

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF GERMANTOWN

2011-2012 Annual Report

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MINISTER'S REPORT

Rev. Mark Kiyimba, UU Community of Kampala, Uganda: We started our 2011-12 year with events that clarified the critical importance of standing up for our faith. On Saturday, Sept. 10th Rev. Mark Kiyimba, who serves as the Minister of the UU Community of Kampala, Uganda, spoke about the history of Unitarian Universalism in Kenya, his new UU church, and the state of GLBT civil rights (and lack thereof). On Sunday Rev. Mark preached at our Ingathering Water Ceremony on "The Importance of Faith." On Saturday we raised \$650 dollars for "Standing on the Side of Love, Uganda Campaign." On Sunday for a special Share the Plate we raised \$2,500 for the UU Community of Uganda.

Heart and Soul: For more than a year we have worked intensively to help our congregation re-discover and clarify our core identity and purpose. Our team - previously named DNA - includes Linda O'Gwynn, Eli Scarce, Leni Windle and me. Through multiple meetings and conversations we received helpful input from a wide variety of USG folks. Through this process we developed a new mission statement with core beliefs and values. We are currently presenting this draft to the congregation. After receiving input we will convert this into a document, which can help us to explain who we are to visitors, neighbors and partners. This work will give focus to driving our congregational decisions for staffing, ministries and programs.

UUA Multi-Cultural Ministries Consultation: The UU Association selected our congregation to work with nine other UU congregations across the nation, seen as having some success and competency in multi-cultural ministries. Eli Scarce was appointed to represent the Ministries and Programs Council and act as a co-chair with me. In this second year of this enterprise, USG took twelve people to a superb conference at All Souls Unitarian Church of Washington, DC. Upon return we are exploring conversations with our USG Ending Racism team about future collaborative efforts in growing a diverse People's Church.

Staffing: This year we have enjoyed a unique staffing combination. I am honored to serve as head of our staff with such talent and dedication: Gloria Guldager Smith, Administrator, Lida Holota, Administrative Assistant, Mark Daugherty, Music Director, Erick DuPree, Consulting Director of Faith Development, Rev. Rob Keithan, Consulting Minister, and Sandy Campbell, Sunday Morning Religious Education Coordinator. We are blessed Carolyn Cotton serves well as our Rental Coordinator.

This year we created a new structure for the maintenance and cleaning of the building. We have hired the Loida Zepeda Company to clean and give lawn care. Countless people have given strong compliments about the effectiveness of the cleaning. Mike Rogers was hired to be our Sunday Morning and Special Events Sexton.

We give thanks for their good work and wish many blessings to the people leaving staff at the end of June: Sandy Campbell (will remain an active member), Erick DuPree (will remain DRE of First Unitarian Philadelphia and begin a PhD program in English at Temple University) and Rev. Rob Keithan (has become the new Director of Public Policy for the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice in Washington, DC).

Next year we are thrilled that Gloria Guldager Smith will become the full-time Congregational Administrator. Lida Holota will remain as Administrative Assistant. We will

have a full-time Intern Minister, Joan Javier serving from September 1-June 30. Joan is coming to us from Yale University Divinity School, where she just completed her Masters of Divinity. We will also welcome Rev. Jody Whelden as our new Director of Faith Development for children and youth in July.

Sullivan Wing Loan Program: The Sullivan wing of our building was renovated in such a beautiful and pragmatic way. Many thanks to Carolyn Cotton and the Master Plan Implementation Committee, Scott Murray and his Buildings and Grounds Committee and Howard Silver Contractors. That wing is now enjoyable and user friendly for children's chapel, small group gatherings, large meetings and relaxed one-on-one conversations. Thanks to all the generous folks who helped make our loan program a success. USG families loaned \$130,000 and gave \$20,000 to USG specifically to make possible the renovations on the Sullivan wing, the new office space next to the stage and the rental apartment on the second floor of the Austin Youth Lodge.

UU Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network: In November I became President of the Board of Directors of this statewide UU social justice group. In the fall we had an annual meeting where our constituents voted with their feet and created working groups in economic justice, environmental justice, gay lesbian transgender and bisexual justice and immigration justice. We were blessed to hire USG's own Dennis Brunn to be our Director and Virginia Kirk as the Assistant Director. We are now entrenched in the state budget making process fighting a Governor and state congress majority who are attempting to make major draconian and unethical cuts to the supports in place for low-income people across the state. Our other big priority is working for common sense policy limits and tax structures for the gas companies that are currently getting a free ride in using "fracking" methods to wreck the land in extraction of gas.

MLK Day of Service: I was excited and honored to serve again as co-chair of this event. We were thrilled with approximately 450 volunteers. Nine sister UU congregations and additional community partners worked together to make this event a tremendous success.

Small Group Ministry: This year our eleven groups with over 110 people as members were not alone. We partnered with the Church of the Larger Fellowship and regional Philadelphia congregations on the same monthly themes. I led our congregational efforts in making two professional 5- minute videos on "Forgiveness" and "Living Faith."

The Future is Bright: As I write this report our new son, Ellis, is one month old. How wonderful to have a high quality spiritual home like USG for raising Ellis and all the children and youth of our congregation. August 2012 completes my tenth year as your minister. The potential for all of us (adults and children) growing spiritually and bringing blessings to the world has never been higher. Our chalice burns bright, and we are blessed to gather and spread courage, hope and love to our city and our world.

*In Faith,
Kent*

CONSULTING MINISTER'S REPORT

I was hired to serve USG as a part-time Consulting Minister for the period August 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012. In addition to generally supporting the day-to-day operations and long-term mission of the congregation, my responsibilities fell into the five categories below:

Staff Liaison to the Ministries and Programs Council (MPC): When I came aboard, the MPC was entering its second year of existence and had just adopted four “meta-goals” for the programs and activities of the congregation. In my opinion, these goals are excellent, well-articulated statements of where USG wants to go. However, after a few months of learning about the congregation, I became convinced that the MPC needed to do some further research into the challenges and opportunities commonly experienced by a church our size. When we sat down to map which people and groups were responsible for what activities in the congregation, we found holes in two major (and related) areas: leadership development and deepening member engagement. Since both are critical to being a strong and effective congregation, the MPC plans to make them a major focus for next year. We also agreed that it was time to officially explore adding a second worship service, and I’m working with Linda Brunn to get that process started. Many thanks to Beth Lazer, MPC Chair, and to all MPC members for their patience and hard work!

Increasing the Focus and Effectiveness of USG’s Social Justice Ministry: At the start of my tenure, I found that USG was at a relatively common place for a mid-size congregation: although there were several strong activities going, such as Green Sanctuary and MLK Day of Service, there were also many commitments without sufficient leadership or support. Also, most of the activities were about service and education rather than systemic change, and there was no clear central vision or leadership to guide the work and connect it to the mission and membership of the congregation overall. Please see the report of the Revisioning Social Justice Task Force to see how we addressed these issues! Many thanks to Dennis Brunn, Task Force Chair, and the other members for their passion and dedication.

