to deliver the Time For All Ages in many of our worship services; to students in our religious exploration ministry and Joyce Duncan for delivering the Time For All Ages; to Carol Mason for delivering readings in worship throughout the year; and to all who delivered Stewardship Testimonials!

And my thanks to Tracy Hall, the TUUC Choir, and all our talented instrumentalists and vocalists who enhance our worship with their talents and thoughtful musical selections!

This year, I have intentionally included more of a language of reverence in worship. The purpose of this goal is not to promote a particular theology over another. The purpose of this goal is to acknowledge that language, and especially metaphor is a tool of religion just as microscopes and telescopes are tools of science.

For some, a language of reverence holds great meaning. For others it does not. Either way, one of our primary tenants as Unitarian Universalists is that “we need not think alike in religious matters to love alike.”

The purpose of worship is not to promote “right beliefs.” It is to help us to grow in right relationships. Right relationships invite us to deepen our understanding and tolerance of those with different theological beliefs. As Thomas Jefferson observed, “...it does me no injury for my neighbour to say there are twenty gods, or no god. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg. .” Jefferson was talking about freedom of conscience in religion in the United States. Let us bring his insight to our Meeting Room and foyer on Sunday mornings. For this is what it truly means to claim the religious identity of a Unitarian Universalist.

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

It was a pleasure to participate in the September teacher training and explore what wisdom our volunteer teachers hoped to pass on to our students. And it was a joy to work closely with Joyce Duncan on monthly times for all ages (many of which included the participation of our YRE classes this year) and the Family Christmas Eve service. I am looking forward to participating in YRE Sunday as we bridge Zinnia Epps into emerging adulthood!

With regard to adult religious education, in the fall, I facilitated a five-session new member orientation based on the UUA curriculum “New UU” with Andrew Hager, Karyn Marsh, Joyce Duncan, and Monica Sweidel. In the spring, I created a four-session exploration of Celtic Spirituality on the themes of hospitality and soul friendship; kinship with creation; mystery, spirit, and prayer; and pilgrimage.

I met with our Chalice Circle facilitators: Robin Sinn, Mary Beth Brizzolara, Marcia Brooks, and Michael Magrogan. More of the materials of Soul Matters was incorporated in the winter/spring session of Chalice Circles.

Heartfelt thanks to Michael Magrogan, Art Starr, and Jeff Savoye, for organizing adult religious education programs on a wide range of topics.

This year, I was invited to be part of a pilot program sponsored by *Well for the Journey* for eight local clergy to meet monthly for spiritual deepening. *Well for the Journey* received a grant for this program. We met (almost) monthly on a Monday from 9:30-2:30 to explore a spiritual question; journal; break bread together; engage in walking meditation; and deepen our connections as colleagues.

### PASTORAL CARE

I made 129 pastoral visits as of April 30. My thanks to our Caring Committee: Lisa Lubomski, Jen Larson, Spice Kleinmann, and Michael Magrogan for providing support ranging from cards to serving food at memorial service receptions. And my thanks to this year's Lay Pastoral Associates: Mary Beth Brizzolara, Mimi Marks, and Len Proctor. Nancy Mears is considering joining the Lay Pastoral Associates. This year, our congregation has experienced the deaths of several long-time members. These are significant losses. Caring is an essential part of any spiritual community. And at another point on the wheel, it was lovely to attend a baby shower for Nicole Brynes. I had officiated at her wedding and it was so exciting to see what has arrived in "the next chapter!"

### ADMINISTRATION

My heartfelt thanks to the Board of Trustees and the Operations Team and especially to Jasmine Faelyn and Dr. Neil Porter for serving two years at President and President-elect!

In addition to meeting with both leadership bodies, I met twice with the Sunday Morning Structure Task Force (thank you Karyn Marsh, Andrew Hager, Jen Larson, Joyce Duncan, Sue Walker, and Tracy Hall!)

It has been a pleasure to serve on the Governance Task Force with Jason Braspenickx, Chair; Karyn Marsh, Dan Alper, and Michael Magrogan. The Governance Task Force was charged by the TUUC Board with implementing recommendations from The Reverend David Pyle's assessment of

TUUC's governance. The Governance Task Force read "Governance and Ministry" by Dan Hotchkiss; researched the governing documents of other UU congregations; and had ongoing conversations with the TUUC Board and The Reverend David Pyle.

What is being proposed is experimenting, for one year, with a model adapted and adopted by other UU congregations, which empowers members and friends to engage in meaningful ministry together.

Heartfelt thanks to Robin Sinn for chairing this year's Committee on Ministries and to its members: John Barry, Mary Beth Brizzolara, Jen Larson, Patrick Mahoney, and Art Starr for their good work and wise counsel.

Great gratitude to our dedicated, creative, flexible, and visionary staff team: Kai Aiyetoro, Mary Kay Baker, Joyce Duncan, Tracy Hall, and Nancy Hannah!

### INNER LIFE

I stopped by at the end of the wonderful TUUCON weekend at TUUC to thank Kat Moseng and Lisa Barnett. Someone said the conference was "life transforming." There is no higher praise!

Don and I enjoyed the TUUC Auction, the performance of "Eleanor Roosevelt: Across a Barrier of Fear;" several birthday parties of TUUC members and friends; and several Town Hall Meetings!

I met regularly with the Membership Committee and thank Karyn Marsh for all her good work as Chair. As always, heartfelt thanks to the Harrisons for hosting such lovely New Member Potlucks. It was a pleasure to welcome 17 new members in January. Our next new member recognition will be on June 3.

## OUTREACH

Our Black Lives Matter banners were vandalized in July. In early August, TUUC received four e-mails and two phone calls asking us to take down our banners. We also received two e-mails of support and even an offer to pay to replace the banner from another UU congregation. I responded to the latter with notes of gratitude and to the former with invitations to the e-mailers and phone callers to dialogue on racial justice.

The banner by our front door was vandalized on August 21. Kai Aiyetoro and Mimi Marks were interviewed by The Baltimore Brew. I was interviewed by Catherine Rentz at the Baltimore Sun and Fox 45. I filed a report with the office of Attorney General Brian Frosch. The Reverend Susan Frederick-Gray, President of the UUA, sent a letter of support.

I met with Kai and Officer Arnett of the Baltimore County Police Department. Officer Arnett conducted a safety audit of our building and provided us with a written report.

Our Black Lives Matter signs were vandalized sometime between September 8-9. Jasmine and I filed an incident report with Officer Jordan of the Baltimore County Police.

On October 8, we celebrated the one-year anniversary of the installation of our Black Lives Matter banners with a service on the theme of "Courageous Conversations." The TUUC Puppet Thing participated in both worship services. Mr. Ben Jealous, the former Executive Director of the NAACP, spoke in the second service. Several members of A Dialogue on Race and Ethnicity participated in the second service. Mr. Jealous invited the media and we received this coverage:  
<http://www.wbalTV.com/article/church-rededicates-black-lives-matter-banner-after-vandalism/12805183>

After the signs were vandalized, again, we received this coverage:

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/baltimore-county/towson/ph-tt-banner-1018-story.html>

<http://www.wbaltv.com/article/black-lives-matter-banner-stolen-from-towson-church/13074631>

The Towson Times also wrote an article about us.

With this increased media attention came unwanted attention---anonymous mail with messages that were less than kind.

We moved forward with a community dialogue from 2-4 on November 12. J. C. Faulk co-facilitated.

Since more dialogue was desired, I recommended to the TUUC ADORE that they consider reading Debby Irving's *Waking Up White In America*. I am grateful to Darla Tewell and Mimi Marks for adapting a study guide for TUUC ADORE and to all the facilitators of the six discussions of this book. Local Presbyterian churches have been reading and discussing the book. And one Presbyterian congregation reached out to TUUC to ask about "next steps." This potential partnership is very exciting and I know the leadership of ADORE, with Sheila Malenski at the helm, will create "next steps" in terms of reflection and action.

Todd Robertson and Kai Aiyetoro did yeoman's work to get our new security system installed while anonymous angels worked to rehang the banners each time they were vandalized.

Most recently, we have been contacted by the local zoning office that we are out of compliance with our Black Lives Matter banners. The complaint was lodged anonymously. We will continue to move forward with our message of racial justice.

We participated, along with hundreds of other Unitarian Universalist congregations in "The Promise And The Practice" Sunday. We learned more about the experience of people of color in our association of congregations and raised over \$1,300 for Black Lives Unitarian Universalist.

In early December, I had the honor of being invited to deliver a prayer at a rally for a single-payer insurance program in Maryland. I got to meet Senator Bernie Sanders. This was my invocation which I offered as your minister:

*God of Love, "Great Author of every public and private good," we each have our own personal ways of understanding and honoring You. You, who from ancient times has joined us in relationships like covenant, compact, and constitution, the means by which we may collectively make promises and agreements to serve the common good, we pray, tonight, to lift up ways to serve the common good when it comes to providing health care for each and every person in our state.*

*In this week when some are retelling an ancient story preparing for the birth of one whose parents had no place to stay and no health insurance, remind us of our strong hope for leaders whose minds and hearts stir our souls with a vision of compassion and care for those in need of compassion and care---which at some point in our lives will be each and every one of us.*

*In this week when some are preparing to retell the ancient story of a group of leaders who resisted the injustice of a sacred space defiled guide our souls to resist the social injustice of souls defiled because they cannot afford care for their bodies; those who work but cannot afford the tests and prescriptions they need; those in need of healing who have nowhere else to turn for care but to an emergency room. Guide us to rededicate ourselves to health and wholeness---and the well-being of our neighbors and fellow citizens.*

*Great Author of every public and private Good, may you give us hope and dreams and leaders of wisdom, empathy, and vision---who will work for fundamental human rights. For we are each and all carriers of Your eternal and universal light. Amen.*

On January 29, at the invitation of Senator Brochin, I had the honor of delivering an Invocation to the Maryland State Senate. This was my invocation as a representative of TUUC:

*“God of truth, love, and justice, some say that on this day in 1820 a woman was born in Dorchester, Maryland, who would grow up to listen for your still small voice, and the truth that slavery was wrong and all people are created equal. This woman offered You her prayer, “I’m going to hold steady on You, an’ You’ve got to see me through.” This leader courageously followed the North Star for years to accompany more than 200 fugitive slaves to freedom---until a law was written and passed in our country that never again could any person own another person.*

*Tonight, like Harriet Tubman, may we listen for your voice calling us to name wrongs and envision a better way. May we also affirm, “I’m going to hold steady on You, and You’ve got to see me through.” May we follow our true north in our deliberations and decisions remembering those in our communities who have placed their faith and confidence in us. May we be grateful for the opportunity to draft, amend, and pass legislation that reflects our deepest values; makes a difference in the lives of citizens; and becomes part of our legacy. All this, we pray in the name of all that is holy. Amen.”*

I attended a pastor’s breakfast hosted by The Assistance Center of Towson Churches.

