



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
IN CHERRY HILL**

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MISSION AND VISION

Mission:

Learning and teaching, to know others and ourselves;

Valuing and embracing the richness of all our diversities;

Serving Others and confronting injustice, achieving more together than each can do alone.

Vision Statement:

We will become a beacon of liberal-religion in Southern New Jersey.

We welcome questioning minds and growing spirits. We nurture civic, social, and environmental justice.





REPORTS FROM THE STAFF AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
IN CHERRY HILL**

Report from the Developmental Minister

Rev. Margret A. O'Neill, minister@uucch.org

This fourth year of this 5-year Developmental Ministry has seen substantial progress on the developmental priorities of culture change for greater connection, trust and abundance. In spite of a third year of the Covid-19 pandemic, this congregation has continued to stay connected, to continue progress on your goals, and make the gradual shift into new patterns to accommodate both a Covid-reality world and generational shifts that deeply affect congregational life.

I continue to work in dual roles as your developmental minister: first, I am your minister, which means I am head of staff, supervisor and team leader for our excellent and highly professional church staff, as well as having direct responsibility for leadership in congregational worship, and providing staff support for the committees and teams in Social Justice, Congregational Relationships, Fellowship Groups, Caring, Arts & Aesthetics, Worship, Finance, Stewardship and the Endowment Trustees, as well as being a member (non-voting) of the Board of Trustees.

As your developmental minister I also serve as your developmental coach – a teacher and facilitator, seeking to support the church in achieving the results you seek, and coaching you in the decisions and changes that you choose to work toward your goals. The developmental work is grounded in the developmental goals you set in November 2019 (creating a culture of trust, connection and abundance) as we have adapted over this time to focus on the work you have defined:

- **Trust:** Clarity in governance and policies is fundamental to establish and maintain trust in lay and ministerial leadership, and across the congregation
- **Connection:** Well bounded covenantal relationship is fundamental to healthy and sustainable connection
- **Abundance:** The culture of abundance is shifting in response to the changing realities of church life, and the Minister 2024 process is grounded in creating an abundant future for this congregation

Trust: The Policy Work Group and the Board continue to define and articulate clarity in roles and relationships, to be codified in policies and procedures to provide clear direction for the church.

Connection: Under leadership of the Congregational Relationships Team, this congregation has engaged in a participatory process that has extended over 18 months, to create a renewed congregational covenant which is presented for congregational adoption in the Congregation Annual Meeting in June. The next step in the relational process will be a congregation-wide reading and discussion of the book, *Set Boundaries, Find Peace: A Guide to Reclaiming Yourself* by Nedra Glover Tawwab in order to support structures and processes of relational accountability.

Abundance: Creative and productive abundance is evident in many areas of church life, including the skills and talents of the staff team, the dedication of members, and the ability to mobilize resources for church priorities. This provides a strong foundation for the Ministerial Search Team to engage in a search for a minister under a contract-to-call agreement, to continue the important work guiding this congregation into the future.

Communication technology remains a major focus in these times, and during this year many of our members have developed new skills in connecting both in person and virtually. There has been a widening of accessibility with nearly all activities available in “dual platform” using Zoom supporting community and increasing access in ways we could not have imagined three years ago.

I continue to sustain my professional resources by actively participating in the Transitional Ministers Chapter of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA), and in the interfaith Interim Ministry Network, where I serve on the Board of Directors and the faculty and participate in curriculum development and conference planning. I have the honor of teaching the skills of congregational transition to my colleagues, both UU and interfaith. I serve as a Coach for colleagues through the UUMA, and also as a mentor for transitional minister colleagues.

I sustain my personal and emotional resources by participating in colleague support groups with other ministers, by staying in close touch with friends and family, by reading and relaxing, and in activities that renew my spirit. I spend some time each month in my work-in-progress home in Hyde Park, New York, as I prepare to move there upon my retirement in summer 2024.

I am grateful to be serving the Unitarian Universalist Church in Cherry Hill, and I look forward to continuing our journey into a future that we create together.