Preaching: I happily preached a few times more than once per month, due to the cancellation of several speakers and covering a 5th Sunday. I found the congregation to be very thoughtful in your feedback, both positive and constructive.

Pastoral Care: In 2011, I devoted some of my attention to helping bring new structure and energy to the caring ministry program. After seeing a need for additional communication and ritual around the unexpected departure of DRE Jude Henzy for medical reasons, I was able to identify and support several actions which seemed to bring sufficient healing and closure. Since the beginning of 2012, I have focused on providing care via occasional emails, phone calls, and weekly in-person visits.

Small Group Ministry: In August-October I drew on my small group ministry experience in other UU congregations to assist with the promotion and re-launch of USG’s program. In addition to leading a group and participating in the monthly leaders’ meetings throughout the year, I also facilitated the adoption of a sample group covenant that we hope will provide more clarity on expectations and participation.

Submitted by Rev. Rob Keithan, Consulting Minister

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

In January, I completed my second year as USG's Office Administrator. Time flies! And in July, I will begin a new chapter in my tenure at USG as your full-time Congregational Administrator. I am excited about this new opportunity and look forward to helping USG continue to live out its mission and values.

My partner in the office, Lida Holota, and I have worked very hard this past year to improve several key areas as they relate to the day-to-day operations of the church. They are as follows:

Improve Communications Procedures for USG Publications (electronic and printed):

1. In January, we began use of two web based forms for committee and group leaders to submit announcements and building space requests. This system has helped tremendously in our ability to keep on top of space use, facilitate/anticipate space needs and conflicts, and publicize events in a more effective way. Leaders are still getting used to the new procedures, but progress is being made.
2. In conjunction with the Communications Committee, Lida and I have been meeting with groups responsible for major events at the church to develop plans for publicity and communications. This process has been a huge help to all involved and we plan to continue this process going forward.
3. A facebook page and twitter account were created this past year and every weekly eCommunicator is posted to both locations, in addition to other special announcements as they arise. We continue to discuss ways in which video and social media can help us reach more folks and create more connection.
4. Expanded our Contact Us page on our website to include a listing of all staff, board of trustees, council and committee chairs and group leaders with active links to email addresses. (mirrors the front half of the printed directory)
5. Communications Policies as well as many other current USG Policies and Procedures have been placed online under the Members Online tab.
6. Developed and implemented online registration and payment for several USG events including Adult RE, Children's RE, SGM, Men's Retreat, Rebuilding Philly, Share the Plate Nominations, All Church Retreat, and the Service Auction.
7. Assisted the Board President in the implementation of a web-based monthly leadership report
8. Via our new website platform, developed and implemented a new online Bulletin Board group for all in the church community to share and solicit information for services, resource needs, items for sale, etc.
9. Streamlined our process for development of the printed CommUUnicator and email CommUUnicator. Leaning more on the website as the depository for all current information regarding church events and activities and using the information from the website to develop other communications media.
10. Assisted Kent and Erick with the development of the "Taking It Home" project. This online resource was created to help people go deeper with topics discussed in our Sunday worship services and help them bring some of the spiritual practices and theme of the month exercises into their daily/weekly routines outside of church.

Work on building use issues including use of rooms and signage

1. Worked with Carolyn Scott to identify new signage needed for the interior of our church building. We are hoping the new signs will be installed over the summer.
2. In conjunction with Carolyn Cotton, updated all of our rental contracts and made them all available for download on our website.
3. Worked extensively with the Admin Council on accessibility issues. We will continue our work and research on a new lift or elevator to provide access to the Sullivan Chapel.
4. Worked closely with MPIC for the opening of the Sullivan Chapel and preparing the space with proper furniture, furnishings, signage, internet connectivity, etc.
5. Worked closely with B&G for the closures and remediation of the Daskam Room, Committee Room and Kent's office.
6. Worked with Kent, B&G and Carolyn to reconfigure personnel/contractors for the cleaning of the building, security, groundskeeping, Sunday morning Sexton, and Special Events Sexton.
7. Continuing research on Video/Media options for Sullivan Chapel, other meeting rooms and the sanctuary. This is a growing need for all users of the church and must be addressed if possible in the coming year.

Membership and Sunday Morning Support

1. Worked with MPC on the creation of a new Fellowship Hour Hosting program. The program has helped to improve the Fellowship Hour experience and more refinements in the program will be forthcoming to make it sustainable going forward.
2. Attended most Membership Committee meetings as staff liaison to provide assistance and support in reaching out to members and visitors.
3. Attended both the General Assembly Conference in Charlotte, NC last June and the Mosaic Makers Multi-Cultural Gathering in Washington DC in February. These experiences will help me to support efforts in the church to improve and expand on our efforts to welcome individuals of all ages and backgrounds and be a “people’s” church.

Make updated church Policies & Procedures more available for church leaders

I began work this last spring with MPC to identify and update all current USG Policies and Procedures. This work will continue with the end goal of placing all Policies and Procedures on the USG website for easy access and use by all in church leadership. In addition, we hope to develop a “packet” of helpful information for Board of Trustees members and Committee Chairs to help them perform the duties and functions in their perview.

Technology/Data Support

Every church leader has a need to access current and accurate church data. This takes many forms, but mostly includes member and friend contact information, as well as committee/event participation and giving history. We currently use a database program from ACS Technologies. Although ACS is a well-respected church management database program, it has proven difficult for most of our leaders to access and use. I have developed a team of knowledgeable database users to help in the research and possible implementation of an alternative database program that will better suit our needs.

Submitted by Gloria Guldager Smith, Office Administrator

LIFESPAN FAITH DEVELOPMENT: Children and Youth

In preparation for the annual DRE report, I felt that a letter would best serve as the nature of this report. This past church year has seen many exciting opportunities to arise in the USG Religious Education and Faith Development portfolio. In partnership with the Religious Education Committee, Church School programming has been well attended with an average weekly attendance of 65 children. Even in the face of changes in leadership, from Jude's departure to Margaret Lea stepping down as chair, the children have not felt the effects of such transitions. This is in no part without the tireless commitment of a select few congregants.

USG and I are blessed with amazing and skilled volunteers who worked tirelessly to create compelling programs including social justice initiatives and monthly children's chapel. Surprisingly however in the face of compelling programming, recruitment of volunteers has not been fruitful. Securing new people and fresh faces into the RE community continues to be a challenge for the Religious Education Committee. As such, there has been a lot of turnover, and 2012-13 will start with a committee of whom many are new members under the leadership of Susan Doering as chair.

