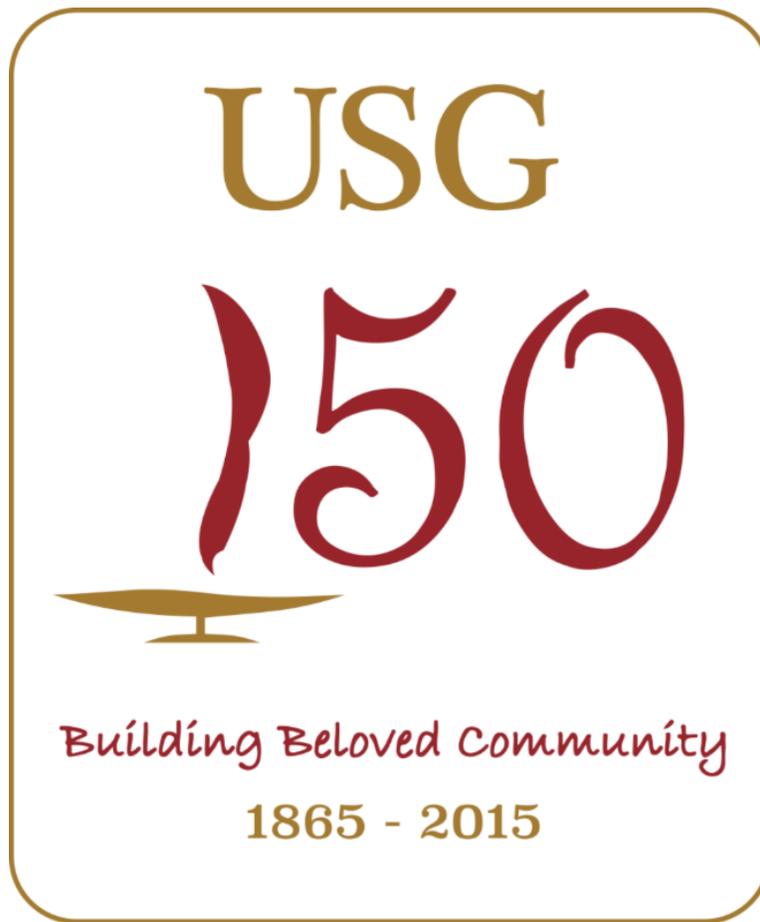


UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF GERMANTOWN

2016-2017 Annual Report

Presented May 21, 2017



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Submitted by Tom Ott, President Board of Trustees

◆ **Members** – Tom Ott (President), Scott Wolkenberg (Vice President), Susan Smith (Secretary); Linda Brunn, Michael Campbell, Joanne Davis, Eva Finney, Bill Morrow, Eli Scearce

◆ **Mission** - The Board of Trustees is charged with the temporal affairs and property of the Society. (bylaws, 1978).

Policies approved:

- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Covenant of Right Relations
- Passed changes to the Committee on Ministry Charter
- Abolished the Finance Council and created the position of Treasurer
- Policy regarding contracts and reviews for contractors
- Passed No Firearm Policy

Additional Accomplishments:

- Board approved the following deficit reduction Plan:
 1. A budget for the FY beginning July 1, 2017 with a deficit not to exceed \$12,500.
 2. A budget for the FY beginning July 1, 2018 with a deficit not to exceed \$6,250.
 3. A budget for the FY beginning July 1, 2019 with no deficit.
- Board passed a resolution that USG enter into a covenant with UUPLAN (Unitarian Universalist PA Legislative Advocacy Network) with a goal to provide UUPLAN with financial support of \$5.00 per member annually for the next 5 years.
- Board held two congregational budget review meetings: Dec. 18 & Jan. 8.
- Board discussed with minister plans of study for his sabbatical.
- Voted to give Congregational Awards to Ann Schoonmaker (lifetime), David Ward, Jeff Smith, Bob Williford, Eric Foster.
- Board to conduct self-evaluation process specific to examining the Board's ongoing role as the new governance structure evolves.
- Board elected Susan Smith president commencing July 1, 2017 and Eli Scearce as Vice President

MINISTRY EXECUTIVE TEAM (MET)

Submitted by Linda Bernstein, MET Representative

MET Report to the Congregation May 2017

The Ministry Executive Team is responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the church. Since July 2015, the MET has been composed of our minister, Rev. Kent Matthies, Church Administrator Gloria Guldager and lay members Linda Bernstein, Bill Dowdall and Jenn Leiby. The three lay members will be rotating off over the summer and new members will begin to serve: Dennis Brunn, Delores Hill and Kay Weiser.

We work closely with committees such as Building and Grounds, Stewardship, Worship Arts, Children's Spiritual Development, Adult Spiritual Development and the Social Justice Council, all of which are actually carrying out the programs of the church.

Rev. Kent started a six-month sabbatical leave on February 15. He will return to church life on August 15. A lot of our energy this year was devoted to making sure the church was ready for Kent's absence. We worked closely with Worship Arts to ensure that area ministers and other visiting ministers were in place for all the Sunday services. We helped Intern Minister Connie Simon transition into greater responsibilities during Kent's absence, specifically in the areas of social justice and caring. In Kent's absence, supervision of staff was taken on by board president Tom Ott.

Following on the congregation's approval of a capital campaign to install an elevator in our building and make improvements to our back driveway, we created a capital campaign fund-raising committee. The committee consisted of Tom Schoonmaker, Rev. Ken Matthies, Linda Bernstein, Bill Dowdall, Jenn Leiby, Jessica Slivak and Susan Smith. That committee did preliminary fund-raising work over the summer and extended the appeal to the congregation in October. We successfully completed the appeal in January, having raised \$351,160. As of today, the capital campaign account has received over \$100,000 of the promised funds, which are payable over the next 3 years.

When the board approved going forward with the projects in January, we created two committees, one to oversee the elevator and one the driveway. The elevator committee has successfully solicited bids and awarded a contract for the design phase of the elevator construction. We are hoping to have construction begin after Labor Day with completion before Christmas. What a nice present that would be!

In June 2016 we finalized a contract with our new Director of Spiritual Development, Jason Bender. Jason has brought a high level of energy and knowledge of child development to his position and revitalized the CSD program. Notably, we now have a functioning high school group as well as a large Coming of Age class. We have heard many positive comments about his contribution.

The new USG website became operational in September. In addition we transferred to a new database, PowerChurch, with resulting budgetary savings and better data base programs. It is being used for data base management, calendaring, contributions and CSD registration.

We oversaw the transition from the Finance Council to the creation of a treasurer position. Since MET has an active responsibility for preparing and managing the USG budget, the role of the finance council had become attenuated. The new position of treasurer has responsibility for reviewing spending from the operating account and managing the CIF account. We also have reconfigured some bookkeeping and accounting functions, eliminating the services of our contract bookkeeper. Many of these functions will be performed by the administrator with significant cost savings.

In November, Sarah West stepped down in her role as chair of the Caring Team. Two co-chairs, Bonnie McDairmont and Linda Bernstein took on that position.

We arranged for opportunities for the congregation to process the difficult feelings engendered by the protest and the Black Lives Matter forum in October, followed by the unexpected and dismaying presidential election.

We oversaw the creation of a USG Security Committee and are monitoring its functioning. The Security Committee will formulate plans to deal with potential threats to our property and people. Some of the items under consideration are more security cameras, higher focus and training on welcoming/greeting each person who enters the property through whatever entryway, and instructions to the congregation on what to do if a crisis should occur.