Report from the Director of Lifespan Faith Engagement

Paula Gribble, dre@uucch.org

This year we got to see some respite from the pandemic, and people started returning with their families. We got to welcome several brand-new families as well!

CHILDREN AND YOUTH FAITH ENGAGEMENT (CFE) CLASSES AND PROGRAMMING

We started this year with all ages of children and youth together in one class. Our concentration wasn't on content, but re-connection and bonding. Families were inconsistent about attendance in the fall, but picked up more regular attendance in the Winter and Spring. We were able to then offer two classes, one for children up to age 10 and one for 11 and up. In keeping the classes going, and keeping the children connected, I was able to:

- Offer lessons (assembled by me) that engaged the children and youth in fun and connection.
- Concentrate some of my time on the growing Youth Group, including teaching on Sundays.
- Coordinate with a small set of committed teachers, and welcome two new teachers into the program.
- Build relationships with new families and their children, and help assure their acclamation and welcome.
- Offer more engaging multi-generational worship experiences (working with Rev. M)
- Partner closely with COW to do more social justice work with the children and youth (at a Parents' Night Out).
- Partnered with Grounds to do a work outside clean-up day with the children and youth (during class time).

We were able to do several special events and celebrations, including a Halloween Trunk or Treat, a Holiday Party, the Big Bang Holiday, a Skating Party (at Hot Wheelz), a Parents' Night Out, and an Easter Hunt and Games. At the time of this printing we are also planning a church-wide Game Night June 3.

LIFESPAN FAITH ENGAGEMENT (LFE)

This was a challenging year for adult faith engagement. People were overwhelmed, and over-extended, and they didn't not have the wherewithal for multiple session classes. We had some success with the monthly Theme Discussion, and mostly offered opportunities for connection and fellowship. We did have great success with a class called "What About All These Pronouns?" and a Sunday after church discussion on the UUA Article II changes.

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WELCOMING AND MEMBERSHIP

As part of my portfolio, I continued working with Welcoming and Membership (W&M) this year. Highlights of this year's work can be seen in the W&M Report. Of note, with regards to my support of the team:

- I created a training for Ushers, Greeters, and Welcome Table folks.
- I worked with W&M to develop documented roles and responsibilities for tasks and being a committee member.
- With Rev. M and W&M, we offered a worship on radical hospitality, and how everyone can be more welcoming.
- I continued to work with updating information in the database.

OTHER AREAS

- I continued to work closely with the Leadership Development and Nominating Committee (LDNC). This year I offered planned guidance each month which expanded the committee's own leadership development.
- I assisted LDNC with forming and facilitating the Leadership Council. I started doing planned guidance for them.
- The staff team worked to collaborate on different tasks as needed. This was a particularly challenging year, but staff really supported one another.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/OUTREACH

- I continued to serve as President of the Delaware/Susquehanna Area RE Cluster, and co-president of the JP LREDA Chapter. We have monthly meetings.
- I maintained my professional connections with LREDA, and with colleagues from all over.
- I took the Dimensions of Faith Development and Youth Ministry Practicum classes.

I also announced my leaving, and my last day is June 23. I have loved working with this congregation and will miss it.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paula Gribble, Director of Lifespan Faith Engagement

Report from the Director of Music Ministry

Natasha Steinmacher, music@uucch.org

The Music Ministry program is an integral part of the Ministry of the Arts. It has one of the most expansive reaches of the congregation's programs since everyone who attends worship experiences the energy that it generates.

This year we rejoice in our return to our newly renovated sanctuary! Newly acquired audio and video equipment has enhanced our music and worship experience. The UUCCH Choir, UUkulele Band, and Bell Choir continue in-person weekly rehearsals. Choir rehearsals are multi-platform, as requested.