Sandra Campbell who has served USG as the Church School Coordinator on Sunday mornings will end her formal employment with the church on June 30th, and will also step out of leadership on the Religious Education Committee. I am grateful to her dedication and commitment to the program and collegiality to me.

I recruited and hired Jennifer Buch to run our childcare, and she has proven to be a ROCK for our little ones. USG is lucky to have her in the Bristol Room.

In addition to the usual liturgical year, Church School excitingly invited Queen Nur to offer the congregation and children an authentic Kwanzaa experience. This coupled with Jazz Funeral, Easter, Day of the Dead, Bread Communion, and Christmas surely provided many multigenerational opportunities for our children and youth. Also, Seder was well attended by families in addition to our Family Fun Nights.

Children's programming focused on love, UU Identity and Values, and also used a trimester approach with teaching a two Sunday a month commitment. Some issues that are present in the program are children's behavior and parent involvement. The committee has worked hard to institute behavior covenants, however parental buy in has been limited. There were many initiatives brought forward to engage the Youth of USG, including a multi church youth group, however timing and interest did not permit many USG youth to attend. The youth and their families also opted to not attend a planned DC Social Justice trip around Coming of Age, and instead worked together to have a successful on site overnight/credo writing.

In this time of transition, many wonderful people need to be lifted up, including Margaret Lea, Susan Doering, Susan Smith, Shawn Craig-Parker, Ilene Klein, Jenn Leiby, Tammi Talda, Alan Windle, Sarah Frazier, Sarah West, Chris McLaughlin, Kurt Ahrens, Joe and Audrey Walsh, Betsy Gabriel, Gwen Gatto, and countless others.

It is also important to lift up that while Adult Spiritual Development took a hiatus this past year, several classes were offered which can be reviewed in the ASD report. I thank Margaret Kinnevy and Samantha Miller.

Lastly, I want to take this opportunity to reflect on my time with USG. Initially what began as a short-term collegial request from Kent to “cover” has absorbed my life for the past fifteen months. I am ever grateful to have been able to impact the lives of children even if from afar. That is why I am called to do this work. In honesty, my relationship with USG has been bittersweet. It has been hard to integrate into the gathered community, and I have not had the opportunity to build relationships in a manner that I would if circumstance permitted me to be at USG on Sunday mornings. I have, at times, felt under a scrutinizing microscope, with an expectation that I would run programming in the same manner that it had been when Jude was present. While that, however, was not a professional expectation, the glare of expectation coupled with not being onsite, has nonetheless left me exhausted. But even through some adversity, I can say that Unitarian Universalism lived on in our programming and within our RE community. That is truly what matters most to me. Together we developed a seemingly negative into a positive picture.

The role of interim staffing is to help move a program forward while leadership figures out the big picture—in this case replacing a full time faith development professional while using a 15 hour consultant. I am profoundly grateful to Kent’s tireless support, along with my colleagues, Rob, Gloria, Lida, Mark and Carol. Amazing chairs like Linda Smith with worship arts, the MPC, as well as board presidents, Berdine Whedon, Mary Lee Keene, and incumbent, Tom Ott, have offered invaluable insight and leadership. I am pleased that the RE Committee learned how to navigate its own ship and not be dependent on a program that is solely staff driven. That is a major accomplishment and took a sincere change in attitude and culture. It is they, not I, who actually made Sunday morning happen.

Each religious educator brings a skill set, and while I lament that my strongest skill set did not get the light it has in other congregations, I learned things at USG I may not have been exposed to elsewhere. My time as part of the USG community helped me to develop my skills in delegating complex program administration and managing programs with a sense of emotional distance. Through the congregation’s generous professional expenses granted to me, I was afforded two graduate courses at Starr King School for the Ministry, thus finishing my requirements for masters level credentialing as a religious educator through the UUA.

I close this letter with a quote by Albert Schweitzer, “At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”

It is my sincere hope that I have been a light to you all, as the chalice is a continual source of light that brings us faith to guide our journey home.

In Faith,
Erick DuPree, Consulting Director of Religious Education

MUSIC DIRECTOR

This year I find that we have continued along the musical track that we have followed for the past several years and things seem to be running smoothly. We continue to use more in-house talent to enhance our worship services, and I have found that this is an enjoyable and positive part of my work at USG.

The USG choir continues to anchor the special music aspect of Sunday morning worship. Together we are on-hand for three out of four (or 4 out of 5) Sundays per month from September into June. We continue to have several professional soloists: Emily Joy Goldberg (soprano), Beverly Gross Spencer (alto), Robert Hefele (tenor), and Thomas Schoonmaker (baritone). It is a pleasure to work with them as well as with the choir. I am always impressed with their loyalty and dedication to providing quality music to enhance our worship services. This year we have presented three major choral offerings: *Navidad Nuestra* by Ariel Ramirez in December, *Songs and Sonnets* by George Shearing in March, and *Vesperae solennes de confessore* by Wolfgang A. Mozart in May. Each of these pieces was an attempt to appeal to different constituencies within our congregation and yet speak to everyone at the same time: the Ramirez piece was targeted to appeal to those who enjoy multicultural music (specifically Latin American melodies and rhythms); the Shearing was a suite of vocal jazz pieces on texts of Shakespeare; and the Mozart was an attempt to appeal to those who enjoy classical choral music. This year we didn't have the chance to call on our Klezmer band, but several of the musicians who have played in that ensemble had the opportunity to perform at other services in different capacities. We did have our rock-ish ensemble play this year. I did not attend General Assembly last summer because my nephew was getting married the same weekend. I was sorry to miss the annual GA excitement, but I do plan to attend this summer in Phoenix.

I still use the organ to enhance our worship when it seems most appropriate. The instrument has not yet been repaired and brought back to tip-top shape, but it works well for some hymnody and some repertoire. But most of the time I am at the piano for services. Since this is the case, we may want to consider upgrading the instrument in the sanctuary. While it is acceptable, it is certainly not wonderful. However, with the climate control issues that we routinely face in the sanctuary, perhaps it is better left the way it is. Additionally, we have an additional upright piano in the sanctuary, a piano in the committee room, and the old grand in the assembly room (which I think should be replaced).

I continue to serve on two committees as a part of my employment at USG: the Worship Arts Committee as well as the Music Ministry Committee. I have also been included in some of the multicultural committee work that our congregation has been invited to participate in. In February I attended a multicultural workshop conference in Washington, DC, as a part of my work with that group. It was a powerfully invigorating weekend experience with the opportunity to worship at All Souls Church in DC. It has been enjoyable to get to know the different folks who serve on these committees and to work with them to enhance our Sunday morning worship. I think we're succeeding: I know when I look out at the congregation on a typical Sunday morning; I am pleased and delighted to see such a lively mixture of people who have come to worship together at our wonderful USG.