After several years of increasing deficits, the board directed the MET to reduce the deficit over three years until a state of no deficit is achieved. The budget we have prepared this year calls for a deficit of \$12, 500. Some savings were realized in the reconfiguration of the bookkeeping/accounting function. We also had to decrease funding for the music program including the band, the UUrban Mystics, and lessen other funds directed toward music ministry. The board has asked for a no deficit budget next year. We are going to explore creation of a USG fund-raising committee to look for other avenues of fund raising. We have increased membership growth, which should increase our stewardship results. But achieving a no deficit budget to propose one year from now next year will be very difficult without significant increases in both pledge income and other fundraising events.

MINISTER – no report, minister on sabbatical

Rev. Kent Matthies is on sabbatical

INTERN MINISTER

Submitted by Connie Simon, Intern Minister

It has been my honor and pleasure to serve USG as Intern Minister this year. In addition to building wonderful relationships that I hope will last a lifetime, we've done some very good work. Looking back over the year, I consider the following to be my most significant accomplishments as your Intern Minister:

- Participated in creating authentic and meaningful worship experiences such as our “Home for the Holidays” Christmas service and, with Mark Daugherty, our adapted social justice Passover Seder.
- Facilitated Ending Racism Committee reorganization efforts
- Coordinated USG’s involvement in the national “White Supremacy Teach-In” and supported its engagement in the UUA hiring issues
- Provided pastoral care and support to many individuals and to the congregation at large following the 2016 presidential election, the October Black Lives Matter and at other times of personal crisis
- Chaired the Martin Luther King Day of Service 2017 which featured more than 25 service projects and over 350 volunteers

This coming year, we will continue to build on our anti-racism and social justice work. I will continue to support and be engaged with other ministers, congregations and interfaith coalitions

on the local and regional level. As part of my Focused Initiative for seminary, I'll be working on an "Interfaith Connection and Action" project that combines religious education, fellowship and community service. I'm also excited to lead our MLK Day of Service efforts again in 2018. Most of all, I'm looking forward to being with each of you as we work together to build Beloved Community.

DIRECTOR OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Submitted by Jason Bender, Director of Spiritual Development

As the Director of Spiritual Development at the Unitarian Society of Germantown (USG), it is my job to design, support and deliver life-span religious education to children, adolescents and adults. The bulk of the actions and achievements from this past year and goals for the future are outlined in the following Child Spiritual Development (CSD) and Adult Spiritual Development (ASD) Committee reports. In this space, it is my intention to make it well understood among the church congregation that our CSD program is a context for both children's and adult spiritual development. In this effort, I have used Natural Learning Relationships (NLR) to help explain how child-development and adult-development are connected.

Natural Learning Relationships is an ontological epistemology of child-development. As such, NLR is a model that helps explain the optimal conditions by which children come to know (epistemology) their whole being (ontology). In other words, NLR helps explain how children grow in self-knowledge. The NLR model also shows how the adult-child relationship can be a context for adult development. That is, adults who help children grow in self-knowledge also grow in self-knowledge. Development is, therefore, a mutual process. This is as true for cognitive, social and emotional development, as it is for spiritual development.

Spiritual development can be defined as an intangible process which is evidenced by the quality of one's whole-being. Spirit is what we might call the mysterious, awesome force driving the whole of creation. In this way, spirituality is infused into every aspect of our living and being. Yet, the spiritual is very difficult to pinpoint. This is partially because of its pervasiveness, and partially because its nature lies beyond the material world. To have insight into the spiritual aspects of ourselves, some claim that one must go beyond ordinary mental processes of thought that are constituted by memory and knowledge. In this sense, spiritual development is to probe the unknown depths of our being, from moment-to-moment. It is to awaken a new mental process that brings along with it a purity in awareness that is not tinged by judgment or conflict. This type of self-actualization begins when we turn our attention inward in an attempt to understand our own nature. In other words, it begins with self-knowledge.

Many insightful teachers have said that to go far, one must start near – that is, we must begin with knowledge of ourselves. In this way, the field of self-knowledge (i.e. the learning processes, actions and insights by which one comes to know one's whole-being) would appear to be the most appropriate framework for a program aimed at spiritual development. This is true for the spiritual development of both children and adults. In this way, the field of self-knowledge has the potential to re-contextualize what is meant by the term "religious education." This is one reason why I have suggested the use of Natural Learning Relationships in our CSD programming at USG.

The educational relationship that we are trying to promote in CSD is an intentional one based upon trust and care. It is a relationship where the adult must trust in the child's innate capacities to flower toward goodness; and the adult must care deeply about nourishing the child's developmental need and supporting their optimal well-being. Furthermore, adults who work with children in ways that help them grow in self-knowledge must also be engaged in their own self-explorations. Mutual growth is only possible when the adult is also engaged in their own processes of self-reflection.

I believe that religious education should be grounded in this mutual process of generating self-knowledge. This process is one by which the educator brings the student into their own learning, as well as meets the child where they are. As such, the adult-child (or teacher-student) relationship is seen as "the context" for learning. The relationship is the learning environment. Natural Learning Relationships calls this the "dance of mutual development." When parents and educators engage the field of self-knowledge with children, they too are growing in self-knowledge. This is one way we can begin to see how our Children's Spiritual Development program is a context for both children's and adult's spiritual development. It is also a way that we can begin to see how our work with children either re-creates the existing social order, or transforms it toward justice and love.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Submitted by Gloria Guldager, Church Administrator

It is with much joy that I reflect on this past year as your Church Administrator, my 7th year in the office! The USG community is incredibly vibrant and there is never a week without some major event or activity to enliven our spirits or help us engage in our surrounding community. There were many accomplishments and developments that occurred throughout the year and I am pleased to report on some of the highlights.

MET Operations:

I continue to serve on the Ministry Executive Team (MET) and I attend our weekly MET meetings. The detail of our work is included in the MET report below. I also serve on the Welcoming Community Team as a MET representative and attend monthly board meetings (as a staff member and MET representative). These connections with top leaders in the church are crucial to our work and help us be more effective and stay on track both financially and programmatically.

Finances:

We continue to implement changes in our financial systems to better manage and track our operational finances and investments. Working closely with Bill Dowdall and MET, we determined this past year that there were many disadvantages to our current bookkeeping system and so we are making a change for the upcoming church year. This change goes hand-in-hand with the dissolution of the Finance Council and the creation of a new Treasurer position, now held by Mark Bernstein. We have terminated our agreement with our current bookkeeper and we will begin a system whereby the church administrator performs the day-to-day bookkeeping functions, including payroll, with oversight from the new Treasurer and support from a new accountant for bank reconciliations and statements. We will also be taking advantage of many new time and cost-saving features provided by our bank, PNC Bank, to simplify our bookkeeping processes. The initial setup of this new system will no doubt take some additional

time, but the end result will provide us with better financial processes and data with significant cost savings.

Communications:

The church office continues to create and send weekly CommUUnicator and SPIRIT emails, monthly Social Justice eNewsletters and produce a printed Order of Service and announcements for our Sunday services. In addition, we highlight the following activities, accomplishments and goals.