This year, I worked to nurture the music program to serve the congregation and its congregants through:

- Facilitating and coordinating music for weekly worship services
- Supporting our music program in our newly renovated Sanctuary by learning our new sound system

- Developing two All Music Sunday services that affirm our UU commitment to Beloved Community and uphold our UU sources and principles, one of which included an offering of gifts of appreciation for participants in the music program, and the other celebrated my 20th Anniversary at UUCCH
- Facilitating and directing weekly rehearsals for Choir (allowing for Zoom attendance when requested)
- Continuing to navigate the Choir through covenant with our “Pandendum” to allow for safe music-making by practicing an abundance of caution out of our caring for each other, while also respecting personal choice
- Supporting and collaborating with lay leader Cynthia Ketner for a successful transition out of leadership with the UUkulele Band. The UUkulele Band performed for both Palmyra and Collingswood’s Porchfests, as well as a holiday concert at the Collingswood Perkins Center
- Supporting the UUkulele Band in a shift to a shared leadership model, visioning work, and several new covenant drafts
- Supporting and collaborating with lay leader (and Music Director Emeritus) Ken Ewan for another successful year for the Handbell Choir
- Incorporating congregation members, soloists, and instrumentalists in our Sunday service music
- Facilitating the hiring, in collaboration with church leadership, of our new Collaborative Pianist -Mark Yurkanin
- Encouraging members to share their musical gifts in ways that nurture their spiritual growth and serve the congregation
- Programming and facilitating music for our annual Love Song Sing-Along Event
- Researching, making connections, and bringing forward music from the wider community
- Entering in partnership with the Universal African Dance and Drum Ensemble for the “Spirituals Program,” in which we create a meaningful relationship between the music we sing and a beneficiary organization
- Continued learning about Negro Spirituals and appropriately sharing in worship service
- Working in partnership with the Committee on Music Ministry in sponsorship of a concert with Jim Scott, UU musician and composer
- Continued work with the Committee on Music Ministry toward goals for “LAMP”- Legal Acquisition of Music Project and opportunities to connect with our wider community through music.
- Navigating the Committee on Music Ministry’s transition to a team leadership committee model
- Participating in professional development opportunities through the Unitarian Universalists Association, the Association for UU Music Ministries, and Music that Makes Community
- Serving the Association for UU Music Ministries as Program Director of Member Engagement
- Professional accolades include being hired by the UUA as Music Coordinator for the 2023 General Assembly in Pittsburg, PA

The UUCCH Music Ministry program is focused on supporting transformation and connection in our congregation through music. Music serves as a vessel for our spiritual community’s experiences and initiatives. To that end, I look to support our Music Ministry in the following ways:

- Continued support of the music program in our newly renovated Sanctuary by continuing to learn the new sound system and integrate new video and audio techniques for progressive, dynamic hybrid worship
- Building deeper connections in the congregation through music for those who want to sing or play but cannot make a weekly commitment, for families with young children, for youth, in other words- more flexible opportunities for music-making

- Professional Development learning opportunities around conducting and competence with music writing software
- Continued participation with the UUA General Assembly and the Association for UU Music Ministries annual conferences, as well as other professional development opportunities

I am tasked with providing an inspiring, imaginative, and enthusiastic year-round music program of professional quality that nourishes the hearts, expands the minds, and enriches the congregation's lives.

This spring marked the 20th anniversary of my working as a music professional for UUCCH. Thank you for the continued honor and privilege of serving the music ministry at UUCCH.

Report from the Church Administrator

Julie Rigano, info@uucch.org

I have had a successful onboarding period and transitioned smoothly into serving the work of the congregation. My first few months were focusing on learning the systems in place, the culture and history of the congregation, and the working style of the staff. This has been crucial to my success, and I am grateful to everyone who answered my innumerable questions, staff and lay leadership alike. In my discovery process, I learned not only how the congregation has been operating but more importantly what the congregation wants to move towards.

Some specific accomplishments include:

- Updating Newsgram, including changing formatting and creating new graphics
- Creating dynamic graphics for our website to promote worship services, events, and other important congregational information
- Supporting congregational leadership with clear communication and assistance in technical processes

My goals for continuing to serve this community include increasing our web presence, optimizing our space and systems, and creating clear communications about our systems.