Submitted by Mark Daugherty, Music Director

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Exciting things continue to happen at USG. Our building program continued with the opening of the renovated Sullivan Chapel that gives our children better spaces for religious education and offers more opportunities for rental to outside groups.

Another aspect of our building plan began to bear fruit with the rental of the apartment in the Austin Youth Lodge. That space is being occupied by Loida and Elmer Perez, who are keeping the church much cleaner since they took over custodial duties. We expect to invest more in cleaning and maintenance so that our facilities will be more pleasant for all of us and more attractive to prospective renters.

We are thrilled to have elevated Gloria Guldager Smith to the full-time position of Congregational Administrator. Gloria has become a major asset in the day-to-day running of USG.

Our endowment continues to be steady with the growing economy and the excellent management of Trillium, which puts our money only in socially responsible investments, in accordance with our UU principles. Recently, our dearly departed Edna Jones added significantly to our finances with a very generous bequest.

The Board spent a good deal of time on broad issues this past year, such as policy governance, which leads us to ask: How should we govern ourselves? What is the role of the minister, the board and the councils? How should each spend her/his/its time, and what authority should each group have? We interviewed several other UU congregations. Discussion of these issues will continue into the new year.

One big unsolved question is: how can we involve the congregation more in decision-making? Easier said than done, as we all find ourselves too busy. But we all need to be involved to make this church all that it can be. We very much welcome your thoughts in this area.

The Board also devoted time and energy dealing with the problems in our religious education program. Our much loved DRE, Jude Henzy, became ill and had to leave. A temporary DRE filled the gap while we searched for a new DRE. Fortunately, that search is coming to a close.

In addition to renovations under the master building plan, our beautiful but aging building required extensive repair due to heavy rains. Even with the herculean efforts of our truly amazing Buildings and Grounds Committee, we were required to pay for repairs from our investment fund. We expect to invest more heavily in our building for the foreseeable future.

Increased building and staff costs have, unfortunately, outpaced our income growth, and we now face the largest budget deficit in many years. But we are debt free and still have a healthy amount in our Consolidated Investment Fund. We will work on revenue producing ideas to bridge that gap.

On February 19, the voting membership of USG approved sponsorship and co-ordination of Rebecca Froom, along with Arlington Street Church in Boston. Rebecca was ordained at Arlington Street Church in May. Rebecca was raised here and is now a third generation member

of the Unitarian Society of Germantown. Rebecca's mother, Louise, is an active member. Her father Rev. Burt Froom is a Presbyterian Minister and long-time friend of our congregation. Rebecca has preached here with great response.

So many people have contributed so much to USG this year. We would like to name names. But we know that we are not aware of everyone who has given significantly of their time, so I will name just two: Scott Murray, whose leadership of the B&G Committee is almost a full time job, and Dave Dearden, volunteer church counsel, who had no idea when he took this job of the hours he would have to spend this year. Thanks, Scott and Dave, and thank you too to the dozens of others.

Submitted by Mary Lee Keane, President

FINANCE COMMITTEE AND TREASURER'S REPORT

◆ Members

Walt Ceglowski (chair), Lee Meinicke, Treasurer, Rudy Sprinkle, Michael Campbell, Assistant Treasurer for CIF, Tom Smith, Charles Gabriel.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

The most significant financial activity of the year enabled the completion of the renovations to the Sullivan Wing. A new bank account was opened at Valley Green Bank, a neighborhood financial institution, to separately manage transactions related to the implementation of the Master Plan. The Board approved an internal loan program and congregants created a pool of \$150,000 that was added to the remaining amounts in the Sullivan Library Fund portion of the Consolidated Investment Fund (CIF). An additional \$14,000 was contributed to the project by members and friends. Including some expenditures incurred in the previous fiscal year, the Sullivan Wing and new RE office renovations have been largely completed for \$180,000 leaving \$26,000 in the new account for the next steps of the Master Plan.

Managing our operating budget has been a challenge this year, with both congregant giving and use of facility income coming in lower than projected. Cash flow has been an ongoing challenge. Funds were drawn from the General Endowment to pay for \$30,000 of major building repairs and improvements due to extraordinary water damages to the main building and which threatened the Sullivan Wing. Current projections anticipate that frugality in expense accounts will almost make up for the shortage in revenues, with operating revenues and expenditures of about \$450,000 by year-end.

◆ High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year

The Board has agreed in principle with the Finance Committee's recommendation to move all of our general bank accounts from PNC to Valley Green Bank, in solidarity with the Quakers who have called for a boycott of PNC for its investments in mountain-top removal mining. Implementing this change will take some care and planning.

The Treasurer hopes to create a coordinated financial picture encompassing our everyday operations, significant building repairs and improvements, and the next phases of the Master Plan Implementation. Identifying and balancing both sources and uses of funds will be a priority.

The Finance Committee will continue to carefully review the monthly financial statements and to refine financial policies and procedures.

Submitted by Lee Meinicke, Treasurer

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

◆ Members

Sarah West (chair), Tom Ott, Walt Ceglowski, Jessica Slivak, Julie Marothy, Gloria Guldager Smith, Administrator

◆ Mission of Committee

The mission of the Admin Council is uncertain at this time.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

This past year the Admin Council looked closely at accessibility issues for those with mobility challenges. Working with the Building & Grounds Committee we arranged for new wheel chair spaces in the sanctuary where wheel chairs do not have to extend into the aisles or be located in a strong draft from a nearby doorway. We worked with Building and Grounds to identify deficiencies in the ramp leading into the assembly room and made recommendations for its reconstruction. We also looked at the effectiveness of the lift, considered the effectiveness of our outdoor front sign, and checked out the effectiveness of the hearing assist devices in the sanctuary.

◆ High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year

We are awaiting a Board clarification of whether or not the Admin Council is still a useful part of the governance system.

Submitted by Sarah West, Chair

MINISTRIES AND PROGRAMS COUNCIL (MPC)

◆ Members

Beth Lazer (chair), Linda Brunn, Kent Matthies, Andrea Parry, Anais Salles, Eli Scearce, Joe Walsh, Peter Walsh

◆ Mission

The Ministries and Program Council, a liaison between the Board of Trustees and USG's program committees, leads the effort to accomplish USG's mission in the areas of worship, faith development, caring/inclusive community, and social justice.

◆ Goals

Our goals articulate our vision of what we want USG, as an organization, to accomplish for ministries and programs in carrying out USG's vision and mission.