1. We were successful in launching our new UUA themed wordpress website last September. We owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to Mark Thompson, Treva Burger and Carl Leiby who provided their expertise and time to get the new website up and running. The new site looks great and provided some much-needed functionality in some key areas. There are still some issues we need to work on, but all in all it has been a huge success.
2. We continue to increase our use of Facebook and Twitter to communicate with our members as well as visitors, guests and partner organizations. Social media is an integral part to how many people in our community connect with one another and seek information, especially when communicating with our partner organizations such as UUPLAN, UU Greater Philly Cluster, and Rebuilding Philly Together.
3. With the election of November 2016, it has become clear that our USG community is engaged in social justice issues like never before. To support in communicating our social justice activities, we may consider increasing the frequency of our Social Justice eNewsletter from monthly to weekly. There are a lot of logistics that would need to be worked out to make this happen, but it is something we are considering.
4. This spring, we made a decision to no longer place the Sunday sermon title on our front Lincoln Drive sign. There were several reasons that contributed to this decision, including the difficulty of finding volunteers willing to change the sign and the recognition that changing the sign is physically very difficult. We decided to come up with a plan that would require changing the sign less often and would help us to better communicate who we are. Sometimes we will display a message that supports one of our social justice initiatives. Other times we will display a message that corresponds with the theme of the month or other inspirational thought.
5. In addition to the new messages on the Lincoln Drive sign, we continue to utilize outdoor banners and interior posters/banners to display images and messages to provide welcome and say who we are.

I am eternally grateful for our Assistant Administrator, Carolyn Scott, and her continued dedication. She cares deeply about the church and strives to provide the most clear and inspirational communications to all of you.

Professional Development

I am grateful that I will have the opportunity to attend General Assembly again this year in New Orleans. I will also attend the AUUA Professional Administrative Days (organized by the Association of Unitarian Universalist Administrators to provide training and networking specifically designed for Administrators. I am an active member of the AUUA).

Over the past several years, my attendance at AUUA Professional Days and General Assembly have allowed me to make several connections and friendships with my fellow administrators

across the country and these connections are vital to my growth and understanding of best practices in all areas related to Church Administration.

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Submitted by Mark Daugherty, Music Director

Music continues to be an important part of the Sunday morning worship experience at USG. This includes both instrumental and vocal music. We seem to have a growing number of instrumentalists who are willing and sometimes eager to share their talents with our community. But it is the choir that anchors the music at USG and this is an amazing group of people who selflessly give of their time and talent to enrich the worship experience for our congregation. This normally involves a rehearsal on Thursday evening that runs about two hours, plus an hour before the Sunday service. Occasionally, we may also rehearse on Saturdays in preparation for a music service. Speaking of which, we presented three music services this year: in December we performed *Songs of Wisdom from "Old Turtle"* (music by Joseph Martin, lyrics from the book by Douglas Wood) with E. Ashley IZard providing the narration; in February we presented *They Called Her Moses* (music and book by Donald McKay and Robert De Cormier) with narration provided by Robert Anu and Diane Leslie; and in May we presented an original service on our seven UU principles with music composed by our soprano soloist Emily Joy Goldberg. Our soloists also include Beverly Gross Spence, Robert HefeLe and Tom Schoonmaker. You've heard them many times over the course of the year, both as section leaders and soloists. They have all been with us for a number of years. Additionally, the UUMystics, USG's band, played several times during the year – the target was one Sunday per month, and they provided musical accompaniment for Emily's UU Principles service heard today.

Last summer I went to Columbus, Ohio, to attend General Assembly and once again I found it to be an inspiring event filled with energized transforming worship and opportunities for learning. I also sang in the GA choir again (the USG singing men were on camera quite a lot during the Sunday morning worship service). I also went to Madison, Wisconsin, to attend the UU Musicians' Network annual conference. For me this is an event not to be missed. It is filled with high-quality music making and worship that is truly inspiring. The music-making was phenomenal, consistently on a high level. And of course it was great to meet with my colleagues from all over the USA and Canada to exchange ideas and learn from each other. I came back with several new musical ideas that I am itching to try when the time is right. The choir usually enjoys the new music that I find at this conference, and the congregation has also benefitted from this wonderful denominational resource. Since last year I am also the district liaison for the Pennsylvania wing of the JP district within UUMN.

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 still works well for some hymnody and repertoire. But most of the time I am at the piano for services. Last year in my report I wrote that because the piano has become so important in our Sunday morning worship I urged the congregation to consider upgrading the sanctuary instrument. Miraculously, Peter and Marny Walsh, longtime singers and friends, were planning a downsizing move and they donated their wonderful rebuilt Steinway grand piano to the church. It is a joy to play and many people have commented on the beautiful tone of the Walsh piano. Many, many thanks are due to Peter and Marny! Additionally, we have a small upright piano in the sanctuary, a piano in the committee room, and the Sameck grand piano that used to be in the sanctuary is now in the assembly room

and we use it for choir rehearsals and occasional music programs. We also have the electric keyboard in the sanctuary.

I continue to serve on the Worship Arts Committee and I am always amazed at how passionate the members are about Sunday services. (There is also the quasi-committee that puts together the annual Seder and I am a part of that). It continues to be a pleasure to work with the committee members as we strive to create worship that is transformative and inspiring. I think we're succeeding. It is a pleasure to look out at our congregation on a typical Sunday morning and see the lively mixture of people who have come to worship together at USG.

GOVERNANCE & MINISTRY TASK FORCE

Submitted by Andrea Parry, Chair

◆ Members

Linda Bernstein, Linda Brunn, Treva Burger, John Davis, Eva Finney, Rev. Kent Matthies, Tom Ott, Andrea Parry (chair).

For Church Year 2017-2018, Linda Bernstein will chair. Committee will be comprised of 2 Board representatives (Susan Smith and a designate), 1 MET representative (to be designated), 1 Nominating Committee representative (John Davis), 3 former Board and/or MET members (Linda Bernstein, Andrea Parry, and 1 to be determined), and Kent as needed.

◆ Mission of Committee

- Forum for discussion. Provide a small group forum for representatives of the Board, the MET, and other lay/staff leadership to clarify and discuss significant issues before they go to the Board. The intention is to enable input from a broader perspective and reduce Board time in doing groundwork.
- Policies and procedures. Assist Board in noting need for new policies or policy updates. Prepare draft policies or policy updates for Board review and decision, or recommend others with more specialized knowledge to do the drafting. Prepare drafts of Board procedures as needed.
- Governance process. Monitor and refine allocations of responsibility between Governance (Board) and Ministry (MET/other church volunteers and staff), and obtain Board concurrence. Monitor collaboration between Governance & Ministry. Continue to refine governance processes and interactions.
- Nominating Committee. Support the work of the Nominating Committee.
- Board self-governance and self-evaluation. Support the Board as requested.

◆ SMART Goals Established for Past Year

- Forum for discussion. Provide a small group forum for representatives of the Board, the MET, and other lay/staff leadership to clarify and discuss significant issues before they go to the Board. The intention is to enable input from a broader perspective and reduce Board time in doing groundwork.
- Policies and procedures. Assist Board in noting need for new policies or policy updates. Prepare draft policies or policy updates for Board review and decision, or recommend others with more specialized knowledge to do the drafting. Prepare drafts of Board procedures as needed.

- Governance process. Monitor and refine allocations of responsibility between Governance (Board) and Ministry (MET/other church volunteers and staff), and obtain Board concurrence. Monitor collaboration between Governance & Ministry. Continue to refine governance processes and interactions.
- Nominating Committee. Support the work of the Nominating Committee.
- Board self-governance and self-evaluation. Support the Board as requested.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of Past Year**

The Governance & Ministry Task Force will be referred to as "GMTF" for convenience.

GMTF held thoughtful discussions of issues arising at USG and brainstormed various approaches. We hope that the Board's appointment of the GMTF as a standing body indicated that the Board found it useful. The governance process was explored and further clarified in the course of these discussions.