I have attended five meetings of local colleagues (not Unitarian Universalist) interested in forming a partnership, in part, to build affordable housing together. More information to follow after we get more concrete plans.

#### DENOMINATION

We took a collection for the UUA/UUSC Harvey Relief Fund in September.

We celebrated the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Justice Sunday in March.

I attended five meetings of The Chesapeake Unitarian Universalist Minister’s Association. Our collegial focus, this year, has been creating anti-oppressive and multi-cultural faith communities. I served as Treasurer of this organization.



I am currently exploring, with the Board, the possibility of having a half time ministerial intern at TUUC next year. A qualified candidate has expressed a strong interest in learning from and with TUUC. Being a teaching congregation entails a commitment of time and support on the part of the Minister and lay leaders. It also offers the reward of being a teaching congregation.

My heartfelt thanks to all who give so generously of themselves to nurture beloved community at TUUC.

---Rev. Clare

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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Jasmine Faelyn**

This was my second year serving as President of the Board of Trustees. It has been a productive year starting with the development of a Three-Year Rolling plan and subsequent progress toward meeting the goals set forth in the plan. Board meetings continue to run effectively with use of a consent agenda, open questions and a process observation report. I am proud of the accomplishments of the Board and the congregation. I look forward to continuing to serve in leadership roles after this year ends.

Building on strategic plans and annual plans from previous years, the TUUC Board of Trustees met in August 2017 to develop a 3 Year Rolling Plan with facilitation by Kären Rasmussen, a consultant from the Central East Region. The three Year Rolling Plan is a living document that is to be revised annually by adding the next year with new goals while removing achieved goals. The Board reviews and updates the plan regularly at monthly board meetings.

This Three-Year Rolling Plan has six overarching goals. These are: develop a congregational vision for lifespan religious education, address governance change, cultivate a shared understanding of fiscal responsibility and attitude of abundance, increase community engagement, become known for racial justice efforts, and grow spirituality and worship. Progress toward each of these will be

discussed below. A copy of the most current update on the plan is included at the end of this report.

#### DEVELOP CONGREGATIONAL VISION FOR LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Board was unable to initiate a visioning process for the Religious Education program this year. It remains on the radar for next year. The job description for the Director of Religious Education was updated to reflect the change from a 40 hour per week position to a 35 hour per week position.

#### ADDRESS GOVERNANCE CHANGE

In 2016-2017, the Board read and discussed the second edition of Governance and Ministry by Dan Hotchkiss and worked closely with Rev. David Pyle a consultant from the Central East Region who assessed the current governance structure.

For some background, Rev. David Pyle is an expert on governance and consults with numerous congregations in the Central East Region of the UUA. At the Board's request, he prepared a Governance Assessment in March 2017. In it, he reviews our current governance system, its strengths and challenges. He also provides recommendations and some advice on their implementation.

To summarize, our current governance structure is very unique. It is a compromise between different models including policy governance and portfolio boards. In essence, we have a two-board structure that discourages direct communication while encouraging conflict and confusion. It also requires a large number of elected positions. Some roles have redundancies in their responsibilities. Few roles have clearly outlined authority. Our system has been successful in maintaining the church due to the dedicated and hardworking individuals in leadership positions. However, it could be improved to become more efficient and adaptable to the realities of 21st century society, where many people do not have as much time for volunteering as lay leaders.

Rev. Pyle's recommendations include moving some of the Bylaws language, specifically those items that do not address the Board or the Minister, into governance policies. Shifting these would include

changing some of the elected positions outside of the Board into Board appointed positions. Recommendations also include changing the Operations Team into a Program Council to coordinate programs and ministries. For the operation and administrative decision-making and coordination, Rev. Pyle suggests forming an Executive Committee, which would comprise of the Minister, the Church Administrator, and two lay people, one of which would be knowledgeable on finances of the church. Other recommendations provide more detail on what roles the Board, Minister, Program Council, and Executive Team would have in such a structure. The suggested model would provide staff more authority over day-to-day operations. The goal of the recommendations is to enable the Board to be a visionary and strategic body focuses on policy-making.

The Board of Trustees appointed a Governance Task Force to develop a proposed Governance Structure that would implement the recommendations from the Governance Assessment. Members of the taskforce include Jason Braspennickx, Karyn Marsh, Michael Magrogan, and Dan Alper. The Task force has worked diligently throughout this year to create a trial governance model. They have reported and discussed their work with the Board of Trustees at some monthly board meetings. More information on their progress this year is provided in a separate report below. (Addendum A)

#### CULTIVATE SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ATTITUDE OF ABUNDANCE

The Board did not have a treasurer this year and was not able to fill the roll. I greatly appreciate Monica Sweidel who as Finance Council Head was providing reports to both the Operations Team and the Board. While TUUC continues to have much anxiety about finances, the reality is that our cash reserves have improved, and it is likely we can end the year without a negative balance. The stewardship campaign was fun and well run, though it struggled to meet its very ambitious goal. A Taskforce consisting of members from the Endowment Committee and the Committee on Ministries was appointed by the Board to complete research in UUA recommendations and uses for endowments in other UU congregations.

This year the Board appointed three new members to the Personnel Committee. The members are Paul Konka, Luke Williams, and John Mattingly. The Personnel Committee diligently studied the UUA fair compensation guidelines and provided recommendations that would place our staff who are all very experienced at or above 103% of their midpoint salary range. They presented their recommendations at the April Town Hall meeting stating that none of our staff is overpaid, and arguably, some are underpaid.

#### INCREASE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Over 25 new members have joined the congregation since June 2017. New member classes have been successful in engendering a sense of community and commitment to TUUC and Unitarian Universalism. There were many fun events offered this year including a very well attended musical.

#### BECOME KNOWN FOR RACIAL JUSTICE EFFORTS

Commitment to racial justice is specifically mentioned in the mission statement adopted in June 2017. Our Black Lives Matter sign was rededicated in October 2017. It has not been vandalized since being relocated somewhat higher in the trees. TUUC also held a community dialogue about the banners in November 2017. Additionally A Dialogue On Race and Ethnicity (ADORE) got renewed energy through a book discussion of Debby Irving's, "Waking Up White In America." Over 35 people participated in six discussions offered on the book. Mimi Marks and Darla Tewell prepared the discussion guide.

Earlier vandalism of the Black Lives Matter signed revealed some concerns regarding the safety of church property and employees. To address these fears, a camera system has been installed at the entrances of the building. A key card system was also installed, but is not yet operational.

#### GROWING SPIRITUALITY AND WORSHIP

Theme based ministry utilizing Soul Matters, a program to which over 140 Unitarian Universalist congregations subscribe, was introduced this year and utilized in worship, chalice circles, and some YRE programming.

Concerns regarding the uneven attendance between the two worship services remain. A discussion group has met and is developing a survey to collect congregational input to address the Sunday morning structure and schedule.

#### THE SURVEY SHOULD BE READY BY SEPTEMBER.

Rev. Clare has been intentionally incorporating more theistic language in worship. One member asked that the language of the covenant be changed to “thus do we covenant with each other” rather than “thus do we covenant with each other and with God” since we speak of growing in harmony with the divine in the previous sentence. That change was made. No one has objected. However, concern regarding the task on the Three-year Rolling Plan to “include more theistic language in worship” was voiced at town hall meetings in November and April indicating that more congregational conversation about use of language of reverence may be needed.

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#### **THE OPERATIONS TEAM – Neil Porter, President-Elect**

The Operations Team (O-Team) is tasked with overseeing the day-to-day management of the church. The O-Team consists of seven Council Heads and staff and overseen by the President-Elect. The Councils are House and Grounds, led by Todd Robertson, Religious Education led by Jen Larson, Outreach led by Janet Schollenberger, Communication led by Scott Shane, Sunday Services led by Andrew Hager, Inner Life led by Jeanette Anders, and Finance led by Monica Sweidel. The O-Team, in conjunction with the church staff and board, has accomplished a number of important successes this year. Todd Robertson oversaw the removal of numerous trees of invasive species. Additionally, Todd spearheaded the installation of a new security system including security cameras near the street. Scott Shane and Kai Aiyetoro constructed a fabulous new website for the church. Monica Sweidel organized another very successful stewardship campaign with the assistance of Anita Cox. Monica has overseen the budget throughout this past year, assuming many of the roles normally performed by the treasurer. Finances for the church this year have been the healthiest in almost a decade.

