

Unitarian Congregation of West Chester
Annual Reports
2014-2015



UCWC Annual Meeting, June 7th

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UCWC Vision, Mission and Goals

We are a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. We ascribe to the Seven Principles and Sources of the UUA that can be found at <http://www.uua.org/beliefs/what-we-believe/principles>.

The following statements have been written and adopted by our own congregation and reflect what we aspire to be and how we act on those aspirations.

Our Vision Statement

“We gather aspiring to be a thriving, caring, and welcoming community that supports each person’s spiritual journey, embraces diversity, challenges us to live responsibly and is a catalyst for a just and compassionate world.” (*adopted in May 2005*)

Our Mission Statement

“As a diverse liberal faith congregation, we make a difference in our lives, our children’s lives, and the wider community by creating an environment for spiritual growth and fulfillment, building meaningful connections, and for actively advancing peace and justice in the world.” (*adopted in June, 2009*)

Goals We Have Set to Achieve Our Mission:

Pillar I: Creating an Environment for Spiritual Growth

Goal: We provide inspirational worship.

- *Our services offer (1) a variety of music and musical genres, (2) insights into our own UU identity and faith, and (3) inspiration for our members to change their lives in positive ways.*

Goal: We provide religious education for all ages.

- *Our religious education curriculum provides lessons that focus on UU history, principles, and world religions so that our youth receive a well-rounded religious education and understand UU concepts.*
- *Our adults are offered and encouraged to take part in a variety of opportunities that include interfaith exploration and dialogue, celebration of a variety of holidays and holy days, and deeper exploration into Unitarian Universalism.*

Goal: We support and provide opportunities for individual spiritual practice.

Goal: Our building and our grounds are safe, welcoming, comfortable, and accessible to all who seek their use in harmony with our mission.

Pillar II: Building Meaningful Connections

Goal: At the UCWC people feel welcome, dialogues flourish, and relationships develop through good times and bad.

- *We provide a multitude of opportunities for social engagement, mutual support, musical sharing, and shared experiences about living a meaning-filled life. Our leadership demonstrates appreciation and gratitude to members of the congregation for their contributions of time and talent and encourages this behavior as a culture throughout the congregation.*

Goal: To further the Universalist-Unitarian principles of striving for world community and accepting one another, we maintain intentional involvement with diverse populations and promote diversity within our congregation.

- *We provide a welcoming atmosphere for diverse populations in our services, events and activities.*
- *We provide opportunities to interact with diverse populations within the larger community.*

Pillar III: Advancing Peace and Justice in the World

Goal: We work to have an impact on economic, environmental, and social justice issues at the local, national and international levels.

- *Our members contribute time, talent, and donations to charitable organizations serving the needs of the local or wider community.*
- *We network with each other and with other organizations to share information and experiences and to grow from the experiences of others. We participate in public actions to influence local and national legislative efforts, to improve economic and social equity, to reduce violence and injustice, and to protect or support the ecological environment.*

Our Facilities

- *Our building and our grounds are safe, welcoming, comfortable, and accessible to all who seek their use in harmony with our mission.*

Minutes of Prior Annual Meeting, June 8, 2014

Reading and Lighting of Candle

Welcome and Gratitude

11:30 Meeting comes to order. Welcome message to the members and a thanks for serving from the board.

A brief reading was made on “Serving with grace.” By Rev Gary Kowalski. In that reading “...we are Co-Authors....and have a joint sharing in the success of the enterprise....”

Robert’s Rules

74 members plus 6 board and a quorum is met for the annual meeting to commence.

President

“It has been an exciting and successful year for the board. Thanks to the following people for their dedication, time and commitment...” Lengthy list of volunteers, staff, members and more followed.

Interim Search Committee Report

Presentation: We were tasked to find a minister with excellent skills and a two year minister period. After reviewing several candidates, the person we chose was Rev Bill Zelazny. We got a strong connection from him. Very easy and very comfortable person. Excellent organizational skills. Lots of experience in managing people for city governments and many churches. Talked about his past and his CV that provided many compelling reasons to have Rev. Bill join the congregation. We have many challenges to face as a congregation and the Interim com feels he is the right candidate to help us set up for success in all of our future endeavors and initiatives from stay or go, merging, finances and settled ministry. Starts at the end of August. His partner will not be moving to the area.

Nominating Committee Slate of Proposed Officers

- Vote for new members, program and nominating committee.
- There was a movement to accept the nominations to board, program director....
- A second on the motion was made. No discussion .
- Vote: All hands up to accept the nominations as presented.

Treasurer’s Report

Enter the treasurer report as part of the minutes. [Addendum]

\$21,000 every month is what we spend. Regardless of the month, \$21,000 is spent. There are 168 people as members. This means each of us have to contribute \$1500 a person annually to break even at \$21000 a month.

Current pledges are \$171,000. We have a deficit gap of \$34,000 this year. Revenues are down. One-time gifts were not requested. Fixed expenses are up.

Possible Solutions:

- Cut certain expenses

- Add revenue

Comments from floor on topic of financials:

- Building loan is paid off? Can we finance through mortgage. The mortgage will be paid off soon. It will be soon.
- Idea is to save cans and recyclables for extra income.
- Why do we not have enough of pledges?
- Answer from finance and stewardship:
- We haven't heard from people.
- Many have moved away.
- There is a level of uncertainty with the congregation's future.
- Economy has taken a toll.
- Other points raised by the floor:
- There's a lot of new energy.
- There is no way we should decrease DRE. Large applause from the floor.

Comment from the member of the finance committee:

- Many nonprofits have the same difficulties we are having where costs outpace revenue. We are not alone.
- What non-profits generally do is they cut costs.
- We have a revenue problem. If everyone can make a pledge and increase their pledge, that would be the best solution. We need to invest in our community.

Comments from the floor:

- We have all things going on.
- There is uncertainty and that has to be brought up to everyone's attention.
- We need to table some things that are creating this uncertainty: Stay or go and merger talk.

Ideas on expense conservation:

- We could hire the interim for just one year to save money.
- Or cut our UUA fair share.
- We could go to a part time minister.
- How many have been an increase and how many decrease.
- Uncertainty is a constant in life. We have all seen the best and the worst of this congregation in past difficult times. We have no idea what is ahead, but we have to face it. It's all good.
- Special project gifting will raise the money needed. President spoke on this: As a congregation we can't do specific on gifts. It's against the by-laws and would pit one group or cause against another.
- Outside fundraiser could have tax implications that would challenge our status. Chalice lighters are for expanding programs not funding new ones.
- Everything is on the table. Is the building fund in the report. No.
- We can't look forward and be afraid. We have a great future. Take a leap of faith because in one year there will be certainty.
- Need to bring in more people.

Treasurer:

- Carryover - \$12,000 projected. Don't know what it will be.
- \$6000 - \$7000 is expected.

Move on "Approving the "Gift Matching Budget."

Movement is second.

Call to question.

Comments from the floor:

- Do not like this budget. And want to approve the full budget. There is general agreement in this.
- If each of the current people pledged \$340 it would close the gap.
- Get people to come back to the congregation.
- Do not want to cut staff especially DRE budget.

Move on approving the "Gift Matching Budget" is withdrawn.

Movement to withdraw is seconded.

Move on "Approving the Gift Budget with cuts to the staff removed from the gift budget."

Motion is seconded.

Call the question for vote on Gift Budget with cuts to the staff removed.

Goes to vote:

7 yes

46 no

1 abstention

Discussion from the floor on a full budget for only 3 months, after which time we will meet and vote again.

No discussion.

Move on "Accept the full budget (All IN) for 3 months only."

Seconded

Call to question.

Comments from the floor:

- We don't have to do a 3 month budget. The board can revisit anytime and adjust according to needs.
- Talk about a better campaign.

Motion for "Full budget (All IN) for 3 months only" is withdrawn.

Motion for "A full year (ALL IN) budget."

Seconded.

Call the question.

Goes to vote:

In favor 48

Not in favor 3

Abstention 1

The meeting is adjourned at the time 1:10

Addendum.

Annual Budget Meeting

Important Facts

- 1) We spend approximately \$21,000 per month to keep our congregation going
- 2) With 168 members, we would need approximately \$1500 per member each year.
- 3) Gap is at \$34k, with cuts to committee and building reserve
- 4) Current pledges for new year at \$170,122.