USG leaders (staff, council, and committees) will create programs and activities that effectively encourage members and their families to:

- Engage in inspiring and enriching worship and an array of spiritual practices;
- Participate in life-span experiences of meaning, knowledge, and wisdom;
- Be vital, effective, compassionate agents of social justice through a rich variety of service and dialogue experiences; and
- Develop deep and meaningful relationships within an intentionally welcoming, multicultural, and caring community.
- USG leaders will work together to ensure that USG-sponsored programs are designed to meet these goals.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

- Began work on creating/compiling policies related to managing USG programs
- Developed a recommendation for RE user fees
- Charted the Social Justice Revisioning Task Force
- Charted Second Service Task Force
- Created an all-member survey to collect demographic and program information
- Identified leadership development and member engagement as key areas of church life that need to be addressed
- Helped create hosting system for weekly fellowship hour
- Ensured all program committees have leadership for the 2012-13 year

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

- Combine the various aspects of our multicultural work into a unified effort
- Initiate a Member Engagement effort
- Initiate a Leadership Development focus
- Collect and analyze data from all-member survey
- Prepare a 2013-20 Program Strategic Plan

Submitted by Beth Lazer, Chair

ADULT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

◆ **Members**

At this time, the Adult Spiritual Development Committee is not an active committee.

◆ **Mission of Committee**

The mission of Adult Spiritual Development is currently being reviewed by the Ministry and Programs Council with attention to the changing trends in adult faith formation.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

This year, under the consulting DRE, the following classes were offered:

- Genesis with Charles Gabriel
- Mindfulness Training with David Zeitler, MA

We also recruited new member Ashley Burzack to run a weekly meditation. Donna Cotzen offered an after church talk back in the fall, and the consulting DRE piloted a Taking It Home that looked to deepen the spiritual experiences of the Sunday morning worship.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

To Be Determined by MPC, and Staffing for the Future.

Submitted by Erick DuPree, Consulting DRE

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

◆ **Members**

Scott Murray (chair), Tom Schoonmaker, Bill Blasdel, Howard Silver, Misha Lazer, Carolyn Cotton, Mike Heinsdorf, Jim Semmler, Andre Stormont, Al Parker, Harry Radcliffe, Mark Tuveson

◆ **Mission of Committee**

- Preserve, Protect, Operate, Repair, and Maintain the property including the Church building, Austin Youth Lodge and the Grounds.
- Assure suitability for congregational use, tenants and event rentals.
- Manage costs associated with the operation and maintenance of the property.
- Assure long term viability of the property.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

This fiscal year we were faced with some important challenges. The storms of August and September 2011 accelerated damage to several of our interior spaces in the church. The primary issue has been water intrusion. These spaces also were impacted by the deferral of maintenance in prior years. This year we have made substantial improvements.

- A combination of professional and volunteer efforts sealed many areas where water has intruded in the Sullivan wing, the Daskam/Committee roof, and the windows of the Assembly Room.
- We installed a new gutter solution over the DRE office and Minister's office to avoid further water intrusion there. And the drainage pathway at the Lincoln Drive end of Sullivan was improved.
- Once the water entry was addressed, we renovated several rooms. The Daskam Room windows were replaced and walls repaired professionally, and volunteers did the finish painting. The Dining Room walls and ceiling were repaired and repainted. Kent's office walls/ceiling were repaired and repainted by a volunteer. The Sullivan stairway had loose lead paint removed, and the walls were repaired and repainted. And we are in process with water damage repairs to walls, floor and ceiling of the Committee Room.

We also had unanticipated work associated with several trees on the property that presented concerns for the safety of people and property.

We have continued to manage our utility costs. Past energy efficiency improvements, this year's caulking efforts, our changeover to natural gas for fuel, and our aggressive attention to

thermostat settings has reduced our bill nearly 25% from prior years even after accounting for the mild winter.

We are faced with increasing costs for Storm Water Runoff by the Philadelphia Water Department. If we took no action, our water bills would increase from \$2,000 per year in 2010 to \$10,000 in 2014. Bill Blasdel has led an effort to mitigate these costs. For the fiscal year ending, and for next year, he obtained a grant of about \$180 per month to offset some increasing costs. And Bill and Trish Gallagher have been working with a group of her students at Drexel to review alternatives we have to mitigate costs further. Some of these may require short term investments to save long term, recurring costs. This is going to require continuing effort to manage these costs.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

From top level, within budget restrictions:

- Assure safe operation of the property
- Enhance rental income potential
- Preserve/Protect the property
- Reduce operating costs
- Cosmetic upgrades

Submitted by Scott Murray, Chair

CARING SYSTEM

◆ **Members**

Sarah West and Mark Kaufki (co-chairs)

◆ **Mission of Committee**

Every member of USG is part of the Caring System. We reach out to each other to share joys and support each other in times of sorrow or personal difficulties.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

The Caring System Co-chairs, with the help of our office administrators and the consent of those mentioned, prepare the caring notes for each week's announcements. They meet regularly with the minister on pastoral concerns while preserving pastoral confidences. In January we had an open training session for enhancing our skills in supportive listening and reaching out to members & friends at time of need. Twelve members of the church attended and 10 volunteered to be Caring Ministry Associates to connect on behalf of the church to individuals who could benefit from ongoing or temporary individual supportive attention. During the 2011-2012 year 6 members of the congregation have received outreach from Caring Ministry Associates. A follow-up training for current Caring Ministry Associates will be held in late May. We are proud of our caring congregation and the many members who reach out without being asked when they become aware of a need.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

For the 2012-2013 year we will continue to facilitate our caring system. We plan to hold at least one open training session and to meet several times a year with the Caring Ministry Associates.

If any member or friend becomes aware of a need please alert the minister, the office administrators, or the caring system co-chairs. We are on this life journey together.

Submitted by Sarah West, Co-Chair

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

◆ Members

Dennis Strain (chair), Gloria Guldager Smith, Lida Holota, Carl Leiby, Treva Burger, Judy Morgan, Jeff Smith, Frances Heron

◆ Mission of Committee

The Communications Committee promotes communications within the congregation and to the larger community, utilizing verbal and written announcements, a weekly e-mailed CommUUnicator, a monthly written CommUUnicator, an interactive website, posters and press releases.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- Development of website to include videos of sermons, photos of church events, online registration and payment, a Bulletin Board for personal messages, and a Social Action Network.
- Weekly Facebook updates.
- Calendar to schedule publicity for major events.
- Training of committee chairs on use of website.

◆ High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year

- Maintaining present communication efforts.
- Continuing training of committee chairs on use of website.
- Improving use of pamphlets and bulletin boards.
- Development of policy for proper use of website, as experience dictates.

Submitted by Dennis Strain, Chair

EARTH HONORING TRADITIONS

◆ Members

Dennis Strain (chair) with assistance of Donya Coldwell and Berdine Whedon. Services and events are open to the public without formal membership.

◆ Mission of Committee

The committee recreates the rituals of Earth honoring traditions, drawing heavily upon Celtic traditions. It conducts eight seasonal celebrations.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

The eight celebrations were conducted, two inside and six outside in the Grove.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

The formation of a study group will be explored to learn more about the Earth honoring traditions.