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## **TREASURER/FINANCE COUNCIL REPORT – Monica Sweidel, Finance Council Chair**

The Finance Council has had another very busy year of raising money to continue the work of the church. We have worked hard to produce a balanced budget through pledge, fundraising and controlling expenses. We ended the last fiscal year in the black, and are on track to do the same this year. We have been able to recommend keeping our staff at the same hours as last year with pay increases that are in line with UUA recommendations for our region and church size.

There were fewer fundraisers (other than the auction) this year. They have brought in \$3388. These include the Eleanor Roosevelt production and A Village Wooing. We have fallen short of our \$5000 goal.

The TUUC “Banding Together” auction fundraiser held in November brought in over \$26,000, the highest amount in recent memory. Many thanks to Dan Alper, who chaired the committee and to the committee members: Tim Boniface, Anita Cox, Jason Braspennickx, Monica Sweidel, Samantha Saalfield, Marilyn Maze, Marie Razulis, Linda Talley, Neil Porter, Jane Selewach, Kai Aiyetoro, and Susan Woolhiser. Thanks to all those who helped make this a great success: those who donated items and events to the auction, those who attended and purchased them, and the volunteers who organized and helped that day to make the evening possible.

The Stewardship Committee, led by co-chairs Anita Cox and Monica Sweidel, planned and implemented the “Banding Together” stewardship campaign. Along with Anita and Monica, committee members included Neil Porter, Jason Braspennickx, Stephen Brown-Pearn, Sue Royer, and Sue Walker. So far we have received pledges almost \$307,000. One hundred and ninety families have pledged an average of \$1615. Many thanks go to the Stewardship Committee members and members of the board for putting on the very successful kick-off brunch for the stewardship campaign on February 4.

The Accounting Committee worked with our bookkeeper Mary Kay Baker and Church Administrator Kai Aiyetoro in reviewing and revising our accounting procedures and financial records to make sure we are being fiscally responsible and following best practices. Committee members Jason Braspennickx, Anita Cox, Marilyn Maze, Paul Konka, John Barry, and Marian Michel, along with ex-officio member Monica Sweidel have worked to make sure that TUUC is implementing appropriate accounting procedures and practices.

### **SPECIAL GIFTS – Sue Shankroff, Chair**

<i>Income (donations to the fund)</i>		\$265
<i>Expenditures:</i>		
	Playground repairs	1,356
	Piano move	190
	Total	1,546
<i>Funds on hand:</i>		\$4,226

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### **SECRETARY'S REPORT – Karyn Marsh, Board Secretary**

The role of the secretary of the board is to take minutes at board and congregational meetings, to finalize those minutes after receipt of comments from the Board, and to ensure that the finalized minutes are posted on the TUUC webpage. The minutes of the Board and congregational meetings are considered the official legal records of decisions made by the congregation and its governing body, the Board of Trustees. They not only document the proceedings of meetings, but

also incorporate the written reports of Board members, committees and other bodies that the Board or congregation relied upon to come to a decision. I have worked on standardizing the format of the minutes this year. The Board meeting minutes, as well as congregational meeting minutes and Operations Team minutes are available on the TUUC webpage at <https://www.towsonuuc.org/governance/>. I encourage all members and friends to review the minutes and feel free to ask me or anyone on the Board any questions regarding Board processes.

This past year the Board has continued using a consent agenda structure at board meetings. By having a consent agenda that includes the last meeting minutes and reports of the minister and respective officers, the Board has been freed up to discuss bigger picture items, such as the strategic vision for TUUC, and to educate itself on best practices. This year the Board focused upon the Three-Year Rolling Plan, which is discussed further in our president Jasmine Faelyn's report. The other major focus of the Board this past year has been working with the Governance Task Force on developing a new governance model for TUUC based on the recommendations of the Governance Assessment.

To increase communication with the congregation, ensure transparency, and foster participation, the Board has scheduled regular Town Hall meetings throughout the year. The first meeting was held on November 26. Minutes from that meeting are included in the Board December meeting minutes. Another Town Hall Meeting was held on April 15, 2018, for which minutes are being prepared and will be posted with the April Board meeting minutes. A final Town Hall Meeting will be held on May 6.

It has been a pleasure serving as your secretary. I will be stepping down from that position, but will remain on the Board as a Trustee member-at-large next year. I look forward to seeing you all at the Annual Congregational Meeting on June 3.



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## **GOVERNANCE TASK FORCE – Jason Braspennickx**

The Governance Task Force (GTF) was created by the Board of Trustees in July of 2017 to create a new governance model for TUUC. There were three goals in creating the new governing model. The first goal was to enable the Board of Trustees to spend its time focusing primarily on the mission and vision of TUUC, rather than day-to-day operations and crisis management. The second goal was to empower the staff in fulfilling the church's mission and vision endorsed by the Board of Trustees. The third goal was to create a clear policy structure that allocates clear decision-making authority and ensures that church resources are protected and church activities support the mission and vision of TUUC.

Since July of 2017, the Governance Task Force committee, chaired by Jason Braspennickx, with Karyn Marsh, Michael Magrogan, Dan Alper, and Reverend Clare Petersberger serving as members, has met monthly to develop policies that will serve as a central point for the new governing model. These policies are based on recommendations from the TUUC Board of Trustees, the Central East Region Consultant, Reverend David Pyle, and a book recommended by Reverend Pyle, "Governance and Ministry", by Dan Hotchkiss. The policies that have been created are Governing Policies, which prescribe how the Board of Trustees will operate, Delegation Policies, which give authority to professional staff, Guidance and Limitation Policies, which regulate delegated authority, and Board Oversight Policies, which set forth communication between the Board of Trustees and professional staff. The GTF has also suggested new policies for the current standing committees of the Board of Trustees, including the Endowment Committee, Personnel Committee, Nominating Committee, Committee on Ministries, and a Finance Committee that will be created in place of the Finance Council and Accounting Committees. In the new governing structure, the GTF will propose that the Personnel Committee be a standing committee of the Executive Team.

This new structure will consist of the Board of Trustees, an Executive Team, and a Program Council. The Executive Team will have the Minister, Church Administrator, House and Grounds Chair, and Finance Committee Chair. The Program Council will have 14 chairs of committees (representing Lay

Worship, Music, Stewardship, Fundraising, Membership, Social Action, Aging Together, Chalice Circles, Caring, Communications, Youth RE, Adult RE, ADORE, and Green Sanctuary) in charge of organizing church programs. There will be, pending congregation approval, a one-year trial to determine if the new structure will be successful. The Operations Team will continue to operate, but will function as the Program Council during the one-year trial period. If the structure is deemed a success by the Board of Trustees, a new bylaws structure will be created to accommodate the new structure and presented to the congregation for its approval. The Executive Team, in this structure, meets monthly and will be responsible for decisions on day-to-day operations, carrying out policy decisions made by the Board of Trustees, and communicating the Board of Trustees goals to the Program Council in creating programs that fulfill the mission and vision of TUUC. The Program Council will be responsible for meeting at least quarterly to create programs that fulfill the mission and vision of TUUC. The Executive Team and Program Council would replace the current Operations Team if the new governing model is approved after the one-year trial period.

The GTF has communicated frequently with the Board of Trustees at Board meetings and invited Board participation in some GTF meetings. The GTF will be presenting its recommendations to the congregation at the May 6 Town Hall meeting, a May 15 meeting with congregational members, and a final recommendation at the June 3 Congregational meeting based on information gathered from the prior two meetings.

The Governance Task Force greatly appreciates the guidance given by the Board of Trustees and Reverend David Pyle in its deliberations and in carrying out the policy writing responsibilities in creating this new governance model.

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## **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY – ROBIN SINN, Chair**

The purpose of the Committee on Ministry (COM), as stated in our manual is “To foster communication among the congregation, the Board of Trustees, and the minister, and to provide counsel and support to the minister.” The manual lists the following tasks:

- Assists minister with planning for professional development and sabbaticals.
- Focuses on various aspects of Minister/Congregational relationship.
- Serves as sounding board for feedback from congregation about any items relating to the minister.
- Assesses the ongoing performance of the minister in specific areas using both feedback and formal survey methods.
- Recommends to the Operations Team appropriate compensation for the Minister.

COM members serve a three-year term. Below are the members and how long they have served.

- Jen Larson – 3 years
- Art Starr – 3 years
- John Barry – 2 years
- Pat Mahoney – 2 years
- Robin Sinn, Chair – 2 years
- MaryBeth Brizzolara – 2 years

During the 2017/2018 church year, COM worked with Rev. Clare and with other groups in TUUC.

- COM met monthly with Rev Clare, reviewed her monthly report together, and discussed topics related to various aspects of TUUC and the congregation.
- We investigated UUA salary guidelines and recommended a compensation package for next year.
- We completed work on the Disruptive Behavior Policy.
- Jen Larson and John Barry participated in an Endowment Committee subgroup.
- We provided input on the purpose and scope of COM for a Policies and Procedures Manual review by the Governance Task Force.

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### **ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE – Bill Ward, Chair**

2017-2018 fiscal year endowment started with \$868,128. Quarterly transfers to the operating account equaled \$32,119. Total market gains \$138,524. Total market loses \$53,684. End of April balance \$920,849.

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### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE – Karin Symonds, Chair**

**Members: Patty Barry, Ben Gitelson, Janet Kuperstein, Nancy Mears**

The Nominating Committee is grateful to the members listed below, all of whom have agreed to serve our congregation in the coming year(s). Brief biographies submitted by the nominees are emailed or mailed to the membership of the congregation. Any active member who has the prior consent of the nominee may also make nominations from the floor. Elections will be on June 3, 2018 at the congregational meeting.