Some specific goals include:

- Updating our website not only with current information, but also with the lens of a visitor looking to learn more about how our congregation operates and works towards our mission
- Creating a social media calendar with engaging material for our Facebook and Instagram pages
- Updating our guides for publicizing internal and external events, including a checklist and timeline of tasks to make lay leadership more accessible
- Organizing the overflowing filing cabinet in the administrator's office

My administrative and communication work support the mission, whether it is something external like creating registration forms for learning opportunities for the community, or internal like organizing the email lists to create efficient communication for the teams.

My work's biggest connection to the vision is updating the website. Our internet presence is our beacon to Southern New Jersey and the world. I am meeting with staff to determine how we can update their specific pages on the website to make it more accessible and appealing for visitors. This work supports our vision as we strive to be the beacon of liberal faith in New Jersey.

Report from the Board of Trustees

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Diane Baker-Hallowell, President

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: dibakerhallowell@gmail.com

Other Committee/Team/TaskForce/Program Participants: Paul Asman (1st VP), Jennie Stone (2nd VP), Kate Sloan, Karen Nowicki, Ken Ewan

Group Accomplishments this Year.

Governance

- Ongoing collaboration with the Policy Work Group to restructure our current Policy manual to better facilitate church governance consistent with our values. New policies are being created and old policies are being updated.
- Planned and held a retreat for orientation of all Trustees in September.
- Continued operations as a six-member Board when one Trustee resigned
- Worked with LDNC to plan and carry out the Annual Meeting

Care for the Facility

- Oversaw completion of the sanctuary renovation and decommissioned the Renovator Task Force. Helped plan the Building Dedication ceremony.
- Supported the Finance and Endowment committees through the budgeting process for the 2023-24 church year. Appointed new Endowment Trustees as needed.
- Interviewed and engaged new legal counsel

Care for the Congregation

- Organized a forum and listening circles for congregational information/input into minister search options. Created and distributed ministerial search team applications. Appointed minister search team to start work Summer 2023 in anticipation of a contract-to-call minister hire in Summer 2024.
- Supported lay volunteer efforts with notes of gratitude for service, monthly Board recognition
- Organized monthly connection reflections for Sunday service by Trustees on a rotating basis
- Created call for GA Delegates and appointed delegates for 2023 GA in Pittsburgh
- Reinstated weekly social hour after Sunday services
- Supported guidelines/protocols proposed by COVID task force for ongoing risk mitigation

Care for the Staff

- Supported the minister in transition of church administration personnel from Mandy Skalski to Julie Rigano
- Supported the DMM and minister in creation/approval of collaborative pianist position
- Supported the DLFE in creation/approval of child care position
- Approved DMM leave of absence to lead music at GA June 2023
- Helped plan 20th Anniversary celebration for DMM
- Worked with minister to write annual appraisal of the developmental ministry for the UUA

Plans for Next Year.

- Ongoing work with the Policy Work Group to create a template for a more holistic and effective Policy manual and write Policies to guide our roles and activities into the future. Create processes that will clarify administrative functions/activities of the Board.
- Ongoing work with the developmental minister and Congregational Relationships Team to encourage congregational support and practice of a new covenant.
- Support Minister Search Team in search process and Achieve hiring a Contract-to-Call minister
- Provide ongoing recognition of volunteer contributions

- Ongoing support of church teams to provide worship, religious education, music, community activism, attractive safe spaces in/around the church, working facilities, financial stability, learning programs, caring support, and all the other wonderful activities that make our community

Group Strengths.

- Shared vision of healthy congregation
- Commitment to developmental ministry
- Depth of experience in various aspects of church life

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

We are actively **Learning** about what a successful Board can do to provide vision and direction to a thriving church community. We are asking congregants about what they **Value**, responding to requests, and integrating understanding into our goals for the next ministry. We are **Serving** our congregation and community by learning how to be more welcoming, more understanding and more inclusive. To be a beacon means having a strong foundation of values and systems that supports our work and those who wish to join us. It means having a clear direction about how our light will shine into the world. The Board is actively working toward clarity around these issues so that our voice will be strong and our light will be bright.



REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, AND TEAMS

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
IN CHERRY HILL**

Report from Arts & Aesthetics

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Sylvia Barclay & Pam Anderson

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: sraebarclay@gmail.com,

Other Committee Participants: Heidi Bernard, Shirlene Abrams, Jane Mahorter, Barbara Flewelling, Lynda Odyssey, Cathy Marsh, Julie Bernd, Sol Drekakot.

Committee Accomplishments this Year.

- Dual format meetings were started once the committee felt comfortable to meet in person.
- Team approach to projects started in March
- A&A members, Sylvia and Lynda participated in the newly formed Leadership Council
- A&A purchased table coverings for the Commons to match the carpeting.
- Members of A&A paid for the renovation of the rescued stained glass chalice which was then installed in a window in the Commons.
- A&A co-ordinated the purchase and installation of a pride stained glass which was installed in a Commons window
- Pam & Sylvia designed a Welcome Table runner.
- Shirlene designed and ordered identification placards for art work in the sanctuary and commons
- A&A purchased new folding tables to be used during the craft show.
- A successful Craft show was held from 11/20-12/26.
- Sylvia assisted in the disposal of unwanted Property Closet items offered to members & Habitat.
- A&A accepted the Susan Carroll watercolor of the church grounds. It was framed and placed on the slat wall.
- Gallery walls were repainted in Butter Pecan color. Paid from A&A profits of the Craft Show.

Plans for Next Year.

- Craft Show will again be held in December of 2023. Beth and Pam will be team leaders.
- Gallery Shows will be re-established following the start of Social Hour and the painting of the Gallery.
- Develop of design for the stairwell leading from the Commons to the Gallery
- Plan a A&A church service for the Fall

Committee Strengths.

- A&A invites members of the congregation, as well as the outside community, to develop Gallery installations
- A&A invites crafters, both members and non-members, to participate in the Holiday Craft Fair
- A&A strives to uphold the architectural parameters of the buildings and it's furnishing

How the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission and an invitation to join

- We welcome questioning minds and growing spirits.
- We nurture civic, social, and environmental justice.
- We invite interested people to come to our meetings or help with our Gallery installations, Craft Fair and other art/craft activities where we learn new craft skills.
- We encourage artists of any type to display their works in our Gallery. Currently we are meeting on the 3rd Tuesday at 1PM. We are considering moving to an evening meeting with a Zoom alternative available in order to attract new members.

Connection to church Vision & Mission

- The Gallery installations promote conversations and dialog among viewers, helping us learn about each other and build community. A wide variety of displays, including fine arts, crafts, everyday

objects, and historical items, help viewers to see familiar objects in new ways, evoking reactions ranging from amusements and nostalgia to contemplation and appreciation.

- Photos and postings of gallery activities on the church website and Facebook provide information to a wider audience. Postings to the Cherry Hill Sun about the Craft Fair gave publicity about the church and it's activities
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Report From the Caring Committee

Committee Co-Chairs: Lisa Winkler and Paula Horton

Contact Information for Co-Chairs and Rev Margret: caring@uucch.org

Other Committee Members: Linda Coolsen, Lynda Dillon, Pat Fazio, Dawn Gardner, Deb Giffin, Marilyn Masur, Pat Naylor, Nancy Newcomer, Marion Reigle, Susan Renton-Dice, Marla Russell, Anne Norton

Committee Accomplishments this Year:

We coordinated outreach to members/friends of UUCCH on an ongoing basis in the following ways:

- **Contact with members of the congregation:**
 - Caring Committee members send cards, emails, and texts of sympathy, get well, encouragement, new baby, and birthday, based on weekly Joys and Concerns that were shared and also based on news obtained via other avenues of communication. Nancy Newcomer coordinates the card writing. Thank you Nancy! We also keep in touch by phone with members who may be isolated and alone, so they continue to be a part of our community. We also send holiday cards to this group during the year.
 - In a post-covid world, we continue in-person visits to residents of Medford Leas and others who are house-bound due to mobility issues etc. Visitors are vaccinated and have no recent history of covid symptoms or exposure.
 - Each member of the congregation was contacted by a member of the Caring Committee in the fall. Contact was made by phone if possible, with a follow-up email if the member was not reached by phone. We shared an update on items such as renovation status and covid precautions that were in place. We asked how members were doing during the pandemic, and identified needs that needed to be addressed.
- Bob Downie and his wife Patricia Bourke presented an “**End of Life Planning Workshop**” in November on Zoom. Thank you to Bob and Patty!
- We provided **transportation** to Sunday Service and medical appointments for those who do not drive or whose ability to drive is limited due to an illness or surgery. We focused on rides to church for people who don't drive after the Sanctuary opened last April. Pat Fazio is our coordinator for rides. Thank you Pat!
- We provided **meals** to congregants in need, ordinarily due to an illness or surgery. Marilyn Masur is our meal coordinator. Thank you Marilyn!
- We arranged and hosted special celebrations: Thanksgiving (Hosted by Marla Russell), Christmas (hosted by Reverend Margret), and Tea & Odyssey (presented by Shelly Albini in October and Holly Willet in April). Thank you to our hosts and presenters!
- We assisted with **planning and hosting of 3 Memorial Services**.
- We supported the Children's Religious Education program by participating in Trunk N Treat.
- **Holiday Activities:**
 - In December, we send thank you notes to non-Committee members who have helped us in our work during the year.
 - We also send gift cards to a few members of our congregations who are in need.

- o We deliver gifts to Medford Leas residents. This year we chose Amaryllis plants.
- The Chairs of the Committee host a luncheon in June for the members of the Committee, to thank them for their service on behalf of the Committee.
- We updated and maintained a list of Resources that provides names of agencies and services available to congregants in need within Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester counties.
- **Others we want to thank:** Thank you to Deb Giffen for keeping our Dropbox up-to-date, to Susan Renton-Dice for being our Covid Task Force liaison, to Lynda Dillon for being our Joys and Concerns liaison, to Marla Russell for her help with the Bulletin Board, and to Pat Naylor for her extensive help with Pastoral Care and maintaining contact with Medford Leas administration and residents there. Thank you to Linda Coolsen, Marion Reigle, and Anne Norton, Dawn Gardner and all our members for help with our various projects including card sending, Memorial Service reception hosting, phone calls to members, and other help, as needed. We are very grateful.

Plans for Next Year:

- We plan to continue making phone calls to each congregant, once a year.
- We are planning a Caring Committee Service for August. The theme will be “Resilience: Overcoming in Uncertain Times”.
- We hope to restart our monthly luncheon with residents at Medford Leas, when permitted by the facility.

Committee Strengths:

We have a committed group of Committee members, most of whom take responsibility for a particular aspect of the Committee’s work, such as coordinating rides or coordination meals. Many members also participate in providing rides, meals, making calls, visiting and sending cards to congregants. We also have the help of several others in the congregation.

Describe how the group’s activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

UUCCH is a caring, inclusive, community and being a part of that community, the Caring Committee actively participates in its philosophy to help one another. Many congregants who aren’t members of the Committee have assisted us in our efforts to achieve our goals. Further, our committee embodies all of the UUA principles.

Report from Committee on Music Ministry

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Natasha Steinmacher, Harry LaBelle, Bill Charlier

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: hlabelle@aol.com; 6092177875

Other Committee/Team/TaskForce/Program Participants: Ken Ewan, Stacy LaBelle

Group Accomplishments this Year.