Revenues are down

- a) One time gifts were not requested or received (\$8k in 2013)
- b) Plate donations (not pledged) are down(\$1k less)
- c) Rentals are down slightly (rate hasn't changed in several years)
- d) Fundraisers were lower (\$5k less than 2013)

Expenses

- e) Administrator remains significantly cheaper and doesn't take benefits or 401k
- f) Medical premiums are up, although interim minister is on Medicare, his partner benefits TBD
- g) Utilities are higher (phone, water/sewer, electricity, gas and new borough decision)
- h) Pianist rate could be lowered per UUA guidelines
- i) Professional Expenses were cut during sabbaticals, but would go back to 10% salary

Possible Solutions

Cost Reduction	Savings	Revenue Increase	Estimated Increases
Eliminate UUA and JPD Dues	- \$14,700	Ask for One time Gifts	+ \$15,000
Do not hire Pianist	- \$ 3,500	Increase Fund Raisers	+ \$ 3,000
Reduce RE Dir from 75% to 50%	- \$11,000	Increase Rentals and rental rate	+ \$ 1,000
Reduce 401k for RE Dir	- \$ 3,300	Collect Existing Pledges	+ \$ 5,000
Eliminate RE Prof. Expenses	- \$ 3,300		
Renegotiate Minister Prof Exp	- \$ 3,050		
Reduce Choir Director to 50%	- \$3,600		
Total Savings	- \$42,450	Total Increases	+ \$24,000

*Other Ideas – reduce non paying members, request RE registration fee per family

*Interim moving and training is \$11.9k, but savings for late start of \$9k

Addendum.
2014 BUDGET PROJECTIONS

					ALL IN Deficit
Revenues	Actual YE 2013	Projected YE 2014	%	Projected 2015	
Fundraising	\$ 18,482	\$ 14,900		\$ 14,500	
Gifts	\$ 13,776	\$ 2,200		\$ 2,000	
Pledges	\$ 204,801	\$ 198,300		\$ 160,400	
Plate - not pledged, plus shared	\$ 10,235	\$ 8,700		\$ 9,000	
Rentals	\$ 4,750	\$ 4,200		\$ 4,200	
Total Revenues	\$ 252,044	\$ 228,300	100.0%	\$ 190,100	
Expenditures					
Administrator and 401k	\$ 19,688	\$ 11,064		\$ 11,056	
Other Admin	\$ 11,213	\$ 12,100		\$ 12,300	
Administration	\$ 30,901	\$ 23,164	9.4%	\$ 23,356	
Building Loan	\$ 19,211	\$ 13,739		\$ 13,740	
Janitor	\$ 7,425	\$ 7,359		\$ 7,900	
Utilities	\$ 6,128	\$ 7,117		\$ 7,300	
Other Building	\$ 3,666	\$ 5,000		\$ 6,400	
Building	\$ 36,430	\$ 33,215	13.5%	\$ 35,340	
<u>Denomination & Community Support</u>					
UUA & JPD	\$ 14,534	\$ 14,181		\$ 14,784	
Fire Companies (3)	\$ 225	\$ 325		\$ 325	
Denom & Comm	\$ 14,759	\$ 14,506	5.9%	\$ 15,109	
<u>Lifelong Spiritual Growth</u>					
Choir Director	\$ 6,000	\$ 7,119		\$ 7,193	
Pianist	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,102		\$ 3,500	
Pianist in Summer	\$ 490	\$ 450		\$ -	
RE Director Benefits	\$ 11,692	\$ 13,425		\$ 13,810	
RE Director Salary	\$ 32,492	\$ 33,044		\$ 33,381	
RE Director Prof Expenses	\$ 1,448	\$ 1,425		\$ 3,338	
Lifelong Spiritual Growth	\$ 57,121	\$ 61,565	25.0%	\$ 61,221	
Minister					
Minister Benefits	\$ 19,969	\$ 24,137		\$ 10,748	
Minister Salary & Housing	\$ 68,667	\$ 69,565		\$ 61,502	
Interim Moving Expenses				\$ 7,200	
Interim Training allowance				\$ 700	
Professional Expenses	\$ 3,407	\$ 1,715		\$ 6,150	
In Lieu of FICA	\$ 5,253	\$ 5,342		\$ 4,705	
Minister	\$ 97,295	\$ 100,759	41.0%	\$ 91,005	
Committee Support	\$ 4,525	\$ 12,700	5.2%	\$ 9,400	
Total Expenses	\$ 241,032	\$ 245,909		\$ 235,431	
Gap (Revenues - Expenses)	\$ 11,012	\$ (17,609)		\$ (45,331)	
Balance From Last FY	20,808	\$ 31,820		\$ 14,200	
Balance at Year End	31,820	\$ 14,211		\$ (31,131)	

President's Annual Report

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the congregation for trusting me with a second year as president of the board. It has been an honor to serve this congregation and has continued to be a growth-producing experience for me individually and I hope for the congregation as well.

The board's overriding goal has been to support this congregation through these transition-filled times. Our first transition was to engage our interim minister Rev. Bill Zelazny and to include him in all aspects of the congregational process and planning. He has proven to be a great asset on multiple levels. His guidance and expertise has been extremely valuable to me as president as well as to the board.

As a congregation, we have successfully navigated multiple challenging issues, making decisions that affect the entire congregation and our future. Last June, our financial situation was tenuous at best. The board, leadership and Rev. Bill encouraged our congregation to focus our energies positively with thoughts of gratitude and abundance. We have succeeded beyond what we could have imagined, with not only a successful Burn the Mortgage campaign but with a successful stewardship campaign, as well. We explored a possible merger with the Media church, UUCDC, and decided that a merger was not for us. Following the congregation's decision and overwhelming vote to stay in our building, the board officially disbanded the Stay or Go Task Force. We will now focus our energies on planning for and working through our renovation project and preparing for a capital campaign.

With congregational input, the board identified members to serve on the Ministerial Search Team, and the congregation confirmed their support by accepting the slate of members. The vacancies on the board and Transition Team that were left by the Ministerial Search Team members have been filled. A Negotiating Team was created to partner with the Search Team to negotiate the agreement on expectations and compensation package for new minister.

As a congregation, we explored how we govern ourselves and decided that the majority of us support our present governing system, referred to in our by-laws as "Policy Governance." We are aware that our present system is really a hybrid and not true Policy Governance. The board is working to find new terms to use that better suit our present governing style. The phrase, "Board Executive" is a more descriptive term, and our plan is to use this phrase more routinely in our operations as well as in our by-laws.

The board supported our congregation to call Rev. Kate Rhode as minister Emerita. We have refocused our congregational meetings to educate our congregation about basic Roberts Rules of Order and to try to use them more effectively in our meetings. The board has encouraged a more uniform use of DropBox as a location for document retention and communication. The board is working to implement a means to make our board minutes available to the congregation as our by-laws require.

Some board-supported projects are only partially completed and are in preparation for our new settled minister. We hope to get these done in the upcoming year. We plan to continue our work to create a congregation-wide Safety Policy, and to revise our by-laws and policies to better represent how we actually function here at UCWC. We would like to follow through with 2013 audit recommendations as well as organize and tidy up DropBox entries so there is less duplication and easier navigation on the site.

Key issues that we are facing include supporting the Search Team and search process, supporting all of the steps of the renovation project, and educating ourselves about and initiating a capital campaign in support of the goals for our congregation and its mission.

As I complete this entry for the 2014-2015 Annual Report, I know that there are important items that remain undocumented here. For each item that we accomplished as a congregation, countless volunteer hours were required. For each unfinished item that we have identified, countless more volunteer hours will be required. I have not offered a thank you to any one person, committee or volunteer as we have worked as a congregation using guidance and support from our staff to accomplish each and every item.

Thank you to each person who participated in any way to make our congregational life run smoothly. Thank you to the congregation for all that we accomplished this past year. Thank you for allowing me to serve this congregation as board president. Appreciate each other for all that we do together.

Shelly Case

Interim Minister's Report

New York Times best seller author, Jodi Picoult, wondered in her book Handle with Care whether you can look at your past and find, woven like the hidden symbols on a treasure map, the path that will point to your final destination.” I think this is very possible. And I believe that at sometime in the future this congregation will look back and see that what was done and learned during the 2014-2015 church year set UCWC on a new path. I know that is a bold statement, but we’ve done so much this year, and started to do things in new ways, that this congregation will be a different place from what it was just a few years ago.

Interim Ministry

In September, we stepped on a path toward preparing for the future with the start of my interim ministry. The purpose of an interim ministry is for the congregation to:

- Claim and honor its past while working to attend to griefs and tensions.
- Study its unique identity, its strengths, its needs, and its challenges.

- Clarify the multiple dimensions of leadership, both ordained and lay, and maybe navigate shifts in leadership.
- Engage in activities to reenergize connections with the larger Unitarian Universalist movement and its organizations and with the larger community in which the congregation is located.
- Renew its vision, strengthen its stewardship, review its operations, programs, organizational structure, mode and method of worship and spiritual development, make decisions regarding its future, and engage in preparation for the new, settled minister.

Now, at the end of the church year I am happy to report that we did work on all of these issues.

- *Honor past and attend to tension* – We held several conversations to look at the strengths and challenges of the congregation. We openly faced the feelings held by some members regarding the former minister's departure in a Listening Circle gathering.
- *Identity and challenges* – We have been engaged in a dialog to develop a congregational identity description. The Board decided to discontinue discussions about merger. The leadership engaged with the Interim Minister in frank discussions about operational challenges that have in the past complicated decision making.
- *Leadership* – The Board developed a job description and had discussions about its role and responsibilities within the board-executive governance model we are using. There will be several changes in leadership and the Nominating Committee identified new individuals for leadership positions.
- *Association connection* – We have connected with the UU Association for guidance on the ministerial search. Several individuals attended the JPD Annual Assembly. We have started to research how the UU Association can assist with our upcoming capital campaign.
- *Renew vision, strengthen stewardship, review operations and organizational structure, mode and method of worship and spiritual development, make decisions regarding its future, and engage in preparation for the new, settled minister.* We engaged in a strong annual stewardship campaign and a capital fund-raising campaign to pay off the mortgage. We've addressed several operational processes to make them more streamline, transparent and efficient. We discussed the long-standing concerns about policy governance and the Board worked to modify the governance model. The congregation voted on a proposal to stay in the current facilities, but to initiate planning to make improvements to address health and safety, accessibility, space usage, and aesthetics. We discontinued the Communication Committee and replace it with a Communications Coordinator who will serve as an in-house communications consultant. The congregation elected a ministerial search committee that has begun its work.