#### **President of the Board of Trustees (2018-2019): Neil Porter**

Neil Porter has been a member of TUUC since 2008. He has served as an usher since becoming a member, worked on the Auction Committee for a number of years, and taught the Our Whole Lives (OWL) class to middle-school youth as part of the Youth Religious Exploration Program. More recently, Neil has served as finance council chair from 2012-2014, on the stewardship committee for a number of years, on the Board as a member-at-large from 2014-2016, and as President-Elect from 2016 to present. Professionally, Neil is an Assistant Professor of Neurology at the University Of Maryland School Of Medicine. He has two grown children and a wife who works as a social worker for Baltimore City Public Schools.



**President-elect: (2018-2019): Sue Royer**

Sue Royer has been a member of TUUC for almost twenty years. In the current church year: she sings in the choir; was a Bird Girl in Seussical; volunteers at and is the TUUC liaison to Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood; is a member of the planning committee for the annual fundraising dinner and silent auction for Earl's Place; attended several ADORE sessions; made casseroles; helped with third Saturday work parties; and serves on the Stewardship, Social Action, and Special Gifts Committees. Sue previously served on and chaired the YRE committee for many years, is a trained OWL teacher and taught OWL multiple years, helped draft the initial TUUC safe congregations' policy, served on the Nominating Committee, and was Treasurer of TUUC (and therefore a Board member) from 2006 - 2008.



**Treasurer: (2018-2020): Monica Sweidel**

Monica Sweidel has been a member of TUUC since moving to Maryland, and was a member of First Unitarian Church of Dallas for 25 years. She was a UU even before that, but she did not know it. With over 35 years of teaching experience, she has worked with students from first grade through adulthood in a wide variety of venues including public elementary and middle schools, community college, private college and a private company. Her specialization is teaching English to speakers of other languages. She has been married to her high school sweetheart for over 40 years and has one grown son.



**Trustee-at-large (2018-2020): Art Starr**

Joined TUUC several years ago. Formerly part of Lay Pastoral committee. Member of adult religious exploration committee. Co-founded TUUC men's group. Started a Buddhist book group and a "Wisdom of Jesus" book group. Led a "Making Friends with Death" group and President of Baltimore Jewish Cultural Chavurah, a secular humanistic group.



**Trustee at large (2018-2020): Karyn Marsh**

Karyn Marsh has been an active member of TUUC for ten years and UU since her twenties. Since joining TUUC, Karyn has served or is serving as a youth group facilitator (2008-10), lay worship associate (2011-present), Inner Life Council head (2012-2014), membership committee chair (2014-present), and secretary of the Board (2016-18). She also has served or is serving on the Church Size Study Group and Governance Task Force, and spearheaded the Strengthening and Growing through Engagement (SAGE) effort, which led to the development of TUUC's new mission and vision statements. Prior to entering seminary at Starr King School for the Ministry, she was a corporate attorney and prior to that an environmental consultant. Karyn holds a J.D. from the University of Maryland, an M.B.A. from Villanova University, and a B.S. in Geosciences from the Pennsylvania State University. She is also a certified professional geologist.



**Board Secretary (2018-2020): Angela Castillo-Epps**

Angela Castillo-Epps works for the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities as a Technical Assistance Specialist. She was married at TUUC twenty-two years ago and has a son and daughter who both graduated from TUUC's Religious Exploration program. Angela has performed numerous times at TUUC, previously served on the Committee on Ministries and participated on multiple workgroups. She currently serves on the YRE committee and is a K-1st grade religious exploration teacher.



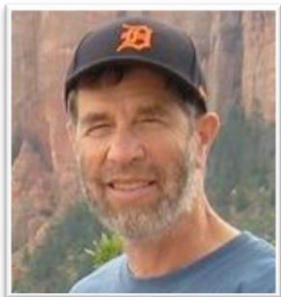
**Communications Council Head (2018-2020): Patty Barry**

Patty Barry has been at TUUC for about three years and is active in the Choir and the Book Group, and she currently serves on the Membership and Nominating Committees. She is Head of School at the Wilkes School at Grace and St. Peter's, after having been a teacher for many years. Patty is married to John Barry and they have three adult children.



**Finance Council Head (2018-2020): Jasmine Faelyn**

Jasmine Faelyn has attended TUUC since fall of 2010 and became a member in 2011. She is a lifelong UU. She served as President-Elect for 2 years before becoming President. She chaired the Mission Task Force. She has also served as a Lay Worship Associate. Jasmine has attended trainings on Healthy Congregations and Board Leadership. She has a Master degree in Social Work and a certificate in Non-Profit Administration. She works as a mobile therapist in Harford county serving adults with severe mental illness.



**RE Council Head (2018-2020): Larry Magder**

My family and I have been members at TUUC for about 10 years. My wife is Lisa Lubomski, and we have two teenage children who have gone through the RE program at TUUC. I am originally from Michigan, and my wife is from Pennsylvania. I work at the University of Maryland School of Medicine as a biomedical research statistician and teacher.

**Outreach Council Head (2018-2020): TO BE DETERMINED**



**Nominating Committee (2018-2020): Dominique Hall**

Dominique Hall joined the church in April of 2016. She is an alto in the choir and a volunteer for the Book Nook as well as other church activities, including the recent production of Seussical. She has also participated in wind ensembles, writing groups, and book clubs in the Baltimore community.





### **Nominating Committee (2018-2020): George Harrison**

When my wife Joan and I were new members, we had our daughter Amy dedicated at TUUC; Amy is now in her forties. Enough about age and tenure. I had a career with the University of Maryland, which included leading basic lab research projects examining the hazards and therapeutic benefits of radiation, and teaching and advising undergraduate students at Towson. At TUUC, I have been involved mostly with Membership, and served on the Board. I bring perspective from my decades at TUUC, and try to address the issues of the day with balance and an open mind.



### **Moderator (2018-2020): Jason Braspennickx**

I have been a member of TUUC for 21 years. I have served as a Moderator, President-Elect of the Board, President of the Board, Sunday Service Council Chair, Finance Council Chair twice, and chaired a number of ad-hoc and standing committees. Currently, I am chair of the Governance Task Force, which is tasked with studying our current governing model and suggesting a new model to improve the leadership and governance at TUUC.

I currently serve as a Benefits Counselor at Aflac and have worked in insurance for more than 20 years. I have a degree in Economics from the University of Maryland-Baltimore County. I currently live in Catonsville.

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## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – Paul Konka, Chair**

The Personnel Committee serves as a body with which employees of the Church, other than the Minister, may discuss terms and conditions of employment. It reports to the President of the TUUC Board. It also prepares an annual recommendation to the Board on compensation for each employee, excluding the Minister, whose compensation is recommended by the COM. The



Committee consists of three active members, who are appointed by the Board. The three members (Paul Konka, John Mattingly, and Luke Williams) were appointed in July 2017, replacing the previous members of Linda Talley (chair), Peter Liveright, and Charlie Reuland, all of whom provided many years of dedicated service to TUUC while on the Personnel Committee.

Committee members' work in the 2017-2018 church year included:

- Served as a resource for the Board of Trustees, Minister, and Staff on personnel policies and matters
- Conducted an in-depth review of the bylaws, policies, procedures, and the Personnel Manual as they related to personnel policies
- Explained the UUA Fair Compensation guidelines to the congregation at a Town Hall meeting
- Reviewed employee compensation using the UUA guidelines
- Provided salary and benefits information to the Operations Team for detailed compensation planning for the 2017-2018 operating budget, and
- Prepared an annual recommendation to the Board on compensation for all employees, excluding the Minister, for the 2017-2018 budget.

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## **CHURCH ADMINISTRATION – Kai Aiyetoro, Church Administrator**

### RENTALS

The Bridge House lease (\$26k) reneged July 5, 2017 so we ended up with less rental income than expected this year.

TUUC became the home of ArtsCentric Summer Institute (ASI) June 26 through July 14, 2017. This group brought the talented creative energy of 15 youth ages 13 – 22 along with their instructors to the classrooms, hallways and meeting room at TUUC.

The ASI participants offered a special performance at the end of Sunday service on July 23, 2017. They plan to return this year.

### MOLD REMEDIATION

Many complaints received throughout the last couple of years regarding the increasing mold issues in the choir closet and classroom closets prompted the need for mold remediation. Green Home Solutions completed this task on July 27, 2017 and as recommended by the company, Kiltz paint applied to seal the treatment.

### DATABASE

After several training sessions on Fellowship 1 throughout the years, the staff and congregation continues to have difficulty maneuvering the database. We started researching new database programs with implementation goal of summer 2018. We are leaning towards Breeze, which is a platform used by many other small to midsize UU churches.

### SECURITY SYSTEM

After experiencing several vandalized Black Lives Matter banners, disgruntled emails and a few physical visits from white men to the church to voice their objections to the banners, the decision to install a new security system was initiated.

Officer Jen Arnett from Cockeysville Precinct conducted a Baltimore County Police Security Survey on August 29, 2017. She suggested we install surveillance cameras in several locations along with making some changes to doors and windows.

The building being found unsecured several times throughout the year has prompted the installation of a new security system and electronic locks. Fob distribution coming soon. Please remember it is all of our responsibility to make sure that the doors are locked when we are last to leave the premises.

## WEBSITE

We completed the new TUUC website using SquareSpace platform on March 1, 2018. We used many pages from the current New Membership Manual for language and many photos from the congregation. ***Thank you to Jeff Savoye for your many years of dedication to the previous website.***

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## **COMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL – Scott Shane, Chair**

Our big push this year was building a new website to replace the one Jeff Savoye had maintained for years on Bluehost. The main goal was to bring website management into the office, so that Kai can handle updates on a regular basis, and to make sure we have a user-friendly system for others eventually to learn. We used SquareSpace, which took some study and practice but ultimately seems to have worked out well, at a minimal cost. We kept the domain hosted on godaddy.com for now, because we had paid in advance, but we will probably shift the hosting to SquareSpace when the current contract expires for simplicity's sake. TUUC members generally seem pleased with the new site, and we have managed to replicate all the group emails and the email bulletin board using Google. There is no charge because TUUC is now registered with Google for nonprofits.