GMTF developed and refined several policies that were subsequently approved by the Board, including the Policy to Effectuate the Right Relations Covenant, Contractor Policy, Firearms Policy, and revision of the Committee on Ministry charter. GMTF currently is working on updates to the Safe Congregation Policy, following proposed revisions by the Committee on Ministry. Other policies were discussed.

GMTF supported the Board in reviewing a proposal for a new role for the Treasurer and restructuring of the Finance function. This proposal was approved by the Board.

GMTF prepared a document for use by the Nominating Committee in recruiting new candidate for the Board, "What prospective Board members need to know." It also met with the Nominating Committee chair and provided written summaries of the support the GMTF believed it could provide to the Nominating Committee, and assistance requested from the Nominating Committee, particularly in helping to identify potential USG leaders in various capacities.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

To be determined.

ADULT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Submitted by Gerry Whelan, Chair

◆ **Members**

Gerry Whelan – Chair, Jason Bender - Director of Religious Education, Rick Rodes, Joanne Davis, Maggie Beaumont (resigned), Nancy Radcliffe (resigned), Sarah West (extended leave)

◆ **Mission of Committee**

To provide programs, events and communal gatherings that support members and friends of the Unitarian Society of Germantown in finding spiritual paths that are meaningful and relevant to their individual journeys as well as to the community as it moves forward compassionately in defining, refining and strengthening our Beloved Community.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

To make programs more accessible by eliminating registration and allowing participation in programs on an ad hoc basis, to offer programs and activities on an ongoing basis rather than a semester basis (eliminating ASD Faires)

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of Past Year**

- The ASD Committee has chosen to focus more of its efforts on programs and activities that are less didactic than in past years and to sustain successful programs.
- Community Day (CD) is now offered twice a year, in November and in March. Both CDs this year were highly successful and very well received and attended. The CD in March was especially innovative in incorporating several of the workshops into the Intergenerational Service. The pancake breakfast following both CDs were especially enjoyable and bonding for the whole community and guests and actually generated a modest revenue.
- Exploring Elderhood has become one of the most popular and best attended programs ever offered. Honorable Elders from our congregation as well as guests meet once a month for a program and activities designed and presented by volunteers on a rotating basis, resulting in diverse participation and ownership. Most programs have some time when participants gather in small groups to discuss the topics and these have been especially popular. Each session is followed by a potluck TGIF.
- Our efforts to establish and sustain an ongoing Meditation program at USG have resulted in a small but resilient core of mediators on Sunday morning as well as another cohort that meets on Tuesday evening for Meditation and Dialogue. Both practices seem to have become self-sustaining although efforts will continue to increase participation.
- We have also had success in our outreach to the Springboard Meditation Sangha (SMS) in Mt. Airy. At one point it seemed possible that SMS might lose its lease and a move to USG was explored but that issue is resolved. But the very positive relations established resulted in three programs jointly sponsored by SMS and USG; a day of teaching by a Rabbinical Dharma Teacher: a one day retreat consisting of meditation, Qigong and teaching; and a four day residential meditation retreat. (Conducted by Oren Sofer, held off site, no USG attendees)
- A series of discussions based on assigned readings on the issue of White Privilege was co-sponsored with the Social Justice Committee.
- A program of restorative yoga has just been launched with an initial offering of 9 weeks and potential to continue on a regular basis. It is free for all interested but is being particularly marketed to members of Exploring Elderhood.
- We also offered an 8-week Our Whole Lives (OWL) program for older adults. This effort was in coordination with the larger UUA pilot program to test their new OWL curriculum for this age group.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

- Continue to offer Community Day twice a year perhaps with a new variety of workshops, worship services and brunches.
- Continue the Exploring Elderhood indefinitely as long as support is evident.
- Continue Sunday morning and Tuesday evening meditation with increased publicity to encourage more participants.
- Offer another Yoga class if our attempts in the Spring were successful and our yoga instructor is willing to do another class.

- In conjunction with Springboard Meditation Sangha, offer a four week course as an introduction to Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) in the fall as well as exploring the hosting of Senior Dharma Teachers.
- Offer a study course entitled "Psalms, Isaiah, Jesus and Paul. Exploring our Judeo/Christian Roots" and led by Charles Gabriel.
- Design and develop an attractive display module for permanent posting at Hospitality Hours indicating ongoing and new ASD program and providing information to encourage participation.
- Solicit and generate new ideas for programs and activities, including exploration of the UUA program Living the Principles as well as a program to compare Unitarian, Buddhist and Christian ethical principles.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Submitted by Bill Blasdel, Co-Chair

◆ Members

Co-chairs: Bill Blasdel & Kurt Ahrens. Active members: Howard Silver, Lynne Kalish, Andre Stormont, Carl Leiby, Carolyn Cotton, Scott Smith, Van Cherrington and August Anderson. Contributing members: Al Parker, Linda Maldonado

◆ Mission of Committee

Operate, repair, maintain and continually improve our historic, beautiful property, working within constraints according to the following priorities:

1. Assure a Safe facility
2. Preserve & protect the property from degradation (biggest threat – water leaks)
3. Reduce/control operating costs (including utilities)
4. Enhance the property for members' use, accessibility, and for rental income
5. General cosmetic improvements and refurbish one space each year.

◆ SMART Goals Established for Past Year

1. Stay within approved FY 16-17 budget utilizing Maintenance Reserve Fund (MRF) to repair the courtyard driveway wall and replace boiler. We will stay within the approved FY 15-16 budget, but any funds remaining will be paid to reduce the depletion of the MRF.
2. Re-affirm priority statement and develop a prioritized list of projects for the fiscal year. Identify and execute projects accordingly. Projects identified, prioritized and underway.
3. Formulate, Propose and negotiate budget for FY 17-18. Done

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

1. Repaired courtyard driveway wall and replaced failed boiler.
2. Rehabilitation of Bristol Room bathrooms.
3. Repair Sanctuary (heat) blowers and rebuild heating ducts to eliminate cold air leaks.
4. Rebuild Memorial Garden walls.
5. Reduction of summer electric bill for July-September continuously running the new AC units in the Sanctuary, maintain low humidity and maximum temperature of 75 degrees.
6. Preliminary work on Driveway Project widening driveway and clearing SEPTA side branches, bushes, weeds and vines.
7. Preliminary work on Elevator Project to minimize impact on trees and stormwater runoff.

8. Additional outside LED lighting including the Assembly Room ramp.
9. Begin multi-year repair & rehab of Sanctuary stained glass windows.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

1. Stay within approved FY 17-18 budget.
2. Re-affirm priority statement and develop a prioritized list of projects for the fiscal year. Identify and execute projects accordingly. Projects identified, prioritized and underway.
3. Formulate, Propose and negotiate budget for FY 18-19.

CARING SYSTEM

Submitted by Linda Bernstein, Co-Chair

◆ **Members**

Co-chairs Bonnie McDairmont and Linda Bernstein. This year, Sarah West transitioned off the steering team after many years of service.

◆ **Mission of Committee**

To provide a caring system to support members of the congregation as needed.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

None were created.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

- All USG members are part of our caring system which is facilitated by co-chairs Bonnie McDairmont and Linda Bernstein. The co-chairs met monthly with Reverend Kent Matthies until the start of his sabbatical in February, and with Intern Minister Connie Simon since then. Our monthly meetings review members who are in need of help and make sure help is being provided.
- With the help of volunteers from the congregation, we have been able to offer support in several ways such as providing meals, and providing transportation to medical appointments. Also, with the permission of the member involved, we write caring notes for the weekly announcements.
- Thanks to the help and caring spirit of our congregation, we are able to provide a caring system to support members of our congregation as needed. In many cases, we depend on the congregation to provide information about a member in need of help. Even a caring phone call or email can be appreciated, but we cannot provide help until we know of the need. Many caring situations are handled in confidence and we do not publicize any illness or need without the permission of the member.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

To continue to provide a caring system in order to offer support to members of the congregation as needed.