Operations and Activities – Interim and Regular

Many other changes or program improvements have been made this year. The Membership Committee has initiated new processes to enrich our welcoming. The Religious Services Committee has been exploring ways to enhance our worship experience. The Religious Education Committee, along with our Religious Education Director, has introduced new elements into the children's religious education program. The Minister and Religious Education Director have been working on adjusting and expanding the duties of the Director along with a new title that will reflect the changing role. A new stewardship model was introduced. Our district cluster representative has regularly attended and reported on cluster activities. A new adult religious education class was started.

But as important, our more traditional programming has been maintained, but with an enlivened spirit. The Fun and Fellowship continued to engage the congregation in enjoyable activities. The Social Justice Committee upheld UCWC's long-standing support of the MLK Day of Service. People have joyfully stepped forward to assist with our music program with voice and instruments. We've continued to provide strong support to the Food Cupboard, as well as continuing to give generously to Share the Plate and the Christmas Eve special collection. The book group and small group ministry activities have continued their activities.

So, what is left to do? Plenty for us in the 2015 – 2016 church year as we prepare for the new minister. I plan to work with the congregation and leadership to: wrap up our "who are we" quest; organize and launch our adult religious education ministry; formulate internal and external communication procedures; expand our music ministry; proceed with facility renovation planning and implementation; initiate a capital campaign; continue to review and adjust operations; review current policies and advise the Board on needed updates; prepare updated job descriptions for the staff; prepare a proposal for a renewed Committee on Ministry; work with the Religious Education Director to expand children and youth participation in our Sunday services. It should be a fun year.

Minister Functions

A minister's – interim or settled – duties are wide ranging. We are called upon to do many things. This is an example of what my typical month looks like.

- Attend monthly regular meetings of:
 - Board of Trustees
 - Executive Team
 - Program Council
 - Religious Services Committee
 - Transition Team
- Prepare at least three Sunday services including writing the sermon
- Prepare various reports for the Board on topics under study
- Handle administrative/operational matters in conjunction with Administrator and the Executive Team

- Work on special projects or interim tasks
- Meet with the President
- Meet with a committee chair or whole committee to discuss an activity or event
- Conduct weekly staff meetings with Administrator and DRE
- Write articles for the *Fellowtarian* and *Connections*
- Make pastoral care visits
- Attend outside organization meeting such as the West Chester Interfaith Council and the JPD Chapter of the UU Ministers Association, or engage in special activities such as making a presentation to a community organization
- Meet with individuals planning or assisting with a Sunday service

Appreciation

It has been personal rewarding and a great pleasure to work with the Board of Trustees so ably led by our President, Shelly Case, the Executive Team with the hard working Program Coordinator, Amanda Lipnack, and Executive Treasurer, Janine Galen, the committee chairs and volunteers, and the staff – Pam Baxer, Stephen Foery, Miriam Davidson, Jason Schafer-Valerius and Barry Miller. This congregation has the great fortune of having dedicated, knowledgeable and amiable individuals working for its welfare. I encourage you to personally thank all these hard working people.

I greatly enjoyed the fellowship and spirit of this congregation that has a casual approach to congregational life and enjoys being together. UCWC is truly a fun place to be. I look forward to my next year here.

Bill Zelazny, Interim Minister

Director of Religious Education Report

Accomplishments —

General RE:

- Welcomed six new families and 12 new children. Three families have either become members already or are regularly attending UCWC and the RE program.
- Developed and led Spirit Play teacher training. Created 21 Spirit Play story baskets.
- Assisted in the Coming of Age and Spirit Play classes.
- Led the annual RE Committee Retreat on the topics of Integrating Teenagers Mid-year, and Effective Communications.
- Continued to work on finding ways to weave the generations together beyond our intergenerational services.

Worship:

- Created and led our Ingathering service in which we introduced Rev. Bill with an a game of To Tell the TrUUth.
- Created and led the RE Sunday intergenerational service.
- Organized and led the ornaments-making portion of our Deck the Hall celebration.
- With Rev. Bill, co-led our Bread Communion intergen, and Christmas Eve family service.
- With Rev. Bill, participated in a sermon about the Unitarian and Universalist women ministers that comprised the Iowa Sisterhood.

Nursery:

- Hired two new people to staff the Nursery on Sunday mornings. Our Nursery population has grown dramatically, with up to 6 infants and toddlers there each week. Parents are also enjoying occasionally sitting in the lobby and listening to the service via the speaker set-up.

RE Space:

- During the summer of 2014 worked with members of the RE Committee (Heidi Frayer and Jen Roth) to rearrange the RE space. Most notably, we moved the DRE office into a smaller classroom space, relocated the supply closet, and turned the poorly-functioning "Fireplace Room" classroom into a Common Area. The creation of the Common Area has been a tremendous asset for parents as well as for teachers and students.

Safety:

- Attended a workshop at the Lancaster UU church detailing the changes in child abuse clearances and mandated reporting now required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for anyone who is in regularly-scheduled contact with children.
- Revised the UCWC Safety Policy to include the new requirements.
- Attended a presentation at the Lancaster UU church by the Lancaster Police, outlining the new thinking on lock-downs and what to do in the case of a dangerous intruder event.

Activities:

At UCWC: Attended Council meetings; worked with the Stay or Go Task Force; led SoulCollage® (introduction and workshop) for 23 women at the annual Women's Retreat.

In Our District: Attended the fall JPD Religious Educators Study Group in Perryville, MD, on the concept of "Missional Church." Attended monthly DRE cluster meetings, and the JPD Spring Conference.

It definitely takes a village! Thank you to our—

RE Committee —

- Heidi Frayer (Chair)
- Sarah Hyson
- Larry Lesser
- Mindy Ross
- Jen Roth

Teachers:

- Pre-K/K/ 1st/2nd: Beth Daniels, Kimberly Ellerthorpe, Heidi Frayer, Larry Lesser
- 3rd/4th: Jason Kohser, Dawn Kreibel, Joshua Sweet, Thomas Tolt
- 5th/6th: Julie Cottage, Brad Daniels, Corey Ross, Sandy Schaal
- 7th/8th: William Ahern, Rick London, Kristen Rybandt

Mentors for the Coming of Age class:

- Connie Eichenburg
- Gerry Giess
- Cindy Heck
- Joanna Iliff
- Fatima Patel
- Amy Spare
- Mark Steel
- Michael Stevens
- Craig Talbot

Youth Advisors: Julianne O'Neil, Marie Steel

Religious Services Committee—for their help with Intergenerational Services.

Parents—for volunteering in classrooms on Sunday mornings, and helping with special projects; especially Heidi Frayer, Larry Lesser, Rhonda Price, Jen Roth, Abby Sercovich and Teri Lesser.

Membership Committee—for all the work they have done and continue to do to welcome and engage visitors, and encourage membership in our congregation.

Rev. Bill—for bringing new ideas to our congregation, looking for more ways to bring our young people into our adult services, and for being open to my ideas for intergen services. It has been a fun and productive year.

Pam Baxter

Program Coordinator/Executive Team Report

The Program Coordinator heads the Program Council (the leaders of our committees and teams) and works as the third member of the Executive Team (along with the Executive Treasurer and the minister) to insure that the activities, events, and efforts of the congregation are meeting our congregation's mission and our goals. This year Janine Galen and I have served on the Executive Team along with our interim minister Rev. Bill Zelazny. We work in collaboration with the Program Council and report monthly to the board.

It never ceases to amaze me the variety of things that the Executive Team handles during the course of the year. Add to that all of the interim period work that Bill has done with us, this has been a very busy year for the Executive Team and Program Council. Just to give you a taste of the kinds of issues that the Executive Team and Program Council covered this year, I compiled this list from our agendas and minutes:

- Supported Finance team in successful active stewardship campaign
- Worked with minister to establish building and communication coordinator positions
- Worked with Office Administrator to set up Podcasts of our weekly services
- Supported minister and board on clarifying Congregation governance
- Supported minister on the “Who We Are” work that he has done with us over the church year
- Helped congregation be able to use credit card processing at events
- Created process for working better with the Office Administrator
- Fixed Lacey St. sidewalk per borough regulations
- Supported board on the mini-capital campaign to pay off our mortgage
- Setup speaker in the lobby
- Worked with borough on the parking permits needed by the congregation
- Began volunteer recognition program
- Support design and set up for new congregation T-shirts
- Reviewed audit recommendations
- Promoted further use of social media
- Held flea market

This has been a very busy year for UCWC. We have seen the congregation shift from a scarcity to an abundance mentality and that has flowed through into everything that we do over the year. I want to thank the Program Council and all of the committees for all of their hard work and dedication. We have a very special community here at UCWC that works because of the time, talent and treasure that everyone shares with us.

Amanda Lipnack

Finance Report

Budget and stewardship support the environment for spiritual growth programs. Stewardship meetings help to build meaningful connections where our values are supported by our generosity. Our careful fund accounting ensures that we are able to contribute to many organizations supporting peace and justice.

Committee Chair: Janine Galen

Members: Tom Towsend, Cyndy Bullaughey, Ann McNally, Lauren Kelly

What were the three biggest accomplishments you feel your committee made toward our congregation's mission this year?