Amy Faelyn and others have kept up the Facebook page and people have learned to look for Kai's weekly slides displayed each Sunday on the lobby monitor. (The slides are not being shown in the main hall, in part because some members prefer to have a peaceful few minutes before the service starts.) We continue to spread the word about TUUC events to the outside world, via the Sun, Towson Times, Afro American, WBJC, WEAA and other outlets.

Given our slowly declining membership in recent years, there is a great opportunity to make a bigger effort to reach what many surveys show is a large pool of people who would appreciate what TUUC has to offer. Google for nonprofits offers free online ads, which we will explore. And we will be thinking about other ways to draw visitors and recruit new members.

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## HOUSE AND GROUNDS COUNCIL – Todd Robertson, Chair

This year is best characterized as a series of unexpected events from severe weather to additional vandalism.

### GROUNDS

On 8/3/17, a severe thunderstorm swept through the Southern Baltimore County area. While the building itself suffered no damage in less than 2 hours we lost at least 15 mature trees either shattered or fallen. The storm also left hanging limbs, leaning trunks, etc. that endangered our neighbors' property and created unsafe conditions on our own. There was also significant damage to the playground fence. Fence repairs and dealing with the safety issues in the forested areas of our property were significant, unexpected and unbudgeted expenses. Thankfully, our insurance did cover a significant portion of the fence repair. There has also been a tremendous amount of volunteer effort in helping make our forest relatively safe to walk in again.

On a positive note, the trees planted by the congregation in the Fall of 2015 as part of our reforestation effort in partnership with the Gunpowder Valley Conservancy and Trees for Sacred Spaces as well as those planted by Baltimore County continue to do well. Additionally, there have been significant 'volunteer' saplings noted including eastern red cedar, sycamore, tulip poplar, black gum and white pine (the first significant 2nd generation of the white pines planted by the congregation in the 70's & 80's.) While it will still be several years until we really see a forest, what is growing there now should be lush and vibrant into the next century.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Special Gifts Committee, those who have donated to Special Gifts, and all of the volunteers who made the improvements to the playground possible. You folks moved literally tons of material that day. I would also like to thank the Green Sanctuary Committee's Earth Day project for their plantings around the playground.

## HOUSE (BUILDING)

After several instances of vandalism to our property and messages and threats via various forms of social media and, in one case, a veiled threat in person to our staff, the Operations Team decided that it was time to do a comprehensive upgrade to our facility's security. These upgrades include cameras at the main upper and lower entrances as well as at the entrance to our parking lot, an upgrade to our alarm system, and the installation of new access control technology. The cameras will provide a record of any additional vandalism to our property and improved safety to our staff and ourselves. The upgraded alarm system provides improved coverage and replaces aging infrastructure. The access control technology involves using an electronic card system to access the building, allowing us greater accountability and flexibility for use of the facility. As of this writing, these projects are ongoing and should be completed no later than the end of the current fiscal year. Additional information and training will be provided as needed.

The number of intermittent leaks in our roof continues to increase. A replacement roof will cost \$70,000 to \$100,000. There remain significant other maintenance issues that have been deferred for many years as well as accessibility issues for differently abled individuals that severely impair their enjoyment of our facility and full participation in the life of the congregation.

## VOLUNTEERS

For some time I have been serving as the Chair of the House and Grounds Council on the Operations Team as well as the Chair of the House Committee AND the Chair of the Grounds Committee. I need volunteers to help me organize and lead projects in both areas as well as volunteers to help the Memorial Garden Committee and the A/V-Technology Committee. The time commitment need not be great but our need for your help is.

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## **INNER LIFE COUNCIL - Jeanette Anders, Chair**

Inner Life is the umbrella group for our church social activities, ranging from movies, discussion groups, and mindful meditation to men's breakfasts, ethnic lunches, and singles potluck feasts to improvisational theater, jam sessions, and book club discussions. We sometimes provide nursery care and discuss issues of aging in our small group 'Aging Together,' and in all of our small groups, we hope to build and deepen group bonds.

News of Inner Life Council committees are listed in the 'Threshold,' our TUUC weekly publication, bringing current information to newcomers, members, and visitors about activities our church offers to the whole community.

The three Inner Life Council committees most often recognized in our TUUC community at this time are:

### **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:**

- provides 'ambassador' outreach to the greater Towson community
- greets/welcomes visitors to services
- provides orientation to prospective and new members
- recognizes new members at special services of welcome

### **HOSPITALITY/FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE:**

- provides a comfortable meeting place for members and newcomers to chat
- prepares and serves refreshments between and after services and special events where people can meet and enjoy the company of others

#### CARING COMMITTEE:

- identifies members and friends needing special care
- provides assistance and maintains contact with those people
- offers continuing assistance

Other committees may form as the need is recognized.

#### **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE – Karyn Marsh, Chair**

Since June 1, 2017, TUUC has added 27 new members, which exceeds last year (FY 2016/17). We attribute this to the Committee's increased efforts with visitor follow-up and regular membership information sessions after second services each month.

#### VISITOR DATA

Since June 2015, the Membership Committee has been collecting data on visitor trends and implemented a new follow up procedure for visitors. The data give insight as to potential opportunities for member recruitment and retention.

The total number of repeat and first time visitors over FY 2017/18 is 388 as of April 29, 2017. At this time last year, the total number of visitors was 509, which is 24% more than the current year. We consider last year (FY 2016/17) to be somewhat of an anomaly due to the national election, which may have prompted increased anxiety over the direction of the country. Many people may have been (and may be) seeking liberal faith communities for spiritual support. Accordingly, we believe it may be more helpful to compare this year to FY 2015/16. A comparison of these two years indicates that this year has a slight increase over FY 2015/16, which had a total of 375 visitors as of April 30, 2017.

As of April 29, 2017, the total number of individuals visiting the church on Sunday is 226. Of this number, 89 are repeat visitors, which represents a 39% return rate. This is lower than the previous two years, but may shift upwards with May and June data factored in. The average number of visitors

per week is 9.02, which is lower than last year, but on par with FY 2015/16. Interestingly, however, the average number of first time visitors is on par with last year at 3.44.

Generally TUUC has fewer visitors in June, July and December and the greatest number of visitors in January and February. This pattern reflects seasonal schedules as many families travel more in the summer and around Christmas or have more Sunday commitments (e.g., sports leagues) during the warm weather months of fall and spring. This year generally reflected this pattern, except for January and February, which had lower visitor numbers than previous years. This could be due to an exceptionally bad flu season. We note there was a rebound in March. Also, October 2017 had a very high number of visitors like the year before. We attribute this to the Black Lives Matter banner dedication in 2016 and rededication in 2017.

### OUTREACH

The Membership Committee did not attend any festivals in the 2017-18 church year. After discussions at Membership Committee meetings throughout the year, the Committee believes that outreach at festivals should still be done, but strategically. There is a plan to put a sign up in front of the church during the Towsontown Festival that invites festivalgoers to church services and Gallery Unicorn.

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION SESSIONS

In an effort to develop committed Unitarian Universalists and to integrate new members and friends into the church community, the Membership Committee has been holding one-hour information sessions on membership once a month on Sundays. These information sessions have been very effective in converting frequent visitors to members or friends. However, the sessions seem to be better attended if they are held every other month. The next session will be held on May 20, 2018.

### NEW MEMBER RECOGNITION AND FELLOWSHIP

New member recognition ceremony occurred on January 7, 2018. Between the two services, we recognized over 17 people. Another is scheduled for June 3, 2018. A new member potluck was held on October 7, 2017 at the home of George and Joan Harrison and was well attended.



Another new member potluck is scheduled for May 19, 2018, and a summer newcomer fellowship potluck will be held on June 30, 2018.

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## **OUTREACH COUNCIL – Janet Schollenberger, Chair**

### **Gallery Unicorn – Emily Tarsell, Curator**

Goals for Gallery Unicorn for the past year were to continue with the following: increase diversity in the work exhibited, 2) increase community awareness and involvement with the Gallery, 3) increase the interface between the exhibitions and church programs and 4) increase the Gallery's financial reserves. Progress has been made with all of these goals. In addition, this writer gave notice that I would be resigning as Director of Gallery Unicorn as of June 2018. 5) A search for a replacement was a goal this past year.

1. Increased diversity – In addition to the usual group and solo exhibitions, Gallery Unicorn has exhibited work from community groups like Make Studio, the Group of Ten and our Annual Members Show. These shows have had broad community attendance and participation and included work from the disabled community as well as those of youth and seniors.

2. Community awareness has increased due to the creation of an email list of contacts for announcements and ongoing publicity on the website, in newspapers and online. Dorothy Hosmer and Dianne Hosmer have led the publicity efforts and have done a great job. In addition, we have been networking with other organizations such as the Towson Arts Collective, the Creative Alliance, the Baltimore County Arts Guild, Make Studio, The Brandeis National Committee and other community arts programs. We had our third thematically based call for artists and are planning for our fourth annual juried art show in September 2018.

3. Reverend Clare has been open to incorporating themes from art exhibits with services from time to time. A UU values-based juried show on the theme of “Beginnings” was presented in September of 2017. Another juried show on the theme of “Vision” is anticipated for the Fall of 2018.