- Completed Legal Acquisition of Music Project [L.A.M.P.]. Music which needed but did not have legal copies were identified, sources located, music was ordered, received, and filed ready for performance.
- A committee member located, purchased, picked up, delivered, and positioned a new horizontal file needed to house music purchased through LAMP.
- Committee members assisted with the Love Song Sing Along event (in person and via Zoom), providing both technical and performance assistance. CoMM provided pizza for attendees. Attendance estimated approximately 50 persons.
- Committee members assisted with the Saturday evening performance by noted UU musician Jim

Scott, providing set up, technical support, and tear down. In addition, a Member housed Jim the night before his performance, saving significant support cost. CoMM provided the Jim Scott honorarium, partially reimbursed. Members agreed that the Saturday evening concert was more appropriate to Jim's strengths than a more formal Sunday service.

- Because of personnel constraints, the CoMM passed a motion to suspend the CoMM charter indefinitely and to reform itself as The Music Ministry Team, an Informal Team Structure with Ensemble Leadership .

Plans for Next Year.

Continue to support UUCCH music programs and DMM needs as requested or identified.

Group Strengths.

Managerial background and professional music experience.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

The committee will address this once the new Church Covenant is published.

Report from Congregational Relationships Team (formerly Right Relations Committee)

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Libby Pontillo

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: pianissimo@comcast.net

Other Committee/Team/Task Force/Program Participants: Pam Anderson, Cheryl Dunican-Hein, Marilyn Masur, Meggie Moore (through 1/23), Lynn Richter

Group Accomplishments this Year.

In November 2022, the Right Relations Committee received approval from the Board of Trustees to change our name to the Congregational Relationships Team, in order to better reflect our group's purpose of encouraging and supporting healthy interpersonal relationships in the congregation.

This church year, we concluded a 16-month process of covenant renewal based on input from more than 80 members of the congregation. Several "World-Cafe"-style workshops in October 2022, two services focusing on covenant in December, and three additional writing sessions in January 2023 combined to build on responses obtained from Listening Circles in early 2022. These gatherings provided the inspiration and material from which we crafted the draft of a renewed congregational covenant. We shared this draft with the Board in February, obtaining their consent to submit it to a congregational vote at the Annual Meeting in June.

We introduced this draft to the broader church community at the March 19th Sunday service. Several congregants who participated in covenant creation shared their reflections at services in April and May 2023.

In addition, our team read Nedra Glover Tawwab's book, *Set Boundaries, Find Peace*, recommended to us by Revs. Sana Saeed and Sunshine Wolfe at their "Healthy Boundaries" workshop in February 2022. We will offer

congregants an initial "pilot" reading group around this book in late June-early July 2023 and several additional groups in the next church year. Interested readers are encouraged to obtain copies of the book and read it

over the summer in preparation for discussion.

Plans for Next Year.

In addition to facilitating the reading groups on *Set Boundaries*, members of our team are interested in participating in a UUA workshop on boundaries. Another of our goals is to integrate the covenant more fully into congregational life through ongoing member education via workshops and presentations.

Group Strengths.

Among the strengths of our committee is our members' deep commitment to the covenantal basis of our faith. We view living peacefully in community as a spiritual practice which can extend into the larger world outside our congregation. We are experienced in and committed to the process of deep listening; current committee members have served many years as either facilitators or participants in Fellowship Groups.

Members of this committee work well collaboratively and share a commitment to maintaining confidentiality and respecting the dignity of others. The commitment of Rev. Margret to mentoring us in our work has been invaluable. Supporting her as she coaches our congregation toward creating a culture of greater accountability, resilience, and trust remains part of our mission.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

A major purpose of this committee is to encourage respectful, direct, and open communication among members of the congregation. We are continually learning, gaining insight into the dynamics of our community, and seeking ways to engage the transformative, rather than destructive, power of conflict. We strive for acceptance of one another in a community of mutual respect and caring, bolstered by a framework of healthy boundaries. Over the past two years, our congregation's success in co-creating a renewed covenant serves to demonstrate that we can achieve much more together than any of us can do alone.

Report from the Congregational Outreach Workshop (COW)

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Linda Delany

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: ldelany0651@gmail.com

Other Committee/Team/TaskForce/Program Participants: Sue Camlin, Lynda Dillon, Linda Carden, Val Saldwin, Sue Van Alstyne

Group Accomplishments this Year.