1) Three large income producing activities:

- + Closing budget deficit of \$25k in just 3 months;
- + Burn the Mortgage campaign raised \$14k, which exceeded needs to payoff mortgage early.
- + Created more active “Building for Tomorrow” Stewardship campaign using affinity groups which increased pledges by 12%

2) Research on State Farm policy based on concerns regarding liability for child abuse and other special circumstances recommended by minister. No additional premium changes required. Review of IRS limitations on ‘unrelated business income’ such as rentals and fundraising. No concerns found at this time.

3) Research on financing equity line for ‘stay or go’ proposal from several institutions.

4) Change in payroll vendor from ADP to Paychex to save monthly fees and to improve service.

Goals:

We exceeded our income goals and we were very pleased with the new Stewardship approach

What were your three biggest challenges this year to achieving the goals you feel your committee set?

Unplanned expenses for building architects, continued disconnect from fundraising events, challenges with bank errors

Is there anyone else you would like to thank that was critical to your committee work this year, along with the members of with your committee?

Stewardship follow up volunteers – Gerry Geiss, Janet Hutchison, Mike Miller

Pastoral Care Report

The Pastoral Care team provides ministry to the congregation when in need as an adjunct to the Minister. Our goal is to educate the congregation about what Pastoral Care does and invite anyone to call upon the PC Team for confidential support. We also may provide hospital visits, phone calls, coordinating of meals or rides, information about area resources, and general support. We maintain a list of members who have volunteered to provide meals and rides. The committee and the volunteers who provide these services help to “build meaningful connections” consistent with our congregational goals.

Committee Co-chairs: Amy Spare and Fatima Patel
Members: Diane Cohle, Shelia Grant (new member this year),
Eleahn Kahn, Jim MacFadyen, Fatima Patel and
Amy Spare

Members of this committee serve at the discretion of the minister.

What were the three biggest accomplishments you feel your committee made toward our congregation's mission this year?

This committee provides support to members of the congregation on an ongoing basis with compassion and respect for privacy. Meeting this goal is our primary accomplishment. We communicated regularly via email and by phone and meet regularly. We also designed and ordered “Pastoral Care” ribbons for our nametags.

Did you feel you accomplished the goals you thought you would at the beginning of the year?

Yes.

What were your three biggest challenges this year to achieving the goals you feel your committee set?

We did not have any major challenges this year.

Is there anyone else you would like to thank that was critical to your committee work this year, along with the members of your committee?

We would like to thank two members who went off the committee this year: Sharon Sweitzer and Jon McCormack. Both have been active committee members since its inception.

The committee would also like to thank all the members of the congregation who sought our services, made referrals, informed us of possible needs of other members, and who willingly and cheerfully provided meals, rides, dog walks, and other assistance. It is highly rewarding to be a part of this caring, compassionate community.

Note that anyone in the congregation may contact any committee member (see above) in person, by phone, by personal email or via pastoral-care@ucwc.org, linked from the UCWC webpage.

Religious Education Committee Report

Religious Education for children represents half the ministry of the congregation.

Committee Chair: Heidi Frayer
Members: Heidi Frayer, Sarah Hyson (new member), Larry Lesser,
Mindy Ross (new member), Jen Roth

What were the three biggest accomplishments you feel your committee made toward our congregation's mission this year?

- added 2 new people to the RE Committee
- re-evaluated our use of the downstairs space, moved the DRE's office to open up a larger classroom area, created a Common Area, expanded the Spirit Play class area
- provided input to the Stay or Go Committee on RE's use of the space, and our needs going forward.

Did you feel you accomplished the goals you thought you would at the beginning of the year?

- Yes.
- We expanded our Committee.
 - we made the downstairs space more engaging, comfortable, usable, and efficient.
 - as always, we successfully ran a full program, and welcomed/integrated new families.

What were your three biggest challenges this year to achieving the goals you feel your committee set?

- more than ever: time, and busy schedules. RE has some unique issues in the sense that parents w/young children have particular challenges in how they want to and are able to spend their time outside of home and school.

- even with the changes we made, there are building/classroom issues that remain a challenge. We look forward to the renovations proposed in the "Stay" recommendation that will eliminate water infiltration in the basement, and improve the air quality (a serious issue in the warm, humid months). We also look forward to reapportioning the space.
- attendance.

Is there anyone else you would like to thank who was critical to your committee work this year, along with the members of your committee?

- Building Committee (water issues, work parties)
- Membership Committee
- Volunteer Teachers and Mentors
- Hospitality Teams

Building Interest Group Report

(there is no building cmte)

Gerry Giess, Hal Deal (he's sort of new), Michael Werner and Dave Werner, Keith Dallara, Wayne Bullaughey and Lowell Young were the main participants. Also, Curt Hoganson, Rose Werner, Tilo Stahl (Lawn Care & Snow Removal), Shelly Case (Snow Removal), Alan Pitttenger, Callie Durner, Kathy McGinnis, Tom Townsend, Jamie Ingram, Jason Kohser

Lawn care folks are organized by Tilo Stahl. They include: Chris Conroy, Keith Dallara, Gerry Giess, Mary Yeager, Mira Tryon, Dirk Troltenier, Bill Iliff, David Long, Tom Buglio and Janet Hutchison.

What were the three biggest accomplishments you feel your committee made toward our congregation's mission this year?

Windows repaired, painted, south side of bldg

Did you feel you accomplished the goals you thought you would at the beginning of the year?

Yes

What were your three biggest challenges this year to achieving the goals you feel your committee set?

There is a lack of organizational leadership to function as a true committee, address all building needs.

Is there anyone else you would like to thank that was critical to your committee work this year, along with the members of your committee?

Hal Deal is energetic, dedicated, skilled — a wonderful resource. Wane Bullaughey just knows EVERYTHING about this bldg & quietly does what is needed. Michael Werner has passion for the building.

This seems as good a place as any to list the work of the people.

Lawn care
Snow removal
Repaired, scraped, glazed, painted sills, all windows south side of bldg.
Emptied furnace room
Repaired lectern
Paint minister's office
Improved squeaky podium
Sump pump placed in window well under ramp
Periodically removed debris from drains outside bldg
Periodically clean gutters
Buried leaders from north side down spouts
Arrange for repaving side walk where heaved by tree roots
Repair, paint areas needed in stairway & furnace room
Clean up after rain water leaks
Repair ceiling drywall in furnace room
Maintenance to side doors

Membership Committee Report

New people are part of the life blood of a Congregation. They bring enthusiasm, talents and financial gifts.

Committee Chair: Barbara Long

Members: Cyndy Bullaughey, Cindy Rosenthal, Cindy Heck,
Connie Eichenberg, Anthony Penzarella, Ruth Miller (new)

What were the three biggest accomplishments you feel your committee made toward our congregation's mission this year?

1. We took in and integrated 27 new members, our highest number yet.
2. Very successful New Member Dinner
3. Twice a year phone tree calling to all members, regarding our Welcome Back September Picnic and the New Member Dinner

Did you feel you accomplished the goals you thought you would at the beginning of the year?

Yes, we held regular Getting to Know UU's sessions plus an Autumn and Spring Path to Membership.

What were your three biggest challenges this year to achieving the goals you feel your committee set?

Biggest challenge was selecting dates that would suit everyone.

Is there anyone else you would like to thank that was critical to your committee work this year, along with the members of your committee?

UCWC is fortunate to have such a dedicated Membership Committee. Thank you to Rev. Bill for his thoughtful words to our clan attendees.

Music Committee Report

Spiritual Growth and Community Outreach and Awareness

Members: Marie Steel (Chair), Abby McGillivray, Elaine Friedlander,
Hugh Sutherland, Janet Gill, Debby Kern

Accomplishments / Activities

- o We have worked towards fulfilling our goals for Community Outreach and Awareness and Spiritual Growth with the various music programs that have been hosted at the Congregation this year.
- o We hosted a few music concerts at UCWC in order to get visibility in the community as a place to enjoy wonderful music and introduce the community to our church.
- o Choir Director and one Music Committee person were registered with the UU Musician's Network which provided additional resources of music.

Music Events

One of the successful outreach projects thus far has been the monthly Coffeehouses. We have attracted many musicians from the community and a regular audience and have developed a very good reputation as being a first rate Coffeehouse/open mic venue in West Chester. We have collected approximately \$500 dollars for the general congregational fund. The numbers of participants from Nov. – April have been between 30-40 people in attendance.

Roy Zimmerman Concert
October 4th
26 people attended
\$15 ticket price x 26 \$390 (80/20 split) \$312/ \$78 for UCWC

Zach Grim
February 8th
31 people
\$333.00 for Safe Harbor

A Cappella Pops
March 8th
Approximately 85 people attended
\$15 tickets \$18 at the door

A Cappella Pops Concert Net Revenue

Total \$ 1,292.60

Accrued to Pops \$ 904.82

Accrued to UCWC \$ 387.78

Mount Airy Home Companion Show

March 15th

Approximately 54 People attended

50/50 split

\$10 tickets

\$545 (50/50 split) \$272 for St. Mad Band/Mt. Airy Home

Companion. \$273 + \$35 for food.