4. Gallery Unicorn has been self-sustaining and has contributed to the church with a modest profit. Sales for 2017-'18 were good. Gallery Unicorn receives a 25% commission on the sales of artwork. That combined with cost-cutting measures have resulted in an after-expenses profit. Our current balance is roughly about \$5,000.

5. In the search for a new gallery director, this writer created a Gallery Unicorn Director Job Description. Lisa Lubomski and Pam Burns expressed an interest although as of this writing, neither woman has been able to commit time to exploring the possibility further. In addition, I have explored the possibility of renting the gallery space to community groups such as the Towson Arts Collective (TAC) and the Baltimore County Arts Guild (BCAG). Since this would be a departure from the way the Gallery had functioned heretofore, I created a Gallery Unicorn Policies and Procedures guide for gallery rentals. TAC will be showing in the gallery space for June-July 2018 and BCAG is considering future showings in of the space. However, a definitive plan for the continued operation of Gallery Unicorn for 2019 is still pending.

We want to recognize church members who have been part of the Gallery Unicorn committee: Bonnie Fous Reynolds, Dorothy and Dianne Hosmer, Michael Magrogan, Len Proctor, Carol Horst, Carol Watkins and George Harrison and express our sincere gratitude for their help in the service of Gallery Unicorn.

### **GREEN SANCTUARY COMMITTEE – Samantha Saalfeld, Chair**

In our ninth full year as an accredited Green Sanctuary, the committee focused on opportunities for environmental education and advocacy, responsible stewardship of the TUUC grounds, and continued cultivation of our environmental justice partnership in Baltimore City. Continuing our activism on behalf of clean energy in Maryland, committee members engaged in an evaluation of

two competing bills related to the state's clean energy portfolio that were introduced in the Maryland Legislature during the 2018 session.

To facilitate community awareness of the topic, we hosted a successful screening of the documentary *Burned: Are Trees the New Coal?* Members of the TUUC and larger communities attended. Marion Edey, Founder and Former Director of the League of Conservation Voters, led an inspiring discussion following the film, and representatives from Sierra Club and Food and Water Watch offered opportunities for involvement. Several GSC members also joined the Sierra Club Lobby Night in Annapolis to talk with legislators about five environmental bills that were introduced during the session.

GSC members also continued our work to maintain the young native trees, rain garden, and bayscape garden planted in 2015, through organization of and participation in work parties, and by funding the purchase of a weed whacker for use in clearing vegetation around the young trees and elsewhere on TUUC's grounds.

Since 2016, the GSC and other volunteers from the TUUC community have been engaged in a partnership with Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in East Baltimore, focusing on food justice/urban gardening through maintenance of their urban greenspace and vegetable gardens. We are looking forward to continuing our work alongside Amazing Grace's new gardening intern this summer and further building relationships with members of the Amazing Grace community.

The Earth Day 2018 service featured guest speaker Terrell Williams, of Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development, who addressed his work with the East Baltimore Collaborative to improve well-being and sustainability in the neighborhoods of East Baltimore, including McElderry Park, the neighborhood of Amazing Grace. After the service, the committee invited attendees to join us in planting native perennials on the TUUC grounds.

GSC also continued to provide Equal Exchange organic fair trade coffee, chocolate, nuts, and other products for sale to the TUUC community. The proceeds from our monthly fair trade sales fully

fund the fair trade organic coffee served during every Sunday's coffee hour, which GSC prepares and serves as part of Sunday Hospitality once a month. A portion of the purchase price also goes to the good works of UUSC, through the UUSC Coffee Project and the Equal Exchange Interfaith Program. We just learned that, in 2017, TUUC was among the top 5% of 6,000 faith congregations in the country that order from Equal Exchange. Thank you all for your purchases in support of small farmers and sustainable farming methods!

## **SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE – Lorraine Sorbello, Chair**

Chair: Lorraine Sorbello; Committee members: Sheila Malenski, Jane D'Ambrogi, Sue Shankroff, Lois Hybl, Salli Ward, Bill Ward, Marti Mackenzie, Nancy Mears, Stephen Brown--Pearn, Sue Royer, Lavina Velasco, Janet Schollenberger, Lynn Davidson, Christopher Croft, Jeffrey Arnstein, Wendell Finner, Margee Bailey, Jeanette Anders, Nina Della Vecchia, Jackie Wayland, Monica Sweidel .

The Social Action Committee is the “Helping Hands” of TUUC, providing the congregation opportunities to get involved in the greater world through our local, national, and international communities. We communicate these opportunities through the weekly Threshold newsletter, the TUUC website, the electronic bulletin board, Facebook, our lobby monitor, our tri-fold brochure, and timely flyers.

All are welcome to attend our monthly meetings, currently held on the 2nd Sundays between 10:30AM to 11:30 AM, and to share in our passion for Social Action and Social Justice. Our funding comes from 15% of the plate collection, the Christmas Eve collection, and from half of the Book Nook proceeds. In addition, on the 5th Sundays of the month, collections are donated to selected causes/organizations, such as one or more of our Community Partners, or one of our partner Unitarian Universalist Organizations, all listed below.

Thank you to the many members and friends of TUUC whom regularly donate canned food, casseroles, clothes, household items, Earl's Place adopt-a-resident holiday gifts, money, and more.

Time is one of our most precious gifts and we thank everyone for sharing your hours, days, weeks, months, and years.

Our mission is to feed the hungry, help the homeless; educate children, mentor young urban males; support efforts to provide support for victims of child trafficking; support efforts to promote employee-ownership; and advocate for justice, through legislation and other means. During the year, many members and friends of TUUC experienced the joy of giving and the satisfaction of making a difference through their donations, their time, and their active participation in our democratic process, with our Community and the UU partners.

#### OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC) is a resource providing emergency help (food, winter clothing, utilities or transportation) for area needy and homeless persons. Weekly, TUUC donates and delivers canned or dried food items for their food pantry.

Our Daily Bread (ODB) soup kitchen serves hot meals to the needy in Baltimore City. TUUC collects and delivers at least 60 casseroles for the months, which contain five Saturdays and sometimes helps serve them.

Earl's Place (EP), a project of United Ministries, provides up to two years of transitional housing and supportive services for 17 homeless men committed to changing their lives. Another facility, Prospect Place (PP) provides permanent housing for 12 chronically homeless men. Throughout the year, TUUC contributes items such as toiletries, paper goods, cleaning supplies, clothing, and donations of volunteer time and money. TUUC members visit, share dinners, have singalongs, and provide gifts and stockings for both places at Christmas. United Ministries website- [www.umhousing.org](http://www.umhousing.org)

ADORE- A Dialogue on Race and Ethnicity, in cooperation with the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, conducts community potlucks highlighting racial issues (Policing and Racism,

Immigration, etc.). We installed, dedicated, and maintained a “Black Lives Matter” banner in front of TUUC.

The Araminta Freedom Initiative aims to: eliminate child trafficking in MD; increase from 30 the young women provided with mentoring; open a drop in center, providing life-skill training and group and community support for victims of child sex trafficking; implement School-based training and policies, with a Dept. of Education grant; conduct a fundraising walk-run.

Mentoring Male Teens in the Hood (MMTH)- TUUC partners with this West Baltimore organization, making a difference in the lives of African-American boys and young men; we recruit and provide members of TUUC to assist in monthly tutoring.

Earth Sustainability Initiatives (ESI) is an organization, which has as its mission to “Educate and Empower Ourselves and Others to Live Economically and Ecologically in Harmony with Nature.” To this end, it conducts activities, which promote Employee-Ownership and the Health of the Environment.

The UU's support the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD- Advocating in Annapolis), which mobilizes UU's to advocate on priority issues before the MD General Assembly. In 2017, UULMD successfully lobbied for overriding Governor Hogan's veto on the Clean Power Plan, the Ban on Fracking in MD, and the Family Sick Leave Act. The State Legislature is in session late January-April.

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice (UUSJ)- TUUC supports UUSJ, with 91 members donating directly as members, attending UUSJ rallies and amplifying the voice of Unitarian Universalists in the National Capital Region (NCR), as we seek to change the world through acts of love and justice.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is a nonsectarian organization that advances human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world. Their mission and vision

are guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the seven Unitarian Universalist principles that affirm the worth, dignity, and human rights of every person.

On February 17th and 24th The SAC assisted in the presentation of a one-woman show, "Eleanor Roosevelt—Across a Barrier of Fear, " which raised funds for TUUC and for several of our SAC community Partners.

We do social justice - actively supporting UUs for Social Justice in the Capital Region through meetings, workshops, and rallies, and by supporting UUs Legislative Ministry in Maryland through rallies and Senate hearings on such issues as police accountability.

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**RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION COUNCIL – Joyce Duncan, Credentialed Religious Educator;  
Jen Larson, Religious Exploration Council head; Larry Magder, Youth Religious Exploration Chair**

### SUNDAY MORNING

This year our Religious exploration program offered five classes plus youth group at 11:15 am. Providing caring, consistent adult presence in the nursery continued to be a priority for our DRE, nursery chair, and YRE Committee (YREC). Thanks to Margee Bailey for taking on the position of nursery chair, working with the YREC to keep our nursery safe, and welcoming for our youngest members. Our elementary age children were introduced to or deepened their understanding of our Unitarian Universalist principles and sources. Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> grade students learned about Unitarian Universalism as their church home as part of the *Creating Home* class.

Children in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades discussed and did activities based on the *Timeless Themes* of the Jewish and Christian scriptures; 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> graders delved into the same topics with a curricula entitled *Bibleodeon*, through art, drama, and discussion. Our 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders learned about and then

visited six places of worship for different faith traditions, visiting and talking to members of churches and temples they might not otherwise be exposed to. These visits were linked to the church's theme of the month through the new curriculum from Soul Matters entitled *Crossing Paths*.