Submitted by Dennis Strain, Chair

ENDING RACISM COMMITTEE

◆ **Members**

Robert Anu (co-chair), Carla Campbell (co-chair), Nancy Anderson, Pat Clancy, June Krebs, Hal Krieger, Kent Matthies, Jill Murray, Scott Murray, Jeanne Robinson, Anaiis Salles, Eli Searce, Charlotte Turner, Marina Patrice Van Gossen, Marion Watlington

◆ **Mission of Committee**

In an effort to more fully align ourselves with the tenets of our faith, (the tenets of recognizing the inherent worth and dignity of every person - the justice, equity and compassion in human relations), the Ending Racism Committee's goals are to bring us all to become more loving and compassionate as we build awareness of white privilege and systemic racism as prevalent in our lives and affecting us all individually and as a society. Our challenge is to educate ourselves so that we are increasingly aware of the racism embodied in our institutions and communities, and to bring about racial healing within ourselves and our congregation. As members of USG's Ending Racism Committee, we believe that we and our congregation have an obligation to become fully aware of how our lives are affected by racism and racist institutions, their corrosive effects, and how all of us are diminished by these.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of Past Year (2011-2012)**

We had planned to have Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams address the congregation in September 2011 but the speaker, unfortunately, did not show as planned.

We helped coordinate with the Joseph Priestly District and many ERC members attended the Jubilee II workshop held throughout a weekend in October 2011.

Some ERC members participated in the Martin Luther King Day of Service at USG.

We held a discussion in January 2012 with representatives from the Board, the Ministries and Program Council (MPC), and with Rev. Kent Matthies regarding how our church congregation is moving along a continuum scale, the continuum on becoming an anti-racist, multi-cultural institution. Several members will also join the MPC meeting in June 2012 to continue this discussion.

We showed "Something the Lord Made" about Vivien Thomas' contributions to surgery for congenital heart disease and led a discussion afterwards in February 2012.

Annette John-Hall from the Philadelphia Inquirer spoke on a variety of topics regarding racial justice on March 4, 2012.

We showed Parts I and II of “Race: The Power of An Illusion” and led a discussion afterwards in spring 2012.

We showed “True Colors”, an investigative report on discrimination by Diane Sawyer, and discussed the lawsuit against Countrywide Mortgage (Bank of America’s Countrywide Financial unit is charged with steering more than 200,000 African American and Hispanic homebuyers toward costly and dangerous subprime mortgages from 2004 to 2008, even though their credit profiles qualified them for traditional, or prime, loans in April 2012.

Committee members led a discussion at the All Church Retreat in June 2012 of the film “When the Bough Breaks” from the film series “Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?” by California Newsreel.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

September 2012: Open House to kick off the 2012-2013 church year. This is a good session for those interested in joining the committee. We will show “Part III of Race: The Power of An Illusion” by California Newsreel.

Book Discussion Group: We will read and discuss “The New Jim Crow” book by Michelle Alexander.

We may present a program involving a conversation around justice for Black Farmers, and other food justice issues.

We will show some films dealing with racism (“When the Bough Breaks” by California Newsreel) and immigration and resultant discrimination issues (“A Better Life”).

Other programs TBA.

Submitted by Carla Campbell, Co-Chair

GREEN SANCTUARY COMMITTEE

◆ **Members**

Alan Windle (chair), Anais Salles, Carolyn Scott, Gail Mershon, Dennis Strain, Judy Morgan

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of Past Year**

- A very well received Earth Day service.
- Development of an alliance with Citizens Climate Lobby. We are active participants and now host the monthly meeting at USG.
- Installed bike racks on USG grounds.
- Drove the adoption of green cleaning products at USG.
- Held two "Philadelphia Water" events that included lecture/discussion at USG followed by tours of Saylor Grove and the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center
- Sponsored a presentation by a representative of Al Gore's Climate Reality project at Center in the Park.
- "Menu for the Future" Adult RE offering in the fall.

- Hosted presentation of several films related to environmental concerns
- Support to Building and Grounds on storm runoff management abatement

Submitted by Alan Windle, Chair

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

◆ Members

Delores Hill (chair), Maggie Chapman, Elaine Hills, Jenn Leiby, Carolyn Scott, Gloria Guldager Smith, Tammi Talda

◆ Mission of Committee

The Membership Committee's mission is to create a welcoming atmosphere for visitors, to establish a path for them to become members of the church and to retain new members, encouraging all to participate in the life of the congregation so that they and the church may be mutually enriched and that the church will grow and prosper.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- Assumed responsibility for coordinating Circle Dinners
- Conducted New Member Orientations on the first Sunday of every month for individuals before they joined USG.
- Planned and facilitated six Membership Book Signing Ceremonies and two private signings to give new members an opportunity to participate in a formal commitment ceremony
- Planned and facilitated two Visitor Breakfasts with the Minister
- Hosted a Potluck Dinner for New Members

◆ High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year

- Continue to develop new activities and procedures to help visitors make connections to the church community
- Recruit at least two additional committee members to (a) follow up with members (b) assist with the Visitor Breakfasts with the Minister

Submitted by Delores Hill, Chair

NICKY BROWN MEMORIAL EDUCATION FUND

◆ Members

Ingrid Brown (chair); Lida Holota, Shawn Miller

◆ Mission of Committee

In 1994 this fund was created in a merger of the Youth Scholarship Fund (going back to Depression years), and the Nicholas Brown Scholarship Fund.

Eligibility: any pledging (and paying) member or friend (2 years or more) or their children. Disbursements are made to college students from interest earned the previous fiscal year

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

In the Fall of 2011 eleven children of pledging and paying members attending college received small stipends.

Submitted by Ingrid Brown, Chair

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

◆ **Members**

Susan Doering (incumbent chair), Ilene Klein, Sandra Campbell, secretary, Shawn Craig Parker, Susan Smith, Jenn Lieby

◆ **Mission of Committee**

Oversee the spiritual growth of children and youth religious education in partnership with the director of religious education, minister, and ministry and programs council.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

- Maintained effective programming with off site consultant.
- Several social justice programs including a focus on environmental justice
- Developed a dynamic chapel experience that meets monthly.
- Developed a continuous flow of Religious Education programming through summer.
- Partnered with MLK day of service.
- Invited authentic community leaders like Queen Nor to teach about Kwanzaa.
- Cultivated new committee members and a new chair. Parent directed COA for youth.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

Acclimate the new DRE to church life.
Continue to offer compelling programming.