Murder Mystery Theatre

“Greased”

Sat. January 17th

Approximately 65 people at \$35 per ticket

After expenses paid to Without a Cue Productions, food and beverages

UCWC – Raised \$800

The music Committee met with our new Interim minister on a monthly basis to coordinate music for the services. We are making a concerted effort to introduce different varieties and genres of music into our services.

Choir is having an excellent year with Miriam Davidson at the helm. She has challenged us to new levels of excellence and the music we perform enhances the beauty of the services and our music ministry in general. The choir has increased in size and has received compliments on our improved sound quality. Our annual all music service on Sunday, May 18, 2015 was well attended and proved a great success with 2 of our own choir members performing a piano and violin duet. Various guest musicians performed.

Our Dream Budget would promote Miriam from Choir Director to Music Coordinator which is a minimal increase to our choir director’s current hours and subsequent monthly salary, with a negotiated increase to her monthly salary. We anticipate that the additional responsibilities would take approximately 2 hours a week, including extra meetings, and extra time on a particular Sunday. She would be present at an additional service and she would lead the congregation in hymn singing. Another responsibility would be in assisting Rev. Bill with the hymn selections and special music weekly and scheduling and coordination of guest musicians. The Music Coordinator would be responsible for administration of the music ministry on a weekly basis. Those duties are currently handled by lay volunteers of the Music Committee, Rev. Bill, and the Religious Services Committee when it is a lay lead service.

Our sound system needs updating and this would also be a dream budget item. (Cost approximately \$2,000). This will be tabled until we make any decisions about the physical plant of our facility and coordinate with the team/committee that is in place to explore possible renovations or upgrades to the building.

The drumming group has been involved with multiple services with much thanks to Debby Kern for organizing the group and Rhonda Price for participating with dance, Much thanks to Abby McGillivray for taking the lead in leading the congregation in hymn teaching and singing. Also, thanks to Janet and Kenny Gill, Connie Eichenberg, Ed Cohle, Laura Reimer, and Steve Wilcox for adding their instrumentation to the services throughout the year.

Website

We have created links on the new website that tell more about our music program, provide information about choir, coffeehouse and special musical programs. We have utilized the current advertising methods for our concerts in local papers, periodicals, Fellowtarian and Connections. The new sign is a big plus for attracting the community. I have reached out to the Dean of the music program of West Chester University to establish a pipeline of students for playing for our services.

Elaine Friedlander has continued to send excellent students to play on Sundays.

Jason Schafer-Valerius has been a wonderful addition to our staff and has enhanced our music ministry with his repertoire. He will not be available for summer music but various volunteer pianists will play throughout the summer with the coordination of Paul Sapko and Abby McGillivray.

Social Justice Report

Group/Project Submission Form

social-justice@ucwc.org

Name of Group/Project	Social Justice Coordinating Committee
Leader(s)	Linda Sander, Chair, Steve Sander, Co-chair
Group Members	Mike Stevens, Beth Daniels, John Gribbin, Katy McGinnis, Tom Townsend, Amy Spare, Rob Sartain, Mary Yeager, Ed Cohle, Sharon Mayer Conroy, Kim Ellerthorpe, Pam Sapko, Lorrie McKinley, David Long, John McCormack, and Tom Buglio
New Group Members	Kathy McGinnis and David Long

Indicate if they were also new UCWC members this year.

Why is your committee important to the goals of our congregation (<http://ucwc.org/our-mission>) ?

The Social Justice (Coordinating) Committee is the leadership that oversees, supports, encourages, and coordinates the activities of the UCWC subgroups and projects working to advance peace and justice in the world and build meaningful connections in the community.

We lead UCWC efforts to help people in the local community, support animal ministry, promote sustainable living, and support justice in the state, nation, and around the world. See individual group reports and/or the SJ web pages for details.

The Social Justice Council itself does not manage any of the individual program activities, though it occasionally engages in ad hoc activities in conjunction with other community organizations.

CURRENT YEAR

What were the three biggest accomplishments you feel your committee made toward our congregation's mission this year?

1. We had two ad hoc peace and justice projects in cooperation with community groups: (1) Support for refugee unaccompanied minor children living in Chester County, in cooperation with ten other local churches and La Comunidad Hispania, and (2) Hospitality for Peace Walkers from the New England Peace Pagoda, in cooperation with the West Chester Peace Coalition.

2. Anita Mentzer, UUPLAN Executive Director, spoke at an after-service lunch provided by the SJ Committee to increase Congregation members' knowledge about UUPLAN's work for justice in Pennsylvania. 25 people attended.
3. We are proud of our communications, keeping the Congregation and the SJ Leaders informed. Attended Council Meetings, beautiful posters on well-organized bulletin board, maintenance of the SJ webpages, social justice leaders informed as needed, used *Connections* and *Fellowtarian*, etc.

Did you feel you accomplished the goals you thought you would at the beginning of the year?

Yes. We had our annual meeting to decide finances, conducted business by email as needed and communicated with the congregation. Two ad hoc activities with community organizations were a plus. We welcomed two new SJ Committee members. Kathy McGinnis added strong leadership to UUSC and was instrumental in getting us involved with the refugee project. David Long led the Peace Walker event and is the new UUPLAN leader. Both came with the UCWC contingent to People's Climate March this fall before they became social justice leaders.

What were your three biggest challenges this year to achieving the goals you feel your committee set?

1. I am not always able to attend Council Meetings, and it is difficult to impossible to find a substitute.
2. It is hard to think of anything else. We have a very supportive group of leaders.

Is there anyone you would like to thank that was critical to your committee work this year, along with the members of your committee?

The SJ Leaders do a terrific job with their projects. Thank you. Please see their reports and the website for details.

Rev. Bill met with me and was supportive of our efforts. He approved and announced the special collection for the refugee children and helped publicize Anita Mentzer's visit. Stephen Foery was very helpful publicizing our SJ efforts to the Congregation. Thank you to all who contributed to the special collections and came to hear Anita.

Chef Phil Yeager provided soup for the UUPLAN lunch, which was led by John Gribbin, Kathy McGinnis, Mary Yeager, and David Long. Barbara and David Long lead the Peace Walkers event. Thank you to everyone who opened their homes for peace walkers to sleep overnight, and who contributed to the potluck and discussion with them.

Social Justice Volunteers 2014-2015

Committee Chair and Co-Chair:	Linda Sander, Steve Sander
West Chester Food Cupboard Donations:	Kimberly Ellerthorpe
Share the Plate:	Beth Daniels Leader, and Tom Townsend, Treasurer
Fair Trade Coffee and Tea Sales:	Amy Spare and Rob Sartain
PFLAG and LGBT Issues:	John McCormack and John Gribbin
Liaison for Gun Safety Issues;	Tom Buglio
Sustainable Living Email List:	Diane Maguire

Projects with Many Participants:

Gardening for our Neighbors Leader: Mary Yeager
Volunteers:
Barbara Dallara, Keith Dallara, Janet Gill, Ken Gill, Sheila Grant, Jamie Ingram,
Tom Townsend, Mary Yeager, Phil Yeager, Nancy Artus, Dirk Troltenier,
Sondra Hoganson, Maryanne Seitzer.
New group member: Pam Summerhill

Animal Ministry Leader: John Gribbin
Members:
Alan Pittenger, Sandy Gera,
New group member: Anthony Penzarella

Exploring Diversity Book Discussion Group Leaders: Pam Sapko and
Laurie McKinley
42 members on email list.
New group members: Marita Barber and Callie Biemer

MLK Day Of Service

Planning Committee of St. Paul's Baptist Church: Ed Cohle and
Shelly Case
MLK Day of Service Volunteers: Leader: Ed Cohle
(Estimated 75 UCWC members volunteer that day.)

UU Service Committee: Representatives: Linda Sander, Tom Townsend, and
new representative Kathy McGinnis
Volunteers and/or participants in Climate March, Holiday Card Sale, Sunday Services
and Sustainability Lunch: Flo Miller, Jon McCormack, John Gribbin, David and Barbara
Long, Wayne Bullaughey, Cyndy Bullaughey, Mary Yeager, and Stephen Sander

Safe Harbor Dinners: Sharon Mayer-Conroy
(20 people make monthly meals for Safe Harbor Shelter.)
Nancy Artus, Barbara Dallara, Gerry Giess, Sheila Grant, Janet Hutchinson, Kristen and
Jason Kohser, Lorrie McKinley, Katrina Moustafa, Kate Rogers, Catherine Sachs, Amy
Spare, Michael and Rose Werner. New group members: Alisha Laskey, Matt and Cindy
Zencey, Cindy and Paul Heck.

Habitat for Humanity: Mike Stevens (Several people participate.)

Peace Walker Hospitality: Leaders and hosts: David and Barbara Long
Home hospitality hosts: Sheila Grant and Jamie Ingram, Sharon and Chris Conron,
Cathy and Jerry Lakoff,

UUPLAN: Liaison and new leader: David Long.
Informational Lunch Event: Mary Yeager, John Gribbin,
Kathy McGinnis

Special thanks to staff members Stephen Foery, Rev. Bill Zelazny, and Pam Baxter for their help and support of our activities.

Animal Ministry Report

Name of Group/Project Animal Ministry
Leader(s) John Gribbin
Group Members Alan Pittenger, Sandy Gera, Anthony P.
New Group Members Anthony P.

Indicate if they were also
new UCWC members
this year.

Why is your committee important to the goals of our congregation
(<http://ucwc.org/our-mission>) ?