### SOCIAL ACTION

Children and teens continued many outreach activities started in previous years. Younger students made cards and stuffed stockings for the residents of Earl's Place. TUUC families with children as young as 6 served lunch and helped clients shop at Paul's Place day program in south Baltimore. All classes contributed toward making tins of lasagna to support the hot lunch program at Our Daily Bread. In addition, students in 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> grade class learned more about this program through a tour of the facility.

### OWL

We offered Our Whole Lives sexuality education for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades on Sunday afternoons and two overnights. They joined with teens in YRUU to help integrate them into the group they will be part of next year. This program requires trained teachers and we thank Natalie Avallone, Deborah Kleinman, and Andrew Hager for their commitment of time and energy.

### YRUU

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (grades 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>) were grateful for Jeanette Anders, Jen Larson, and Tom Zeller who volunteered as adult advisors this year. Individuals from this group also attended regional youth conferences, performed in worship services, and helped behind the scenes with props for the TUUC musical *Seussical*. The congregation enjoyed the well-planned service that YRUU presented on perseverance, TUUC's theme of the month for February, that included a wide range of music played and sung by YRUU members as well as reflections by teens and opportunities for congregants to reflect on and share their own thoughts. YRUU participated in



the Winter Solstice Revels service, Build a Lasagna day for Our Daily Bread, and helped at the all-ages Passover Seder service. They volunteered their time and labor to learn about and maintain trees at the Gunpowder Conservancy, through coordination with Kim Peabody.

### CAMPUS MINISTRY

The DRE started, at the request of UU students at Goucher College, a campus ministry group that meets once a week on the campus of Goucher College. With support from College Chaplain Cynthia Terry, we have reached out to all students who self-identified as Unitarian Universalist. Using resources from the UUA Young Adult and Campus Ministry group, we have laid a strong foundation that we hope will continue to grow in subsequent years.

### MULTIGENERATIONAL WORSHIP

As in previous years, YRE classes joined the entire TUUC community for the first 15 minutes on most Sundays for ritual, song, and a story for all ages. All classes and YRUU learned about winter solstice and then shared songs, stories, and rituals with the congregation during a Sunday morning service. The DRE coordinated with Rev. Clare on some of these stories, involving classes when possible, to allow them to share what they learned with congregants. This included the 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> grade presenting an updated version of the Good Samaritan in a skit and YRUU members presenting a skit of Jonah, the Fish, and the Worm, a story traditionally told as part of the Jewish holy day Yom Kippur. Younger children helped the DRE tell Andrea Davis Pinkney's story *Sit-In*; another story told by the DRE was *Melena's Jubilee* by Zetta Elliott.

One of our favorite Sundays occurred in November when children had the chance to embody the spirit of "Abundance" –the theme for November– by preparing soup, bread, cookies, and brownies and offering them at coffee hour to the congregation.

In June, the final day of YRE culminated in a service for all ages, "Count Your Blessings," that involved all our children and teens, to share what blessings they have gained from being part of our church community.

### YRE COMMITTEE

The YREC, chaired by Larry Magder, met monthly to plan events, give feedback, and support the mission of youth religious exploration ministry. YREC members helped to plan and organized the Day of the Dead party and ritual in October, Passover Seder, and Easter activities. The committee also helped with two teacher trainings, and our annual end of year Sunday morning service. This group assisted the DRE in planning the second annual Family Fun Night, with potluck, parent discussion, and bonfire in June to celebrate the end of the church year.

### DRE

Joyce continued relationships with TUUC's major outreach projects by planning opportunities for children and teens to volunteer for or at Earl's Place, Our Daily Bread, ACTC, and Paul's Place. She worked with Rev. Clare to write scripts and ensure multigenerational content for Flower Communion, Water Communion, Winter Solstice, and Christmas Eve.

Joyce supported the needs of families in our church and shared her knowledge and experience in working with children and volunteers at various staff and church meetings, including Operations Team, YREC, safe congregations' task force, and 9:30 Sunday morning task force.

The DRE professional expense budget covered membership in the continental Liberal Religious Educators Association and the Greater Washington Area Religious Educators Association, in which Joyce attended as many meetings as were possible given other responsibilities. Unfortunately, the budget does not allow her the opportunity to meet with colleagues at either the LREDA annual

meeting or General Assembly. Joyce did continue her longstanding participation at Unitarian Universalist Mid-Atlantic Convention.

## **ADULT RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION**

**Michael Magrogan (chair), Amy Faelyn, Rev. Clare, and Art Starr**

### COURSES

- Rev. Clare "Celtic Spirituality"
- Rev. Clare "A Liberal Religious Investigation of Evil"
- Art Starr "Buddhist Readings"
- Harold Zeckel "Where Do Our Beliefs Come from?"
- Andrew Hager "Available Light"
- Betsy Gilbert "Mary Magdalen"
- Marilyn Maze "Muslims in America"

### WORKING ON

- "Bio-Ethics" discussion

## **OAKCREST DISCUSSION GROUP: Conversations w/UUs**

**Facilitated by Allan & Marilyn Thorn**

This group meet the second Saturday of each month. The format is usually a presenter followed by discussion. Between 30 and 40 attend, more non-UUs than UUs. Typical topics this past year included faith in the modern world; living and dying; concepts of God; poetry in steel; the unconscious mind; the fork in the road: spite, revenge, vindication or forgiveness; and rituals in our lives.

## **BROADMEAD DISCUSSION GROUP: Conversations w/UUs**

### **Facilitated by Peter Talley**

This group meets monthly through May before taking a summer break. Roughly eight people regularly attend. Their focus has been ethical and moral conundrums rooted in our modern age. They have also been exploring the writings of Yuval Harari, the Israeli historian who wrote the books, *Sapiens* and *Homo Deus*. At their May meeting, they will discuss what to focus on next.

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## **SUNDAY SERVICES COUNCIL – Andrew Hagar, Chair**

The 2017-2018 church year was an eventful one! Please see the reports below for a detailed look at what happened.

### **Greeters (Jane Selewach)**

The greeting team is currently made up of eleven volunteers but I will be recruiting for more quite soon. We want to be able to staff the greeting table with at least one person for the first service (the most difficult one to fill consistently) and ideally two people at the larger second service.

Greeters welcome new and repeat visitors, provide information about TUUC and all its programs within the church and in the outside community. Greeters help gather data by asking members to sign in and complete visitor forms when they would like to receive more regular communication from the church office and to obtain a visitor name tag.

### **Music Committee (Tracy Hall)**

Towson Unitarian Universalist Church continues to enjoy an active music program, which provides music for weekly worship and other special events.

During summer 2017, Music Committee Head Donn Teubner-Rhodes and Music Director Tracy Hall devised a schedule for musicians for the summer services, in cooperation with the Lay Worship Associates. Musicians were mostly from the congregation, with a few guests.

Music Director Tracy Hall served for the third time as Adult Music Coordinator at UUMAC, a weeklong retreat for UUs in Central PA. She planned the music for morning worship and led a choir during the week. She was able to participate again in a hand drumming class and to have a private lesson for the same during that week.

Also during the summer of 2017, Tracy attended her first national professional convention of UU music directors (UUMN). It was held in Arlington VA, making it an affordable trip for the first time in years. Other staff contributed some of their designated professional education funds in supplement her own, to help pay for Tracy's registration. She paid for her own hotel and parking costs for the multi-day event. TUUC has used much of the music introduced during that conference this year, and the workshop experiences provided valuable information.

TUUC Choir resumed rehearsals on Thursday nights after Labor Day, and they continued to provide music for both services, usually three times per month. Casey Mashburn continued to assist with duties associated with the choral music library. A portable filing system for administering choir sheet music was purchased for the TUUC Choir by Jeanne Hoff last year, and that has continued to make distribution of music very simple and efficient.

Solo musicians also help provide music for the services throughout the year: Spice Kleinmann, Paul Azzam, Sharen Camille, Tony Bonta, Casey Mashburn, Nancy Dean, Nancy Hannah, Donn Teubner-Rhodes, Dominique Hall, Beth Moseng, and many others have provided music in Sunday services.

The Music Committee continued to meet approximately every 6 weeks during the year, with Donn Teubner-Rhodes as Committee Head and Rick Bader serving as recording secretary. The committee has served as a problem-solving group, has provided guidance for the Music Director in

general planning, and has helped make financial decisions related to music, among other functions.

During the year, Judi Clague was designated as head of the team for handling hymnal donations, and she worked with Kai and Tracy to develop a policy and procedure for handling these donations.

In the fall, Music Director Tracy Hall held auditions for a small vocal ensemble, to provide singers that are more advanced an opportunity to present material that is more challenging. So many excellent singers auditioned, that the natural result was to create several ensembles. Through the fall, Ensemble Chiaro (women) and Ensemble Leggiero (mixed voices) rehearsed and both sang during services several times. In the spring of 2018, a demanding choral piece for women is utilizing all the women from the TUUC Choir.

A new TUUC Children's Choir began rehearsing on Sunday mornings between services in Sept. 2018. They got started in their first few "performances" at church combined with adults and teens, and they sang on their own a few times as well. During the spring, attendance dropped, so the rehearsals were discontinued in mid-April. Children and teens will be asked to sing in the YRE service in June 2018, but the Children's Choir will not officially resume until fall 2018.

The TUUC Drum Circle continued to meet on the second Saturdays of most months, with a new time of 7:00 PM. Some of the drummers who attend drum circle have helped with worship several times during the year.

In December of 2017, a highly collaborative Winter Solstice service included music by the small ensembles, the Children's Choir, the TUUC Drummers, several RE groups singing or dancing, and other combinations of individuals and groups.

In February, Tracy helped support the YRUU with their service.