CHILD SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT (CSD)

Respectfully submitted by Jason Bender, Director of CSD

◆ Members

Kira Baker-Doyle – Chair, Stephanie Shenck, Alan Gardner, Sandy Devine

◆ Mission of Committee

To design and implement programming that supports children's spiritual development at USG.

◆ SMART Goals Established for Past Year

None established.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

Child Spiritual Development (CSD) was an enriching and meaningful year for both the children and adults who were involved in the program. CSD continues to have regular communication with parents through a weekly email sent from the Director of Spiritual Development (DSD). While the USG Parent Teacher Organization Facebook Group still exists, its use has been discontinued due to a lack of interest by CSD leadership in maintaining it.

This year USG went to a single service, therefore CSD only offered classes at 10:30am. CSD offered the following classes on the 2nd, 4th and 5th Sunday's: PreK (3-5 years), K-1st grade, 2-3rd grade, and 4-6th grade. We offered a PreK-2nd grade and 3rd-6th grade class on the 1st (Spirit Sunday) and 3rd (Social Justice Sunday) of each month. Our Whole Lives (OWL) was offered to our 7th-8th grade children every Sunday. The Coming of Age (CoA) program for 9th-10th graders was also offered every Sunday. The CoA program was re-envisioned this year as a USG Right of Passage. This gave the program a new quality that was well received. All classes were well attended throughout the year. We also started a Youth Group for 9th-12th graders that meets on the 1st and 3rd Sunday in the evening. Youth Group now has a core group who are building this program. I believe we are poised for steady growth in numbers in the coming years, as well as beginning to create more depth in the types of activities that we do.

The DSD also worked with the Director of Administration to develop and implement a new, streamlined method for registering children and taking attendance. We also implemented a 4-part series of Teachers Workshops. These were well attended and the feedback from teachers has been overwhelmingly positive. CSD also introduced "play packs" in the Sanctuary to make the church service experience more welcoming to the youngest members of our community.

In the previous 2015-2016 program year, the family fun activities were reduced to four events: October Pumpkin Carving, Winter Movie Night, Spring Campfire and CSD Carnival in June. We maintained these events, with a great turnout at each (thus far). We will continue these events and we've received requests from many parents to have more movie nights next year. Volunteerism this year was strong, and teacher moral was high. We attribute this to our teacher's workshops and the immediate response to behavioral issues by the DSD using Restorative Justice Approaches. USG also partnered with Mastery Charter School to be part of their internship program. We've enjoyed having a high-school intern help with CSDs administrative work every Wednesday from 2-5pm.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

1. Continue our Teacher Workshops and implement a parallel set of Parent Workshops.
2. Further integrate Natural Learning Relationships, a model of whole-child development, into our CSD programming as a way to meet children's developmental needs.
3. Further integrate Restorative Justice Discipline into our CSD programming as a way to address issues of conflict and wrongdoing.
4. Create a CSD songbook and hire a musician to help teach our children a common set of songs, as a way to build beloved community.
5. Re-envision the childcare program in-line with Montessori methodology, as a way to bring spiritual development to our youngest community member.
6. Increase awareness that our CSD program is a context for both children's and adult spiritual development.
7. Align our programming with a re-definition of religious education (or spiritual development) as a process of increasing ones awareness (toward wholeness) and growing in self-knowledge.

EARTH HONORING TRADITIONS

Submitted by Dennis Strain, Chair

◆ **Members**

Dennis Strain (chair), Maggie Beaumont, Sarah Frazier, Donya Coldwell, Meg Ryan, Susan Bockius, Johanna Moyer, Margaret Thompson

◆ **Mission of Committee**

To develop awareness of Earth honoring traditions and to celebrate the seasonal changes during the Wheel of the Year.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

Conduct celebrations for Samhain, Winter Solstice, Imbolc, Vernal Equinox, Beltaine, Midsummer, Lughnasadh, and Mabon. Increase opportunities for exploring Earth honoring traditions.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of Past Year**

Conducted celebrations for Lughnasadh, Mabon, Samhain, Winter Solstice, Imbolc, and Vernal Equinox. Developed and conducted Beltaine service.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

Conduct celebrations for Samhain, Winter Solstice, Imbolc, Vernal Equinox, Beltaine, Midsummer, Lughnasadh, and Mabon. Increase opportunities for exploring Earth honoring traditions.

ENDING RACISM COMMITTEE

Submitted by Parvathy Menon, co-chair

◆ **Members**

John Anderson, Nancy Anderson, Tim Beckham, Anne Bower, Treva Burger, Ann Clarey, Richard Clarey, Judith Dederick (co-chair), Barbara Dowdall (co-chair), Andrea Durham, Fran

Emery, Sharon Fisher, Sreemati Ghosh, Elaine Hills, Devery Howerton, Mary Ingram, Shobhi Kanal, Lucinda Lea, Luise Lisi, Yvonne Marlier, Elizabeth McGoran, Parvathy Menon (co-chair), Gail Mershon, Lois Murphy, Patti Rayfield, Eli Searce, Connie Simon, Susan Stout, Kay Weiser (co-chair through 1/2017)

◆ **Mission of Committee**

Vision: ERC envisions a society in which racial justice and equality are the reality for all.

Mission: ERC works toward dismantling racism in all its forms, individual, institutional, and systemic, through self-examination, education, advocacy, public witness, and service.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

- Community outreach
- Share and view films
- Support The Coalition Against Mass Incarceration (CAMI)
- Support The Center for Returning Citizens (TCRC)

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of Past Year**

- Held a Black Lives Matter Forum
- Increased membership
- Some members of ERC attended a one day anti-racism training at the Mainline Unitarian Church in Devon, PA.
- Hosted an ERC open house
- Held an ERC potluck
- Screened two movies: Sound of Redemption, 13th, Wilderness Journey
- ERC Members helped with Lori Tharp's book launch. The name of the book was Same Family, Different Colors: Confronting Colorism in America's Diverse Families
- Supported CAMI (Coalition Against Mass Incarceration), UUPLAN, Philadelphia
- Supported TCRC (The Center for Returning Citizens)
- Revised the vision and mission statements
- ERC members were sent a series of 15 readings, which was followed with a discussion

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

- Increase awareness about racism within USG through the weekly ERC table, lending library, recommended readings, etc.
- Encourage ERC members and USG congregants to address all forms and levels of racism through self-examination, education, advocacy, public witness, and service.
- Engage in community outreach through films and possible events
- Support CAMI (Coalition Against Mass Incarceration)
- Support TCRC (The Center for Returning Citizens)
- Address the 13th Amendment
- Collaborate with The Unitarian Universalist Church of the Restoration
- Screen Wilderness Journey and Harvest of Empires
- Organize a Jubilee at USG
- Invite guest speakers to USG

MLK DAY OF SERVICE

Submitted by Connie Simon, Intern Minister

◆ Members

Dennis Brunn, Anne Gwynn, Melissa Guerriero, Judy Rodes*, Rick Rodes*, Carolyn Scott, Connie Simon (Chair), Mel Strieb, Kay Weiser

*Rick and Judy Rodes are unable to be the database managers for MLK Day 2018.