Animal Ministry serves congregants by actively advancing causes related to justice and compassion for other species and thereby contributes to our congregation's overall mission of advancing peace and justice in the world.

CURRENT YEAR

What were the three biggest accomplishments you feel your committee made toward our congregation's mission this year?

- 1) In July 2014, Animal Ministry sponsored a lay-held service devoted to the First Principle Project.
- 2) Following this service, we gathered signatures of over 51 percent of members to meet requirements for Board approval of this project to its next state: approval at General Assembly in 2016.
- 3) Sponsored a successful Dogs on Tour event at our 2015 Flea Market which raised money and awareness for the local SPCA.

Did you feel you accomplished the goals you thought you would at the beginning of the year?

Yes.

What were your three biggest challenges this year to achieving the goals you feel your committee set?

- 1) Bringing in new members.**
- 2) Promoting participation in First Principle Project.**
- 3) Overcoming speciesism.**

Is there anyone you would like to thank that was critical to your committee work this year, along with the members of your committee?

All those members who signed petition supporting First Principle Project.

Gardening for Our Neighbors Report

Gardening for Our Neighbors is a social justice project that our congregation undertakes to provide fresh produce to the Chester County Foodbank which supports households that do not have enough food. We raise vegetables organically and deliver them to affiliates of the Chester County Foodbank. This food is raised on an approximately 45' x 45' foot plot lent to us by a member's family for this purpose. Tools, supplies, seeds, and plants are donated by participants and in 2015 by the West Chester Agway which donated 108 broccoli plants.

In the summer of 2014, we planted lettuce, beets, carrots, and broccoli. We did not have set work days because of scheduling conflicts. Instead, weekly email reminders listed what work had to be done. Unfortunately, this did not work out well and the majority of the work was completed by a few individuals. However we raised nearly 600 bags of produce which was delivered to the West Chester Food Cupboard and the Church of the Loving Shepherd's food ministry program, both affiliates of the Chester County Foodbank. Both programs expressed great appreciation for our efforts and the quality of the produce. Our volunteers enjoy working together but we agreed we had to schedule work parties for future efforts so that more people participate.

For 2015's project, a planning meeting was held in late winter. The planning meeting was open to anyone with interest in participating. Those attending agreed to meet on Thursdays at 5pm starting in late April and/or Tuesday at 9 am beginning in late May. Because we have a small pool of volunteers, we chose crops that do not require frequent attention. We selected broccoli and edamame. Broccoli is a spring or fall crop and edamame is a summer crop. Mary Yeager agreed to procure the broccoli plants and

edamame seeds. She will send out weekly work party reminders to anyone who wants to be on the email list.

As of May 17th, there have been at least 4 people attending each of the work parties. The broccoli is thriving and we will switch to planting edamame on our next work day. We hope to start harvesting the broccoli in mid June. Our volunteers are happy with the schedule. There is joy in working together on a project. Working outside is a pleasure on these spring days and we know we are helping some of our neighbors in need. Reminders will occasionally be put in Connections to encourage others to participate and updates will be published in the Fellowtarian.

Currently active project members are Barbara Dallara, Keith Dallara, Janet Gill, Ken Gill, Sheila Grant, Jamie, Ingram, Pam Summerhill, Tom Townsend, Mary Yeager, and Phil Yeager. Mary Yeager leads this project. If you have questions or want to join the effort message: gleaning@UCWC.org.

You can also see the UCWC website for more information under social justice, local projects.

Diversity Book Group

sharing a diversity of perspectives

Leaders: Pam Sapko and Lorrie McKinley
Members: email list of 42; generally 8-10 attending
Marita Barber and Callie Biemer are new members.

The highlight this year was Fatima Patel's discussion of The Space Between Us by Thrity Umrigar and the Indian potluck dinner that accompanied it. Overall was a nice, diverse selection of books. Two sessions were held in members' homes.

We accomplished the goals.

First Principle Project

After almost a year spent gathering the signatures of congregation members, our Animal Ministry Chapter has gained Board approval of the First Principle Project. Our congregation becomes the fifth nationwide to approve the project's stated aim of changing wording of the UU First Principle from the current "inherent worth and dignity of all persons" to "the inherent worth and dignity of all beings." Over 51 percent of our congregation's membership signed a petition endorsing the project's goals.

Members of the Animal Ministry wish to thank all those members who have joined in this effort to expand the circle of compassion beyond our species. The Animal Ministry Chapter meets at 7 PM on the second Wednesday of each month. For more information concerning this project, please log-on:

<http://www.firstprincipleproject.org>

Approval of a total of 15 congregations nationwide is required before the First Principle Project can be presented for vote at the 2016 General Assembly.

MLK Day of Service Planning Committee Report

We are contributing to the opportunity for congregation members to provide community service and to meet others with diverse racial, ethnic and religious identities. Any opportunity to be in relationship with those unlike yourself creates an opportunity for better racial relationships, peace in the world and greater understanding.

Leader: Ed Cohle

Members: Ed Cohle, Shelly Case

Accomplishments:

1. Use of the building by congregation and non-congregation members for the operation of projects for MLK Day of Service.
2. Involvement of congregation members in various community projects to people with various needs in Chester County.
3. Involvement of the committee leadership with the leadership of St. Pauls Baptist Church possibly leading to opportunities for some joint events in the future.

Challenges:

1. Making sure we could get many members involved in the MLK Day of Service.
2. Getting members to participate in the closing gathering for the event.
3. Trying to interest others at St. Pauls Baptist Church in establishing a relationship with UCWC.

Thanks go to anyone who helped with our building on the day of the event.

PFLAG Report

Parents and friends of lesbians and gays (PFLAG) offers support and direction to parents of gays and lesbian youth. PFLAG also supports adult gays and lesbians. The group offers compassionate help to those in need. The goals of PFLAG are closely aligned with the First and Second Unitarian Principles.

What were the three biggest accomplishments you feel your committee made toward our congregation's mission this year?

Helping those experience loss
Promoting support of Pennsylvania's UU PLAN
Experienced notable growth in membership

Did you feel you accomplished the goals you thought you would at the beginning of the year?

Yes

What were your three biggest challenges this year to achieving the goals you feel your committee set?

Helping parents accepting their gay or lesbian child.

Is there anyone else you would like to thank that was critical to your committee work this year, along with the members of your committee?

PFLAG members greatly appreciate the space and support that UCWC offers.

Jon McCormack

Report of the Greater Philly UU Cluster

Cluster Member Congregations: BuxMont, Cherry Hill, Delaware County, Dorothea Dix, First U Philly, Germantown, Lower Bucks, Main Line, Pottstown, Restoration, South Jersey Shore, Thomas Paine, Wellsprings, West Chester

Cluster Meetings:

Representatives from the congregations met in Aug 2014, Oct 2014, Mar 2015, and Apr 2015. Marilyn Huff, Mark Bernstein, and Treva Burger (USG) facilitated these meetings.

Cluster Mission:

Share our message, Grow our Faith, Strengthen our Congregations

Cluster Status:

The Greater Philly Cluster has been working hard to get to know our neighbor congregations and to be intentional about how we work as a group. In our first year, we established an interest in working together and laid the groundwork. In our second year, we have discovered several challenges and are working to address those. We are working to get broader support of the cluster clergy. Ministerial transitions and a history of unsuccessful cluster ventures in the past have proven challenging in this regard. We are now working to build more trust among clergy and leaders in creating a strong and productive cluster.

The current initiative is to encourage cluster participants to enroll in the HUULTI courses offered by CERG. The goal is to create a shared experience and some enhanced skills to pave the way for future cluster work.

The cluster is planning a cluster-wide picnic for a Saturday in late Sept or early Oct 2015.

Marie Steel



Stay or Go, Final Report, May 2015

By 2011 it became clear to the board that the building was a daunting concern for the congregation. The building committee had disappeared via attrition and frustration. A failure to make hard decisions about the future of the building was hampering many facets of the congregational life. The RE space sporadically suffered minor and major water intrusion. The air quality in the basement [due to allergens] was unbearable to some individuals and not noticeable to others. Concerns about the longevity of the asbestos roof created congregational anxiety. Areas of the building such as the foyer were considered drab and uninviting. The utilization and accessibility of our space, particularly the RE space, seemed contrived and frustrating. The lack of dedicated parking was a problem for the elderly and those with disabilities. Questions were raised as to whether or not these building related safety, usage, and aesthetic issues were inhibiting the health of the congregation by being a barrier to participation and membership.

The board undertook gathering information such as property appraisal, water intrusion remediation, and leasing information. However the board realized that it was a task that was beyond its time resources. In the late winter of 2013, the board asked for congregational volunteers to objectively evaluate the condition of our building at 501 South High Street in West Chester and determine whether the building might be modified to better meet our needs or identify available alternatives should the congregation decide to relocate to a new facility. This ad hoc board taskforce's purpose was to investigate the suitability of our building to support the congregation's mission and to help the congregation decide whether they should invest their energy and finances in our current or move to another facility to the support of our congregation's goals. The committee planned the following phases of work.

PHASE 1: Survey the committees and congregation members at large as to the suitability of the physical plant for supporting the congregation's mission/vision. Analyze the survey results. Identify areas of concern. Share survey results with the board and congregation at large. Foster discussion regarding the suitability of the physical plant among committees, members, and friends.