In March, Alta Haywood offered several weeks of exploration of music theory with several choir members. They learned a lot and had a great time.

Music Director Tracy Hall joined forces with Director Sharen Camille again in Spring 2018, to mount TUUC's second musical theater production, *Seussical*, on the evenings of April 13 and 14. The large cast and most of the band comprised TUUC members and friends. The TUUC community also coordinated and created sets, prepared costumes, and ran lighting and sound. *Seussical* was very well received, and took in donations of over \$2,400. After covering approximately \$1,000 in expenses and setting aside a split to provide seed money for future music fundraisers, the remainder will be given back to the church operating budget for 2017-18. Approximately 200 people on Friday evening and 150 on Saturday evening attended the musical. The only complaint was that the Meeting Room, being a flat surface without a raised stage area, prevented many from being able to see all the action. The show was very energetic and high quality for a community production!

The concert series of the Chamber Music Society of Maryland, called *Music in the Great Hall*, has been a renter of the church facilities for a number of years. Our liaison from the series expressed strong concerns that the TUUC (main) piano needs some serious maintenance work, specifically voicing and regulation. "Voicing" has to do with the relationship of the tone quality of each note compared with others, and "regulation" concerns the touch and action of the piano mechanism. The Music Director agrees that the work could make a substantial difference in the quality of the piano's performance. The Music Committee agreed that, especially in light of the request from *Music in the Great Hall* (a real asset to the church), that this needs to be handled, not only in a timely manner, but on an ongoing basis. Donn Teubner-Rhodes brought the concern to the O-Team, who agreed that it was important to do this work. Music Committee asked for the church to budget for the maintenance of the piano in a separate line item for the coming year's budget; this line item would also cover any piano tunings needed outside of those funded by *Music in the Great Hall*. It is hoped that the congregation will approve adding the line item for this work in next year's budget.

In April, TUUC received the gift of a very nice Yamaha upright piano from Iris and Edward Park. The piano was moved from their home to Room 1 downstairs at TUUC. Special Gifts paid for the professional move. This new piano can be used for special rehearsals, rental groups, RE classes, Children's Choir, and as a second piano for special performances.

As of this writing, a few more musical projects are underway for the remainder of 2017-18.

On Saturday, May 5, a few choir members will participate in a workshop with noted choral conductor Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout. The workshop was initiated by Rev. David Olson of First Unitarian, and a grant provided to help cover expenses. Dr. Rideout will also conduct at the Union Sunday service held at 4 pm on Sunday, May 6—this year at the UU Congregation of Columbia.

On Sunday, May 20, the service will be a Special Music Sunday. In one service at 10:30 PM, we will explore creativity and the senses in a very interactive service that will include some special choral music, some movement and other exercises designed to explore how we perceive through our senses, and some on-the-spot music creation.

Tracy will help support the music for YRE service in June 2018, and Donn Teubner-Rhodes and Tracy Hall will devise a summer schedule for 2018, working with the Lay Worship Associates.

Some exploration is needed to consider new possibilities for seating the choir in the Meeting Room, as they are growing too large to fit comfortably in the current seating area. Use of the top tier of seating is inadequate, due to acoustics. Consideration of possible future musical theater productions should also be part of that discussion. Perhaps the construction of a new platform system is in order.

### **Lay Worship Associates (Andrew Hager)**

The Lay Worship Associates continue to plan and present Services one Sunday a month and for ten weeks during the summer. They communicate with music director Tracy Hall and liaisons from any group leading a service.



Summer 2017 Services had a wide range of topics, from mindfulness to active listening, to Bob Dylan to Five Minutes to Live. Annual poetry and storytelling services were also conducted.

After Rev. Clare returned to the pulpit, LWA members assisted other committees in presenting services and created services for any dates not chosen by a committee.

LWA is currently planning for Summer 2018. Our theme for the summer is Creating Connections.

On May 14, we will gather with leaders of several church committees to plan the 2018-2019 church year.

This year was our first year using the theme-based ministry program Soul Matters Sharing Circle. While we will continue to evaluate the impact and value of the service, we have decided to renew our subscription for a second year at a cost of \$300.

Current Lay Worship Associates are Timothy Boniface, Karyn Marsh, Jasmine Faelyn, Kat Moseng, Sean Mackey, Tara McIntyre, Atif Jensen, Dominique Hall, Margee Bailey, and Andrew Hager.

(Addendum A)

Towson Unitarian Universalist Church  
Three Year Rolling Plan  
Developed 8/26/2017  
Updated 3/21/2018

*Our Vision is to be an intentionally inclusive community engaging with each other and the world in a heartfelt search for truth and meaning.*

*Our Mission is to deepen our ethical and spiritual lives together as we work for racial, social, and environmental justice.*

Goal	Task	Point Person	Rep. Date	Status	Update/ Comment
Congregational Vision for Lifespan Religious Education	Understand/develop process to track accurate data for YRE attendance numbers	Neil & Clare	Dec. 2017	A	YRE attendance data is collected each week and shared in the Threshold.
	Visioning process for Religious Education ministry for 1-3 years. (Bring in Pat Infante) support/teaching & volunteering	Neil	June 2018		Unable to initiate this process this year.
	Promote Adult Religious Education	Carol	Mar. 2018	E	Rev. Clare offered 4 sessions on Celtic Spirituality. Carol Watkins reported on plans for a retirement party. Art Starr offered a wonderful book discussion on Jesus. Harold Zeckel will be offering a class on beliefs in April and Betsey Gilbert will be offering a class on Mary Magdalene's energy in May.
	Request DRE Job Description review	Luke & George	Q1 2018	A	DRE job description was updated to reflect current 35 hour work week and provided to the Board.
Address Governance Structure	Develop new structure and related bylaws/procedures	Karyn Jason	2019	E	The Governance Task Force lead by Jason Braspenickx has been hard at work developing a proposed governance structure and the policies for it. Proposed structure will be presented at the May 6 <sup>th</sup> Town Hall meeting and voted on for a try-out basis at the June 3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Congregational Meeting.
	Appoint preliminary executive team	Karyn Jason	June 2018	E	
	Communicate with congregation through iterative process	Karyn Jason	2019	E	

Cultivate shared understanding of fiscal responsibility and attitude of abundance	Capital Campaign for funds in Building Maintenance	Neil & Sue	2019	E	No update at this time. About \$5000 remain from previous Capital Campaign
	Build cash reserves	Sue	June 2018	E	Cash reserves are healthy right now because of advance payment of pledges for next year. However, that may be a temporary phenomenon owing to the new tax law.
	Gather information and educate re: policies regarding endowment	CoM Jasmine Jason	2018	E	A Task Force was appointed to complete this research. Report due to Board in Fall 2018.
	Ensure fair share dues and fair compensation for staff	Luke Monica	Apr 2018	E	Personnel Committee to present on Fair Compensation at April 15 <sup>th</sup> Town Hall
	Review financial process assessment from Rev. David Pyle	Jasmine	Q1 2018	E	Have not yet received assessment from David Pyle.
	Congregational conversation regarding outcomes of fiscal anxiety and disagreements including addressing withholding pledges	Karyn	June 2018	E	Hope to get more guidance and assistance from the UUA Central East Region next fiscal year; have a workshop on anxiety and healthy congregational handling of finances.
	Build on success of last year's Stewardship Campaign	Sue Anita, Monica	Mar 2018	A	This year's Stewardship was very well run with some fun healthy competition.
Increase community engagement	Focus congregation on building relationships with visitors and new members; develop committed membership.	Karyn Carol	Apr 2018	E	Over 20 new members have joined the congregation since June 2017. New member classes have been successful in engendering a sense of commitment to TUUC and Unitarian Universalism.
	More intentionally fun activities/ Possibility of open events to community & better promotion of such events.	Neil Carol	June 2018	R	Several fun events were done this year including a musical that had 200 people at its first night!
	March together!	George	Apr 2018	E	8 TUUC members signed up for the April 4 <sup>th</sup> rally in Washington D.C. Prior to that, many TUUC members and friends participated in rallies to end gun violence.

Become known for Racial Justice efforts	Reinvigorating and promoting racial justice group (ADORE Action Group)	Sue	Apr 2018	E	ADORE got renewed energy through a book discussion of Debby Irving's, "Waking Up White In America." Over 35 people participated in six discussions offered on the book. Mimi and Darla prepared the discussion guide.
	Rededicating ourselves to Black Lives Matter	Clare Sheila, Darla, Monica	Nov 2017	A	Rededicated sign in October 2017. Held a community dialogue about the banners in November.
	Install cameras and card key system for safer facilities.	Carol Kai & Neil	June 2018	R	Cameras at building entrances are installed. Still need one by BLM sign. Key Card system is not yet operational.
Growing Spirituality and Worship	More theistic language in worship	Clare Andrew	June 2018	E	Rev. Clare has been intentionally incorporating more theistic language in worship. One member asked that the language of the covenant be changed to "thus do we covenant with each other" rather than "thus do we covenant with each other and with God" since we speak of growing in harmony with the divine in the previous sentence. That change was made. No one has objected.
	Develop process to address structure of Sunday morning services and programs	Sue Karyn	Apr 2018	E	A discussion group has met twice and is developing a survey that should be ready by May 2018.
	Evaluate opportunities for personal spiritual growth	Neil Carol Luke	June 2018	E	No update at this time.
	Evaluate theme based ministry	Clare Luke	June 2018	E	Theme based ministry was used in worship, in Chalice Circles, and in some YRE programming this year. Not yet evaluated.

Status Key:

E- Established

C- Continued

R- Revised

D- Discontinued

A- Achieved

Additional idea and questions to consider at future updates:

Look at goal regarding membership (what does it mean to grow) in year 2