◆ Mission of Committee

The MLK Day of Service committee is responsible for identifying, planning and executing service projects, securing supplies and donations, recruiting and communicating with volunteers, supervising on-site logistics and developing and conducting worship for USG's annual MLK Day of Service. Our mission is to provide a day that combines meaningful service and spiritual development and honors of the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

◆ SMART Goals Established for Past Year

More than 400 volunteers participated in over 30 service projects in the USG community. The worship service was engaging and well attended. Volunteers were greeted warmly and received thorough instructions and directions for their service projects. The planning committee held regular meetings beginning in October and were well-prepared for the Day of Service. Participant feedback was positive and many expressed a desire to volunteer again in 2018.

◆ Significant Accomplishments of Past Year

MLK Day of Service 2017 was a very successful event. It was educational and allowed participants to engage in intergenerational worship, spiritual development and service.

◆ SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year

We have the following goals for MLK Day 2018:

1. Begin planning committee meetings earlier in the year - possibly September.
2. Increase the number of service projects to ensure that all volunteers will have meaningful work to do for the entire day.
3. Initiate contact with project sites sooner in the year; get more detailed descriptions of the project scope and the number of volunteers needed.
4. Have all project leaders confirmed by November 15 at the latest.
5. Create a comprehensive MLK Day operations manual that can be passed to committees in later years.

NICKY BROWN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Submitted by Shawn Miller, Chair

◆ Members

Shawn Miller- Chair, Ingrid Brown, Lida Holota

◆ Mission of Committee

The mission of the Nicky Brown Scholarship is to honor the memory of Nicky Brown and to provide a yearly financial stipend to all individuals who meet the criteria for the stipend. The criteria includes attending a college or University at either a graduate or undergraduate level, as

well as other professional workshops. The family applying must also be a pledging member or friend.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

- Increased awareness by publishing the notice earlier and reaching out to the education liaison for the church.
- The committee met its goal of reaching more students last year
- All students were contacted and a follow-up was done on all recipients.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

This year the Committee expanded its reach and had 10 students apply and awarded grants. Last year there were 8 students.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

- Continue to increase awareness and availability to eligible students
- Continue follow-up with Students
- Find additional funding for the stipends.

SERVICE AUCTION COMMITTEE

Submitted by Sam Stormont and Linda Smith, Co-Chairs

◆ **Members**

Linda Smith and Sam Stormont, co-chairs, Members: Carolyn Cotton, John Davis, Joanne Davis, Janet Haas, Lida Holota, Jenn Leiby, Lynne Kalish, Debbie Kish-Silver, Gwen Lindgren, Judi Morrow, Judy Rodes.

◆ **Mission of Committee**

To build fellowship and foster community at USG while raising the highest level of funds to enable USG to meet its overall goals.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

- Added social media manager to committee.
- Actively publicized the need for new committee members, which enabled us to add three new members to the committee.
- Continued to evaluate fundraising strategies and cost benefit analysis of volunteer use of time and effort.
- Evaluated overall auction planning, fundraising, challenges and target attendees with a look toward meeting challenges for the 2018 event.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

- Raised approximately \$22,000 despite challenges of competing USG fundraising campaigns and efforts.
- Continued our "no entry fee" policy for first time attendees.
- Continued to welcome new members to the committee.
- Developed popular auction theme, "London Calling," with outstanding decorations, many creative costumes and an overall high level of creative interest.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

- Despite the hard work and incredible efforts of our wonderful committee, we saw a downturn in funds raised at the auction for the second consecutive year. At our first followup meeting in May we brainstormed needed changes and new strategies to increase our success for 2018.
- We will meet in early summer to finalize new committee responsibilities;
- Implement new strategies to increase donations and new attendees; Enlarge our audience and involve new volunteers auction night and on the committee.
- Expand donations by category and area of highest bidding
- Change booklet layout to reflect new categories of donations
- Re-consider raffles, gift baskets, etc.
- Be a part of and work with new USG fundraising committee to coordinate overall fundraising efforts.

SHARE THE PLATE TASK FORCE

Submitted by Eric Foster, Chair

◆ **Members**

Eric Foster (Chair), Bobbi Penniman, Mark Bangela, Tonya Vales. Sarah Spath, former chair, stepped down in January 2017.

◆ **Mission of Committee**

- Connect to something larger than ourselves.
- Acknowledge our interdependence with each other.
- Shift our congregational outlook to one of abundance rather than scarcity.
- Strengthen our ties with our neighbors.
- Show our community that we are the church “of the loving heart, open mind and helping hands” in a very real and tangible way.

The committee meets about once a quarter to nominate, discuss, and/or review new organizations for open months. When possible, we coordinate awards with monthly social justice themes.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

The committee reviewed 14 submissions, approving 7 of them. Four recipients were new to STP. The rest of the 12 are repeat (and virtually “default”) recipients. Here are the awards:

Month	Recipient	First time STP award?	Award
July	Philadelphia Unemployment Project	no	596
August	Every Murder is Real	yes	955
September	Lingelbach	no	1,188
October	UUSC-UUA (split plate)	no	1,274
November	Nationalities Service Center	yes	1,186
December	PIHN	no	1,979
January	MLK Day	no	2,150
February	Center for Returning Citizens	no	1,096
March	Rebuilding Philly	no	1,140
April	UUPLAN	no	1,214
May	Phila Immigration & Citizenship Coalition (PICC)	yes	--
June	LGBTQ Home for Hope	yes	--
		Distribution to date	\$ 12,778

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY FACILITATORS

Submitted by Treva Burger

◆ Members

Kent Matthies (chair when not on sabbatical), Treva Burger (acting chair), Jenn Leiby, Andrea Parry, Mark Bangela, Mark Tuveson, Stephanie Bonner, Zachary Bosco, Eileen Whelan, Adrienne Wolkenberg, (Margaret Kinnevy, Shobhi Kanal are facilitators not currently attending meetings.)

◆ Mission of Committee

The Small Group Ministry program provides visitors and members a direct experience with others. Through sharing our stories and exploring monthly spiritual themes we become alive and known to each other. The existence of our small groups supports personal and community growth. We intentionally cultivate vibrancy with an open renewal process for our members each fall. There is an inherent dynamism in the process of forming, and re-forming each October, and to a lesser extent through the years as attendance and topics shift.

◆ SMART Goals Established for Past Year

1. The Facilitators group will assess the number and size of groups each summer to determine how many openings we will have in the fall. Each leader also will ask their group members who will be continuing with the group. If it is determined that new groups are needed to have an adequate number of spots to recruit new members to, we will identify, recruit and train new leaders with a goal of having an increase in the number of people involved in Small Group Ministry groups each year. (Annually)
2. Small groups will plan to meet monthly and maintain membership of 6-12 members. Facilitators will meet monthly as a group to support each other, share wisdom and develop and fine tune curricula. (Ongoing)
3. Feedback will be solicited on curricula so we can make any adjustments felt to be needed to make them maximally effective and engaging to a large variety of people and determine if the 3 year cycle of themes chosen will work on an continuing basis. (Ongoing)
4. SGM materials: curricula, group lists, facilitator meeting minutes, brochures, etc, will be kept in a dropbox. The dropbox will be kept organized. (Ongoing)
5. The SGM Facilitators will offer Pop Up (or drop in) Small Groups after the service on Sundays on an occasional or regular basis, depending on what the community supports, in order to give people who feel unable or not ready to commit to a regularly monthly group a chance to explore the themes and connect to other congregants more deeply. The frequency of the groups will be determined by facilitator availability and group attendance. (Continue through the 2016-17 church year, re evaluate effectiveness in April 2017.)
6. Each group will engage in service work to USG or the greater community as part of their own small group covenant and/or the USG membership covenant at least once per year. (Ongoing.)