PHASE 2: Consider ways to remediate identified concerns. Develop at least three alternatives to improve our physical plant. One option was to renovate our current building to better suit our needs. Another option was to lease/purchase another facility which we would adapt to our purposes. The third option was to purchase property and build to fill our needs. The Stay or Go Taskforce provided the financial information associated with each of these options and presented the three alternative plans to the congregation fostering a multilevel congregational discussion of the congregation's physical plant needs in relation to the congregation's mission.

PHASE 3: Foster congregational discussion regarding the feasibility of the three options. After adequate congregational discussion, the Stay or Go committee advised the board and suggested a resolution to the board in regard to the congregation staying in our

current building or planning to move to a different facility as part of a long range plan. This resolution required a congregational vote.

The taskforce surveyed the committees in the spring of 2013. Then the congregation at large was surveyed one-on-one in the summer and fall of that year. There initially was poor follow through on the survey and the taskforce switched to an online survey. A total of 51 people participated in the survey. With the exception of the sanctuary space which was well rated, other aspects were rated less than satisfactory, but overall the building received a satisfactory rating. The survey results are available in a separate document. The taskforce realized that it would be impossible for the congregation to move forward in the decision making process unless they understood the problems that we were having with the building. Furthermore the congregation would have to be able to envision the choices which this taskforce researched in order to choose a course of action. In anticipation of these difficulties the taskforce tried to foster conversations where people and committee shared their joys and concerns regarding the building and hosted a Town Hall gathering in February 2014 where the survey results were formally presented to the congregation and event/committee organizers shared their experiences using the building. This completed the taskforce's Phase 1.

Following the presentation of the survey results, the taskforce turned towards gathering information regarding ways to improve the congregation's physical plant as described in phase 2 above. The taskforce worked in three teams to research the three main options. While taskforce members could work with realtors, contractors, and developers to investigate new real estate options, the taskforce realized that paid professional help was necessary to understand the options for renovations and upgrades that would be feasible in our current building. In the spring of 2014, the taskforce petitioned the board for \$10K to hire an architectural firm to evaluate the building including a MEP inspection. The board approved the funds. Unfortunately the individual who undertook this task became bogged down with his vocational responsibilities and was unable to promptly follow through with selecting and hiring a firm, consequently phase 2 was delayed by several months. In the summer of 2014 another individual (Michael Werner) volunteered to take on this task.

Frens and Frens a local historical architect firm was engaged to provide a professional, objective evaluation of the building. In addition to evaluating the building condition, Frens and Frens was also asked to provide a preliminary strategy to address deferred maintenance as well as preliminary costs for some of the major upgrades that might be considered. The Frens and Frens study was completed in December, 2014. Frens and Frens found the building to be in good condition and structurally sound. The report presented a maintenance plan, a strategy to schedule deferred maintenance, and several general options for changing how space is being used. Frens and Frens identified structural and design options that addressed many of the building concerns that had been previously identified. It is notable that the Frens and Frens study acknowledged that the potential capital upgrades (including an ADA elevator, office reconstruction, air conditioning, and restroom upgrades, among others) could all be phased and implemented based on congregational interests and budgets.

Taskforce also evaluated two “Go” options: purchase or lease of an existing structure with modifications to accommodate our needs (Lauren Kelly) and purchase of raw land to construct a new building based on specific design requirements (Mary Yeager). Reports on these two options are summarized in a booklet prepared for and distributed to the congregation. Moving to a new facility could remedy current challenges such as parking, accessibility, dysfunctional RE space, storage, kitchen facility, and air quality. The greater West Chester area does provide both existing space that might be refurbished for our use (e.g. warehouse spaces and underutilized retail space) as well as open land suitable for new construction. [See the booklet for full details] Alison Kolakowski gathered and published demographic, membership, and stewardship information pertaining to our congregation and the greater West Chester area.

While the two “Go” options provided substantial potential for future growth and expansion, these two options were both considerably more expensive than the “Stay” option, approximately twice the cost of refurbishing the existing facility at 501 South High St. It was noted that the congregation has difficulty maintaining our current facilities because of insufficient finances and volunteer hours. A new/different facility would/could have new costs/responsibilities such as parking lot and grounds maintenance.

The taskforce recognized two significant alternatives not clearly included in our initial plan. The first was to purchase property adjacent to our current property, 501 S High St. The second was to investigate partnering with another organization to share the use of a facility, such as our sharing space with a school which would use the building during the week and coordinate facility use with UCWC on the evenings/weekends. The taskforce collected property sale information for properties within a block of our building and included that in the report. The taskforce could not pursue the partnering alternative at this time because we could not approach other organizations without the approval of the congregation.

An overview of the information gathered for the three options was presented to the congregation at a Sunday service in January 2015 thereby, completing Phase 2 of the taskforce’s plan. From January to April 2015, presentation boards were on display posting the taskforce’s findings, and a taskforce committee member was available after every service to answer questions. After a service in February 2015, a more detailed report was presented on the state of our current building and renovation options. Following a service in March 2015, the “Go” options were more reviewed in more depth. After this gathering, an online discussion board was set up to provide opportunities for congregational discussion. From April of 2013 through May of 2015, the taskforce communicated with the congregation via monthly newsletter articles [most months] and weekly newsletter announcements [as needed]. Similarly, it should be noted that an email alias was establish in the spring of 2013 to facilitate communication between the congregation and the taskforce.

In January of 2015, Phase 3 began. In congregational discussion, people expressed frustrations with different aspects of our facility, but there was no significant

demonstrative support for moving to a new facility. Despite testimony from the congregation's leaders and event organizers, the congregation at large has an inadequate appreciation of the frustration experienced by activity/event coordinators and staff when using the building. Throughout the taskforce's process, it encouraged members /friends to put aside financial concerns temporarily and consider the facility in the context of fulfilling the congregation's mission/vision, but this failed to elicit further conversation. Perhaps this was because the UCWC's mission statement is very general in nature and the role the building serves other than Sunday service is unclear. Another factor was a degree of fear or unease regarding the potential magnitude of the finances associated with moving to a new facility.

It was relevant to recognize that in the past, the congregation has failed to consider the current building via our long and short-range plans. It was also important to note that under either "Go" option, once the decision to "Go" is made, the congregation is all-in, and would need to be committed to a substantial capital campaign and corresponding investment of time and energy.

The number of alternatives was somewhat overwhelming but the taskforce realized that the primary question to be answered was, "Does our current physical plant adequately support our congregation's mission?" This was the question the taskforce continually asked the congregation in its communications. While the taskforce did not receive a clear yes or no answer, it did recognize that the congregation had not yet adequately attempted to adapt the building to our needs. The taskforce also realized that we had not outgrown our building in terms of Sunday services. It should be noted that the congregation is currently in the ministerial search process and this is consuming a great deal of the congregation's attention. It appeared evident to the taskforce and the board after the March 2015 informational meeting that the congregation did not have the interest or energy to support a new building.

Accordingly, the committee has recommended to the Board that UCWC members commit to stay in our current building, undertaking renovations to improve access, utilization, aesthetics, health, and safety also that the UCWC members authorize the Board to initiate the planning process and the capital campaign to fund the effort. Once renovations have been made, the congregation will be in a better position to evaluate the suitability of the physical plant to fulfill our mission.

Considering the taskforce's recommendation and pursuant to Article V of the bylaws of UCWC, the Board of Trustees called a special congregation meeting on May 17th, for the purpose of voting on the following resolution:

Be it resolved, that the UCWC members commit to stay in our current building, 501 South High Street, for a period of at least five years, undertaking renovations to improve access, facility utilization, aesthetics, health and safety.