Submitted by Erick DuPree, Chair

REVISIONING SOCIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

◆ **Members**

Dennis Brunn (chair), Anais Salles, Judy Morgan, Joe Walsh, Sarah Apt, Marina Patrice Van Gossen, Rev. Rob Keithan

◆ **Mission of Committee**

To engage USG members in reviewing and evaluating current social justice initiatives based at USG with an eye toward increasing membership involvement, increasing focus, impacts, and accountability to both the congregation and our partners in the community.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

The Revisioning Social Justice Task Force (RSJ Task Force) grew out of discussions within the Ministries and Program Council last year that concluded that our social justice programs would

benefit from a careful review that involved as many in the congregation as possible. Focus, greater congregational involvement and improved impacts were key concerns.

As former chair of the USG Social Action Committee (the S.A.C. had not functioned since 2007), Dennis Brunn was asked to join the MPC and to bring together a Task Force. In October 2011 four of the Task Force attended a social justice workshop at the Media UU church conducted by Rev. Richard Gilbert, veteran advocate and noted author within Unitarian Universalism for effective, faith-based social justice work. That workshop's promotion of congregation-wide prioritization and accountability influenced our thinking as did the inputs of Rev. Keithan, our consulting minister. The RSJ Task Force early on developed a set of objectives and a timeline which were reviewed and endorsed by the Ministries and Programs Council. We also informed our thinking by each member of the Task Force carrying out interviews of four or more USG members regarding social justice, and through that process reached over 30 members. The interviews covered members' ideas and preferences about the role of social justice within Unitarian Universalism and asked about the specific social justice issues of most importance to them.

We launched our congregational engagement process by planning and conducting a Social Justice Workshop on March 10th, 2012. Over 40 USG members attended the March workshop, facilitated by Rev. Keithan. By the end of the day, the assembled group had selected two top priority social issues for USG to focus on in the coming year:

- 1) Improving Public Education; and 2) Environmental Justice.

Both of these areas build on current and long-standing efforts: the Lingelbach Elementary School tutoring and annual awards dinner, and the Green Sanctuary Committee's work for several years.

Two secondary level initiatives were also selected: Reproductive Justice and Economic Justice. The first initiative is now in motion, the second is still in the exploratory stage.

An important concept discussed and supported on March 10th was that for each area selected for congregation-wide support, we would make an effort over time to engage in both service and policy advocacy, recognizing that institutional policies and practices are the root causes of the majority of the issues we have selected.

The RSJ Task Force next decided to offer support to all of these efforts, including other ongoing work such as Ending Racism, Share the Plate, UU UNO, UUSC, and UUPLAN, by convening a Gathering of Social Justice Leaders for current and potential USG social justice leaders. That workshop, co-facilitated by Rev. Keithan and Anais Salles, took place on May 12, 2012 and involved 15 USG members in a lively discussion of concepts of effective leadership at several levels, the special challenges of engaging UUs in focused social justice activities given our non-creedal faith, models of effective social justice planning, and how to be accountable to partners in the community and to the congregation. Individual evaluation and commitment sheets were collected at the end.

A recommendation emerged on May 12 that social justice leaders and volunteers be more prominently and regularly acknowledged in various ways, and that social justice themes be more frequently integrated into Sunday Services, was broadly supported and will be taken by the RSJ

Task Force back to the Ministries and Programs Council and then to other relevant decision makers.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

The RSJ Task Force is still working on a written procedure that would include specific ways to annually prioritize, support, and evaluate future social justice initiatives, and to propose a specific coordinating body and its function (to replace the no longer functioning Social Action Committee). We see the need for better coordination, communication with all concerned, and for support. At the same time, we are wary that too elaborate or formal a structure and process may not be sustainable at this stage in our development as a social justice-focused congregation.

We will be requesting endorsement from the Ministries and Programs Council that our Task Force continue at least through September to complete that work.

At that point, the current RSJ Task Force envisions disbanding and its ongoing support functions would be taken up by a new committee, tentatively called the Social Justice Steering Committee or Leadership Team, which in turn would report to the Ministries and Programs Council and through the MPC to the Board and Congregation.

The opportunities developed by this process for USG members to put our faith into action are many:

1. Each USG member is asked to make some contribution of time or talent to the two top priority issues: Public Education and Environmental Justice
2. Each USG member is asked to consider engaging in one of the other ongoing social justice initiatives, if they are not drawn to the two listed above.
3. USG members with some experience in social justice work here and in other congregations are asked to consider stepping forth as members of the yet to be formed Social Justice Steering Committee/Leadership Team.

Current USG Social Justice Activities (as of May 2012)

HIGHEST PRIORITY

Improving Public Education- Lingelbach School Partnership - Sam Gugino
Environmental Justice - Green Sanctuary --Alan Windle

NEXT HIGHEST PRIORITY

Reproductive Justice -- Berdine Whedon & Marina Patrice Van Gossen
Economic Justice ---Aaron Van Gossen

CONTINUING ACTIVITY

Rebuilding Philly --Linda Bernstein & Richard Bernat
MLK Day of Service --Rev. Kent Matthies
NIM: Neighborhood Interfaith Movement -- Beth Lazer is NIM Bd member
NPIHN: Northwest Phila Interfaith Hospitality Network -- Vacant Position!

DENOMINATIONAL ACTIVITY

UUSC --Linda Brunn
UU-UNO -- Marietta Tanner

UUPLAN --Rev. Kent Matthies; Dennis Brunn is Director

SUPPORTING ACTIVITY

Share the Plate --Dennis Brunn

Ending Racism --Carla Campbell & Robert Anu

Revisioning Social Justice --Dennis Brunn

Submitted by Dennis Brunn, Chair

SERVICE AUCTION COMMITTEE

◆ Members

Deb Kish-Silver, (co-chair), Sam Stormont, (co-chair), Dennis Strain, Shannon Strain, Lida Holota, Sally Streibig, Lynne Kalish, Elaine Kowalewski, Bill Dowdall, Bruce Bryant, Carolyn Cotton, Maura Gallagher, Judi Morrow

◆ Mission of Committee

To raise funds for the operating budget of USG and provide opportunities for fellowship among the members and friends.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

This year the auction committee held its annual service auction. The theme was Mardi Gras. Carnival characters were cavorting throughout the evening. This year's auction raised about \$23,000 dollars. We are grateful that in these tough economic times the members of the congregation were generous in their donations and bidding.

◆ High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year

To maintain and hopefully improve the service auction's financial contribution to the church. In addition, we will strive to continue providing many opportunities for the kind of fellowship that energizes and strengthens our church.