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- We are in the third year of the new three year theme cycle. We have created some curricula, updated others.

- Curriculum Criteria Guide developed to assist the group in creating and reviewing curricula to assure quality and consistency.
- Started two new groups that are small, but consistent. One is after the service on the second Sunday and welcomes drop ins. The other is a weekday morning.
- We now have 12 groups, 9 of which are near capacity.
- Young Adult Co-Facilitator, Stephanie Bonner, is coming to the Facilitators group meetings which improves communication with that group and she is an excellent addition to the group.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

1. The Facilitators group will assess the number and size of groups each summer to determine how many openings we will have in the fall. Each leader also will ask their group members who will be continuing with the group. If it is determined that new groups are needed to have an adequate number of spots to recruit new members to, we will identify, recruit and train new leaders with a goal of having an increase in the number of people involved in Small Group Ministry groups each year. (Annually)
2. Small groups will plan to meet monthly and maintain membership of 6-12 members. Facilitators will meet monthly as a group to support each other, share wisdom and develop and fine tune curricula. (Ongoing)
3. Feedback will be solicited on curricula so we can make any adjustments felt to be needed to make them maximally effective and engaging to a large variety of people and determine if the 3 year cycle of themes chosen will work on an continuing basis. Since we are starting the first year of the three year cycle and this is the first time we will be repeating every theme and curriculum and from only 3 years ago, we will be looking at ways to keep the themes and curricula fresh and consider the possibility of offering something different this year if the repeat begins to feel stale. (Ongoing)
4. SGM materials: curricula, group lists, facilitator meeting minutes, brochures, etc, will be kept in a dropbox. The dropbox will be kept organized. (Ongoing)
5. The SGM Facilitators will offer extra Pop Up (or drop in) Small Group after the service on Sundays in August and September, depending on what the community supports, in order to give people who feel unable or not ready to commit to a regularly monthly group a chance to explore the themes and connect to other congregants more deeply. The second Sunday group will remain open to drop ins ongoing. (Re evaluate April 2018)
6. We have an ongoing goal of having each group will engage in service work to USG or the greater community as part of their own small group covenant and/or the USG membership covenant at least once per year. We will begin to track who is actually following this guideline and thinking of ways to improve the participation if it is low. (Reevaluate April 2018.)

SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATING TEAM

Submitted by Anne Gwynn and Mel Strieb, Co-Chairs

◆ **Members**

Barbara Dowdall, Linda Bernstein, Nancy Anderson, Yvonne Marlier, Dennis Brunn, Carolyn Scott, Dennis Strain, Gail Mershon, Eric Foster, Dennis Strain, Connie Simon, Judy Dederick, Parvathy Menon, Walt Ceglowski, Marilyn Dyson, Andrea Durham

◆ **Mission of Committee**

This year the Social Justice Coordinating Committee has focussed on raising the awareness of church members on social justice concerns by highlighting a different SJ theme each month in order to increase awareness of and participation in SJ activities.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

SJ themes that were, whenever possible, keyed to the Small Group Ministry theme of the month and/or the Share The Plate recipient for the month.

Different members of the SJ committee were given responsibility for each month. The committee member was asked to provide material to be included in weekly and monthly church communications and to identify Ministry Moment speakers for two of the Sunday services each month. The Ministry Moment speakers gave brief, personal and spiritual testaments prior to lighting the chalice. In addition, a monthly SJ e-newsletter was created to highlight theme-related activities.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

The members of the SJ Committee are pleased with the theme concept and the way it has been implemented. It has helped to focus and provide a structure to SJ activities. There has been a learning curve for the committee members as they have become familiar with the expectations of having a focus month. MM speakers have been effective as they shared the importance of SJ activities in their lives and as examples of ways in which they live their faith. The SJ Newsletter is very well executed and presents an excellent compendium of monthly activities. Inclusion of the SJ theme into SGM program and the CSD program has not been as effective and will be the focus of additional effort next year. We would also like to provide more synergy between SJ focus groups and we will be focusing on this at our next meeting. An additional need is to more effectively encourage new members and others to get involved in Social Justice activities.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

We are beginning a once a month Monday night film/discussion series tied to the monthly SJ theme.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Submitted by Christine Ginsburg

◆ **Members**

Christine Ginsburg, Chair, Eric Foster, Rick Rodes, Tammi Talda, Eileen Whelan, Gerry Whelan (Bill Dowdall officially rotated off, after seven years, but we still consult with him informally)

◆ **Mission of Committee**

The mission of the Stewardship Committee is to foster financial and congregational ownership of USG among our members.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

We didn't do set SMART Goals in a formal way, but we tried to conduct a campaign with heart to raise \$375,000 in 2016-17 and \$360,000 in 2017-18.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of 2016-17 pledge campaign**

1. \$349.2K pledged total – highest in last five years and a 5.3% increase over previous year (this was the second highest % increase in last five years).
2. Total of 187 pledges – highest in five years.
3. Total YOY net increase in pledges (increases minus decreases) from the previous year was a positive \$17,636 – the highest in five years.
4. Average household pledge from multi-member households was \$2,698. The average household pledge from single member households was \$1,276. The overall average household pledge was \$1,859 – the second highest in five years.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of 2017-18 pledge campaign**

1. Currently at \$274.5K, or 76% of our goal of \$360K. This is almost exactly in line with progress of last year's campaign at the same time after launch (60 days).
2. Significant cleaning of the stewardship database – adding 30 new households to the list and removing 49 obsolete or otherwise non-solicitable cases.
3. Solicited 248 households through postal mail. Currently have pledges from 134 (54%). About 31% did not formally pledge last year, but if the not-yet pledgers this year pledge the same as last year, our pledge total will reach the goal.
4. Rewrote initial solicitation letter in first person (from Chair) vs. first person plural from committee last year.
5. Restructured Suggested Giving Guide to better reflect range of pledging at USG.
6. Communications involved eight weeks of announcements in both the CommUUnicator and OOS, four three-minute “Stewardship Testimonials” from members in the chancel, supporting announcements by the minister and worship associates, and two more original videos, which were shown both at the All-Church Dinner and once again in the sanctuary.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

1. As mentioned above, the goal for 2017-18 is \$360,000.
2. Currently, as of 5.12.17, at 76% of goal, with 54% of households having pledged.
3. Improve communications with new members about stewardship generally and particularly the individual pledging process. Coordinate with Welcoming Committee in this regard.
4. Coordinate better with Worship Arts Committee for scheduling Stewardship messages in the service well in advance of the campaign.

UU PA LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY NETWORK (UUPLAN)

Submitted by Dennis Brunn, Chair

◆ **Members:** Dennis Brunn, UUPLAN Liaison; Yvonne Marlier, Co-leader, UUPLAN Immigration Justice Team; Eric Foster and Tom Smith, members of UUPLAN Gun Violence Prevention Team; Dev Howerton, member UUPLAN Reproductive Justice Team; Gail Mershon, member UUPLAN Environmental Justice Team. In addition, there are 10 USG members who paid membership dues since June 2016 and several dozen who contributed through share plate in April 2017.