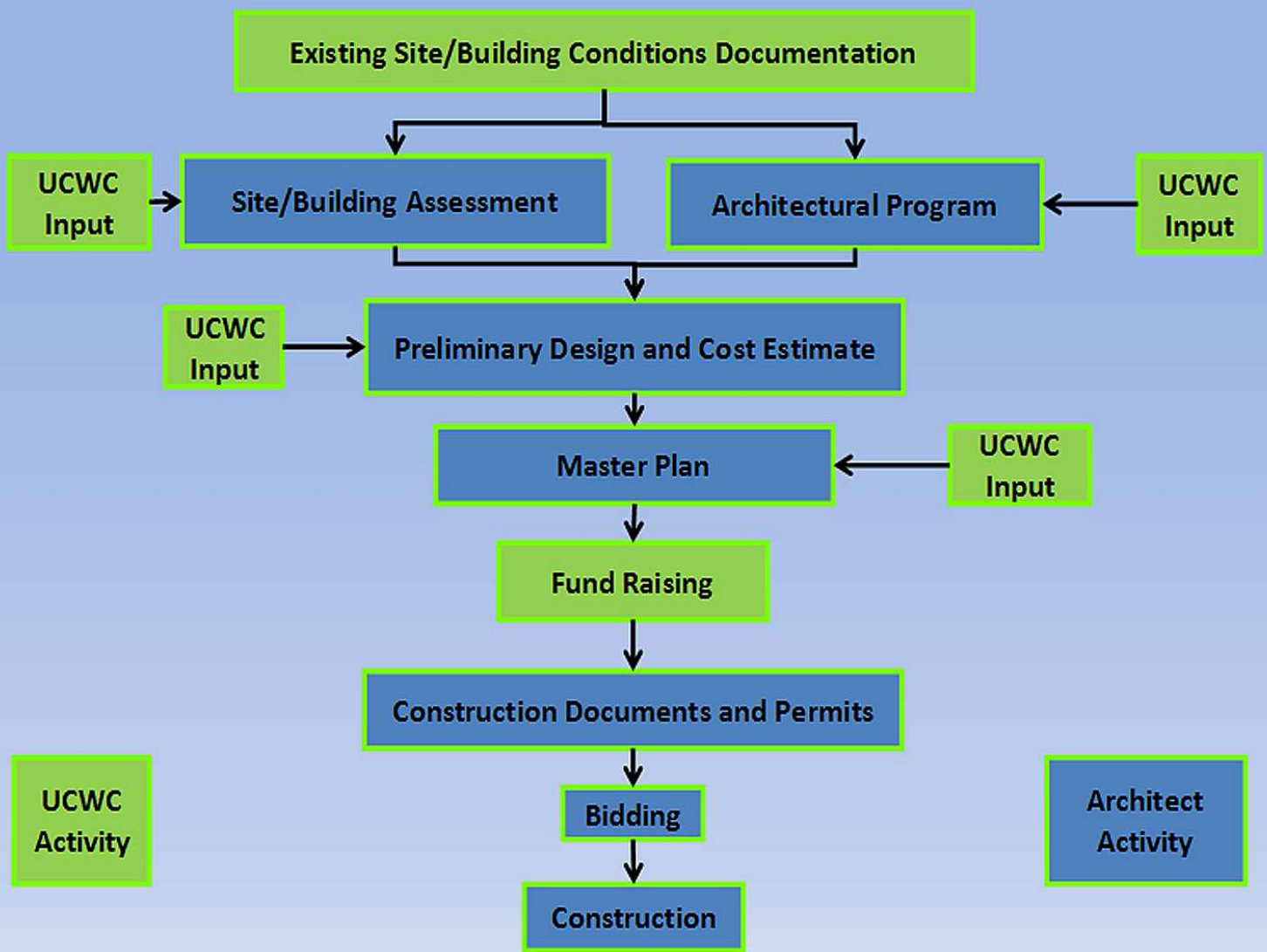
And may it be further resolved, that UCWC members authorize the Board of Trustees to initiate the renovation planning process and the capital campaign to fund the effort.

On May 17th, the congregation voted by an overwhelming majority to approve the resolution. Here ends the responsibility of this taskforce.

I would like to thank the individuals that gave so much of their time and energy to this task. - Lauren Kelly, Alison Kolakowski, Harriet Singer, Michael Werner, Larry Lesser, Inge Leonardos, Sharon Sweitzer, Dirk Troltenier, Heidi Frayer, Fred Frayer, and Rev. Bill Zelazny.

– Mary Yeager, Stay or Go Taskforce chairperson

Planning and Implementing a Major Building Project



Michael Werner

Youth Group Report

Adult Advisors: Marie Steel, Julianne O'Neil

We bridged 4 senior youth to Young Adulthood last year and were left with 3-4 regular participants. 3 of the 4 are senior bridgers this year so we will be left with only 1 person in youth group. Due to the small amount of participation we opted to meet only once a month. There were no incoming 9th graders so we did not get a large group this year.

The Coming of Age Group who will be in high school next year will be taking Owl Class. That will create another conflict of timing for participating in youth group next year. We have had conversations with the RE Director and minister about the conflicting times for next year's Owl Class and Youth Group. We are working out a convenient time for both so that the 4 new youth-group age kids can participate in both next year.

Due to space issues downstairs the Youth Group was asked to give up their space for the large Coming of Age Class. The YG graciously gave up the space and Rev. Bill offered them the use of his office for our meetings.

We started each monthly meeting by lighting the chalice at the beginning of service and then adjourned to our meeting.

The adult advisors met with the former Youth Group Adult Advisors for Counsel and recommendations for having a successful youth group.

ACTIVITIES:

December – Cluster Movie Night and Sleepover - 4 members of our youth group and 15 from surrounding Philly Cluster Youth Groups went to see the Hobbit Movie and came back to church for a sleepover, pizza and more movies.

January 19, 2015 – Community Service Project - Martin Luther King Day of Service – Packaged over 100 lunches for homeless people.

We are planning an intergenerational and cluster Movie Night to show the movie “Selma” with discussions and conversations about Racial Equality.

Some Topics of Conversation

Technology and how it impacts society and youth in general and specifically in the world.

Bullying and what youth can do to make an impact and a difference in their schools.

May 31, 2015 – RE Sunday – Bridging Service for 3 seniors.
– Last Youth Group Event of the Year.

I continue to serve a two-year term as Adult Advisor for the District Youth Steering Committee (DYSC) of our Joseph Priestley District Youth Group Conferences (Cons), even though none of our youth were able to attend any Cons. I am a mentor and advisor for the Youth run cons and have attended 3 Cons this year, in addition to attending DYSC meetings on a monthly basis.

Marie Steel

Transition Team Report

The transition committee serves to promote communication between the congregation and Rev. Bill during this time of change at UCWC. We are a sounding board and a means by which members and friends of UCWC can communicate with Rev. Bill. It is important to maintain communication for all aspects of our mission.

Leader: Beth Daniels

Members: Ed Cohle, Beth Daniels, Fred Frayer, Anthony Penzarella, Mira Tryon, Mindy Ross (new), Rev. Bill Zelazny

Accomplishments:

1. We helped support and "be the ears" for Rev. Bill.
2. We conducted informal surveys re: changes by being listeners.

Challenges:

1. Reaching members for feedback – idea for 2015/16 Fellowship Article asking for feedback from the congregation

The Fellowtarian

Serves as one of the primary communications organs of UCWC.

Committee Chars: Steve & Linda Sander

Accomplishment:

Improved the look of the Fellowtarian through added use of color (since nearly all recipients now get the PDF version rather than the black/white printed version).

Goal:

Yes – all issues were distributed in a timely manner and without major errors.

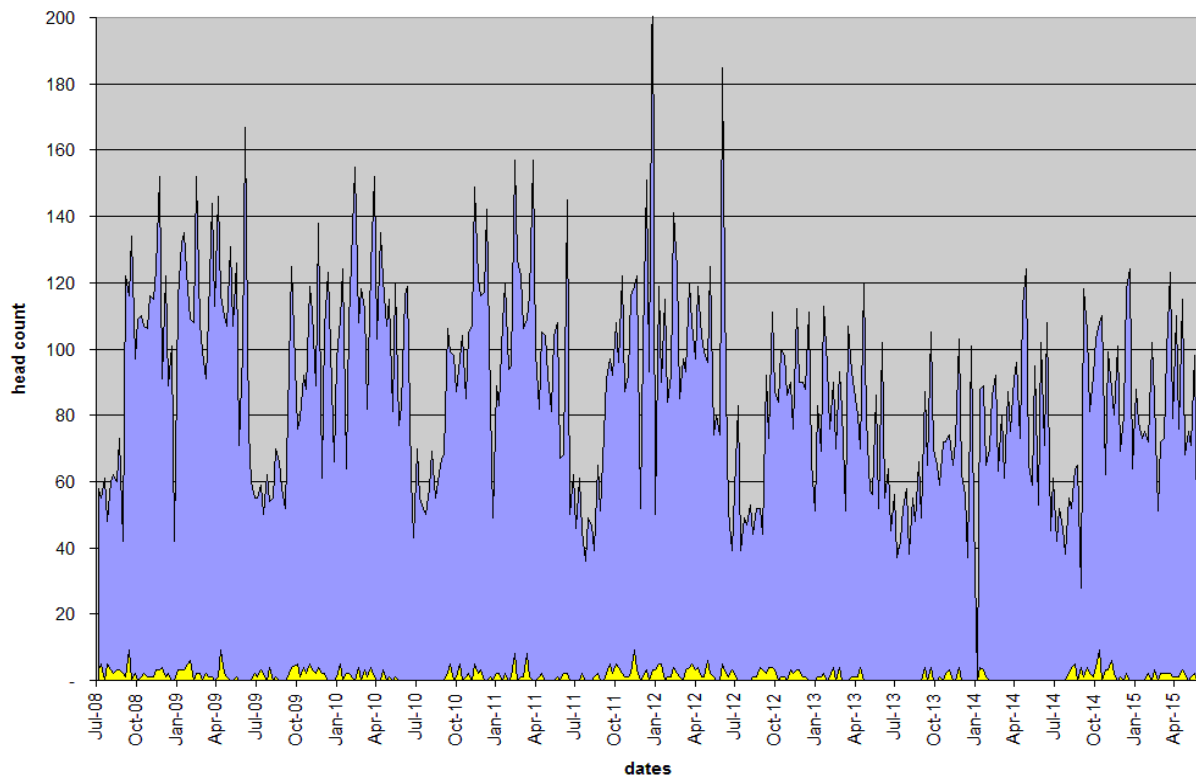
Challenge:

Getting the calendar in synch with the official calendar without errors.

Thank you to all of the individual contributors.

Administrator's Note

This seems a good place to mention that the *Fellowtarian* is e-mailed to 542 subscribers and is mailed to 14 more. *Connections* is e-mailed to 323 subscribers and has readership of 40% on average. Here is a chart of Sunday service attendance records:



Minister Emerita

On April 10, 2015, the congregation voted to call Reverend Kathryn Rohde to be our Minister Emerita.