Submitted by Sam Stormont, Chair

SHARE THE PLATE TASK FORCE

◆ Members

Dennis Brunn (chair), Jamie Preston, (vice chair), Peggy Bruton, Secretary, Gale Gibbons, Carl Slivak

◆ Mission of Committee

To express the congregation's financial support to social service and social justice activities in our community and within our denomination by receiving, screening, and nominating non-profit organizations. We select organizations that are working in the spirit of our UU principles and put those nominated organizations before the congregation approximately each month and ask for an offering. "Share the Plate" means that all funds collected that day are sent to the non-profit. The exception is the Christmas Eve offering which has traditionally been split between the congregation and the nominated organization which by consensus has continued to be our partner, the Northwest Phila. Interfaith Hospitality Network.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

From June 2011 through to April 2012, our congregation gave \$9,663 to the following eleven organizations:

- Women's Center of Montgomery County
- St. Vincent's In-Dwelling Program
- Ella's Retreat
- Schuykill Valley Animal Rescue Center
- Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
- Unitarian Universalist UN Office
- BuxMont UU Fellowship
- Northwest Phila Interfaith Hospitality Network -NPIHN
- MLK Day of Service
- Rebuilding Philadelphia Together
- Center for Development in Central America

◆ High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year

To continue to express the generosity of our congregation in support of social service and social change organizations working in the spirit of our UU principles.

To make our nominations with the awareness that the congregation has selected two social issues as of the highest importance: Improving Public Education; and Environmental Justice.

To renew our Task Force's membership and cycle off the most senior members in an orderly fashion in early 2013. Currently we are looking for two new members starting in September 2012.

Submitted by Dennis Brunn, Chair

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

◆ Members

Kent Matthies, Andrea Barsevick, Rob Keithan (co-chairs), Treva Burger, Karyn Edwards, Emily Joy Goldberg, Margaret Kinnevy, Trevor Lalish-Menagh, Jenn Leiby, Beth Sprinkle, Sam Stormont, Zachary Washington, Leni Windle

◆ Mission of Committee

To offer the opportunity for all to participate in a small group spiritual experience on a regular (monthly) basis.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

In 2011-2012, 11 groups were held monthly at various times and days to accommodate people's schedules and preferences. Over 100 people have participated regularly in small groups. We now have two young adult groups (age <40), one group for 40-somethings, two couples groups, and six general adult groups. Topics for each monthly session were chosen from a list provided by the Church of the Larger Fellowship (a national UU group) and the content was developed by members of this committee.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

Continue to collaborate in the development of a curriculum for the monthly small group sessions that is vibrant, enjoyable, and addresses the spiritual needs of the group members.

Submitted by Andrea Barsevick, Chair

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

◆ **Members**

Sam Gugino (chair), Bill Dowdall, Paul Teti, Maura Gallagher

◆ **Mission of Committee**

To continue spreading the message of stewardship: taking care of what we value in our spiritual community, which includes:

- Creating a conversation among members about what the church means to us, what concerns we have and what we hope for the future.
- Helping members speak more easily and openly about financial matters and the need to raise money.
- Seeking financial commitments from members to support USG via the annual stewardship campaign (aka budget drive).

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

- Our Leadership Reception in late January helped to get the Annual Budget Drive off to a good start. At the end of the first week in April, we were \$31,000 ahead of last year's record pace.
- While pledge receipts slowed significantly from mid April to mid May, at this writing we are still looking at an eventual total close to \$308,000. Though that would put us \$22,000 short of our goal, it would still be the third highest total in USG history.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

- Replacing chair Sam Gugino will be one of the first priorities, though at this writing a new chair is imminent.
- Another personnel decision will be to recruit additional members of the committee to increase the total compliment to between 6 and 8.
- While the Stewardship model established four years ago is clearly superior to what existed previously, it is also equally clear that some innovations are needed to reenergize the Stewardship effort.

Submitted by Sam Gugino, Chair

UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION

◆ **Members**

Marietta J. Tanner, June Krebs

◆ **Mission of Committee**

To further the work of the United Nations by carrying out the programs designed by the UUUNO. UUUNO regularly conducts teleconferences with Envoys in many congregations, so we can be aware of issues and activities. It also provides a UN Day outline and an Intergenerational Conference each year.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

Attended the Intergenerational Conference in NYC in April, sought to provide a United Nations Day, which was combined with Social Action in October. We did provide a seminar after the service to which we invited a U of P professor and his associate who spoke on global women's health, the theme for 2011 UN Day. Placed information on the website to inform the congregation of UUUNO activities and significant UN events.

◆ **High-Priority Goals for 2012-2013 Church Year**

To develop a relationship with the teenagers in the USG congregation so that they will become knowledgeable about the United Nations and hopefully attend the Intergenerational Conference next year. To invite a speaker to the United Nations Day event in October, for which I have applied, but have not received approval. To have regular information to distribute concerning the UN.

Submitted by Marietta J. Tanner, Chair

WORSHIP ARTS

◆ **Members**

Linda Smith and Kent Matthies (co-chairs), Steve Conrad, Mark Daugherty, Susan Doering, Erick DuPree, Charles Gabriel, Brian O'Leary, Alan Windle

◆ **Mission of Committee**

To develop and ensure a high quality worship experience, coordinating all elements of the service including music, speakers, children's religious education, worship associates, ushering, Share the Plate and other essentials into a unified, reverential whole.

Background and General Focus

We believe that our efforts are nourished by the synergy between our planning and the execution of the worship service components. The *Worship that Works* book and other studies show that strong worship is indicative of a robust congregation, and in 2011-2012 we have welcomed the high level of attendance at our Sunday worship services previously seen during the mid-1980s. Our congregation has high expectations for worship: they now anticipate a good-to-great worship experience every week and the various worship teams across the congregation deliver on that promise regularly.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of Past Year**

Consistent evaluation of all aspects of the services for an optimal worship experience, including music, speakers, prelude and postlude issues, including community announcements, Share the Plate presentations, ushering issues, religious education experience for our children has led to the following efforts:

- A consistent Share the Plate presentation style that is appropriate for all congregants.

- A review of sermon guidelines, which were developed for and are now distributed to non-ordained speakers, in order to ensure consistency across the worship experience.
- Consistency of presentation for Joys and Sorrows, the chalice lighting, close of the service, announcements, and other service components.
- Integrating our families into the Sunday morning experience with the family chalice lighting effort.
- A renewed partnership with Mark Daugherty, the choir, lay musicians and the Music Ministry committee.
- Better planning and execution for our Christmas and Kwanzaa services with a worship planning timeline and worksheet that will be implemented for 2012 services.
- Excellence in worship thanks to our wonderful speakers, including the Rev. Rob Keithan, who was an immense asset to our community this past year.
- Continuation of all efforts “under budget,” despite increase in speakers’ travel costs.
- Work with Building and Grounds to ensure the safety of our visitors and congregants through the successful implementation of fire drills in the sanctuary and Sullivan Chapel.

♦ **High priority goals for 2012-2013**

- Exploration of the need for and ability to proceed with a “second” Sunday morning worship service
- Exploration of monthly Sunday evening or weekday evening service.
- Further integration of worship arts and children’s religious education goals and objectives.

Submitted by Linda Smith, Co-Chair (with Kent Matthies)