◆ **Mission of Committee**

The mission of the UUPLAN Committee at USG is to promote awareness of UUPLAN's advocacy work at the state level, to encourage USG members to join one of UUPLAN's seven

“Justice Teams,” and to encourage USG members to join UUPLAN as individual dues-paying members.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

1. to increase awareness of UUPLAN’s work and our justice issues through periodic displays and at least one film/discussion session, and at least one workshop with an invited speaker;
2. to increase the number of UUPLAN members at USG to at least 40;
3. to support collaboration between ERC, CAMI (Coalition Against Mass Incarceration) and the statewide UUPLAN Anti Mass Incarceration Team;
4. to identify at least 3 new members of the Immigration Justice Team; to take at least 5 USG members to the UUPLAN 2016 Annual UUPLAN Meeting in Harrisburg in November.

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of Past Year**

1. UUPLAN materials have been displayed at least 1 time per month and during April, a month designated in agreement with the Social Justice Coordinating Team as UUPLAN Month we held 4 workshops on 4 Sundays after the service and one film/discussion session. These workshops covered UUPLAN work in environmental justice, preventing gun violence, reproductive justice, and anti-mass incarceration. UUPLAN statewide leaders representing each area spoke at USG. Finally, we promoted the importance of broad coalition building for justice by organizing a discussion of Rev. William Barber’s book, *The Third Reconstruction*.
2. The number of USG members now also members of UUPLAN is approximately 40. Most importantly, USG members are now participating in UUPLAN Justice Teams focused on Environmental Justice, Gun Violence Prevention, Immigration, Anti-Mass Incarceration, and Reproductive Justice.
3. Through participation in the regular meetings of the USG Social Justice Coordinating Team, and by inviting the co-chair of the UUPLAN Anti-Mass Incarceration Team (Martha Copithorne – First UU Philly) to speak in April after church, we encouraged mutual awareness and collaboration between ERC, CAMI and UUPLAN.
4. We have not yet succeeded in recruiting at least 3 new USG members for the Immigration Justice Team. However, May 2017 has been designated as Immigration Month in consultation with the Social Justice Coordinating Team and both speakers, a film, and a common read book discussion are planned.
5. Attendees at the 2016 UUPLAN Annual Meeting from Germantown included Dennis Brunn, Yvonne Marlier, Rev. Kent Matthies, Dev Howerton and Eric Foster. In addition to these planned goals, UUPLAN’s series of workshops in April resulted in several new recruits to UUPLAN and, following Dennis Brunn’s appeal to the congregation within the April Share the Plate program, over \$1200 was contributed to UUPLAN. In addition, Dennis asked the USG Board in November to endorse a motion to the 2017 USG Annual Congregational Meeting that USG would become an institutional supporter of UUPLAN by pledging to strive to contribute \$5 per USG member to UUPLAN for the next five years. This recommendation will be voted on at the May 21st Annual Meeting.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

1. to continue promoting awareness of UUPLAN’s work through displays and through workshops, speakers, films and readings;
2. to increase UUPLAN membership at USG to at least 45;
3. to strive to recruit at least 3 USG members to the UUPLAN Immigration Justice Team;

4. to support the goal of raising at least \$1500 for UUPLAN from USG through both Share the Plate and individual fundraising; and
5. to bring together USG members of UUPLAN for at least one session for planning and celebration of our justice work prior to and in preparation for the 2017 UUPLAN Annual Meeting set for October 5 and 6.

WELCOMING COMMUNITY TEAM

Submitted by Treva Burger, Chair

◆ Members

Treva Burger, chair, Gloria Guldager, Eric Foster, Elaine Hills, Deb Kish-Silver, Nancy LaFauci, Alice Parker, Judy Rodes, Tim Beckham, Margaret Kinnevy

◆ Mission of Committee

To welcome visitors and provide them with a path to membership. And to deepen connections in the congregation of both new and current members.

◆ SMART Goals Established for Past Year

1. Maintain or increase congregational membership each year. Ongoing
2. Engage more of the congregation in the role of welcomers: welcome table, ushers, tour guides, etc. by increasing recruiting and simplifying the tasks. Ongoing
3. Complete gift bags and narthex art. 8/31/16
4. Rollout the idea of dividing the congregation into clusters, perhaps geographic, to create small groups for caring, volunteering, community building, etc. to the congregation. Could also use these groups for informal attendance taking (eg who isn't here?) 12/31/16
5. Resume at least one membership event in the 2016-17 church year such as a breakfast with the minister. 6/30/17
6. Initiate a Growth Through Service type program, perhaps partner with Stewardship. 6/30/18

◆ Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year

- Completed and began giving out Visitor gift bags in the narthex and at the Welcome Table. They include a promotional post card, a Principles book mark, a CD with 2 of Kent's sermons on it, a business card with the Welcoming Chair's name and cards with inspirational sayings. We also ordered special Seeker magazines for visitors from the UUA to offer to visitors.
- Wall art was created and hung in the narthex to promote Principles, Sources, Visitor Welcome, LGBTQ Welcome.
- Recruited some new tour guides to increase the ranks.
- Introduced 12 geographically based Villages (formerly Clusters) to the congregation and encouraged groups to begin planning social events. Recruited people to take on Village leadership roles. Sent names of those interested in Caring to the Caring team.
- Made a list of members not currently engaged or unable to come to church because of age or illness and sent them holiday cards. Also reached out by phone to some and began reaching out to new members several months after they join to make sure they are getting involved.
- Established December Usher's lunch as an annual event on the first Sunday of December.
- Got buttons and clip ons that say "Usher" to help newcomers identify them.

- Migrated all data to new significantly less expensive database.
- Updated Christmas Eve procedures so that the ushers for the 6pm service will sort the candles left after the 4pm service and decide which to reuse.
- Began working with a new group in the church who is interested in doing interviews with each member of the church to find out what they are passionate about. Similar to the Growth through Service program.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

1. Maintain or increase congregational membership each year. Ongoing
2. Engage more of the congregation in the role of welcomers: welcome table, ushers, tour guides, greeters, etc. by increasing recruiting and simplifying the tasks. Ongoing
3. Continue to help congregants connect with those in their Villages through social events within (All Church Dinner, Fall Potluck, CSD Carnival) and outside of church, caring, carpooling, justice issues, interviews, fellowship hour.
4. Plan an event with the minister for new members and active visitors who started coming while Kent was on sabbatical. 12/31/17
5. Create posters for the narthex bulletin boards. 12/31/17
6. Support the Congregational Survey Group to help develop that into a Growth through Service type program. 6/30/18
7. Begin succession planning by identifying a chair to start July 2018.

WORSHIP ARTS

Submitted by Jenn Leiby, MET Liaison to Worship Arts

◆ **Members**

Brian O'Leary (Chair), Jason Bender, Mark Daugherty, Eric Foster, Jenn Leiby, Rev. Kent Matthies, Connie Simon

◆ **Mission of Committee**

To prepare and provide excellent worship services at USG.

◆ **SMART Goals Established for Past Year**

- Enlisted and trained new Worship Associates
- Maintained quality of speakers during Kent's sabbatical
- Collaborated with the usher, music & CSD teams to make Sunday mornings flow smoothly

◆ **Significant Accomplishments of the Past Year**

- The Worship Arts Team has been busy making your Sunday morning worship experience rich and meaningful.
- We have assisted Kent in ensuring we have excellent speakers to cover his sabbatical, and we have welcomed some new Worship Associates to the Team.
- We continue to explore the order of the service for the best flow and use of time, taking all feedback into consideration.

◆ **SMART Goals for Upcoming Church Year**

- Enlist and train additional Worship Associates

- Continue to explore the flow of worship service to find what fits best and where things fit best
- Continue to create and maintain resources for summer worship music