- In April 2022 we collected 50 bags of 7 items and the committee members added a loaf of bread to each bag which were given to the Camden Neighborhood Center, we also donated \$100 from our account, in 2021 we had packed 70 bags for the Camden Neighborhood Center, This year April 2023 we collected 34 bags for the Camden Neighborhood Center again giving the nonprofit \$100.
- April, 2023 10 members and friends planted trees in Camden with the NJ Tree Foundation
- October, 2022 7 members and friends planted trees in Camden with the NJ Tree Foundation - we also sent them a check for \$100.
- Jan & Feb. 2023 - collected winter clothing for Joseph's House, a homeless shelter in Camden. Collection was smaller than last year.
- Jan & Feb, 2022 - collected winter clothing for Joseph's House and sent them a check for \$100.
- Dec.2022 - Annual toy collection for Sacred Heart,Camden toy sale
- October,2022 - Raised funds for The Trevor Project - the largest prevention hotline for LGBTQ youth.
- July, 2022 - Tools for School Raised funds to provide backpacks for students in need . 15 congregants contributed to this outreach. We donated \$100. to the organization
- June, 2022 - In partnership with the Community of South Jersey we collected feminine hygiene products for women in need.

- March, 2023 - COW partnered with RE - 9 children attended and we packed party bags (33) to give to the non-profit Unforgotten Haven. The bags contained items needed for a birthday party for families who would not be able to afford those items.
- Due to lower numbers of collection items our committee did donate to the Camden County Food Pantry \$100 but did not have the collection we had the past year.
- Due to lower numbers of collected items of pet food and supplies we did not continue that collection.
- Due to the lack of items collected for the Help Fight Period Poverty outreach our committee will discontinue the collection for this year.
- The ongoing activities are:
- Cherry Hill Food and Outreach. On the 4th Sunday of the Month food is collected. Items needed are advertised in the newsgram. Congregants work at the food pantry designated times of the year. UUCCH is a founding member of Cherry Hill Food and Outreach. It was established in 2006.
- Book Smiles - New and Gently used books are collected in the book smiles bin on the side of Unitarian House. There are now opportunities to sort books at the book smiles warehouse and we hope to have volunteers for that effort.
- Cherry Hill Women's Center - In the past COW sponsored escort training for the women's center. Currently 2 congregants escort at the Center.

Plans for Next Year

- We would like to work with RE for future outreaches and service projects.
- Quite a few of our projects were less successful than past years so we will not continue with Tools for Schools, the HER project or the Trevor Project. The Neighborhood Feed A Child Was very disappointing but much needed so will decide on that outreach in the future.
- Our committee last spring reached out to the congregation hoping a group would step forward to continue the backpack collection UUCCH had done for years. Due to Covid we switched to Tools for Schools. Since our group is small 5 people and only 2 under 70 we did not feel we could take on the backpack collection from the past. We did not get volunteers so we went back to Tools for Schools without much success., We hope to partner with Unforgotten Haven for a school supply collection of some type this summer.
- We would like to do more service type projects and welcome suggestions

Group Strengths.

Our group advertises in the newsgram and on facebook what we are doing. The Worship Assistant highlights our activities and our activities are in the Order of Service. We have a COW table in the Commons where we place pictures of our activities and have handouts. Our activities are on the UUCCH web page. As chair I reach out to new members who express an interest in community outreach. So far only Val Saldwin has joined our committee. We have been meeting in the afternoon as some members prefer not to drive at night. In the past we have had night meetings, placed notice in the newsgram without any success. We are open to night meetings. Our meetings are in person and on zoom.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

We thought the Trevor Project was a good way for congregants to embrace diversity. All of our collections with Camden partners are serving others and confronting the injustice of poverty. We feel our acclamation "service is our law" is our calling.

Report from Committee on Racial and Economic Equity (CREE)

Point of Contact: Susan Druckenbröd & Bill Warner through June 2023, pending for 2023-24.

Email/contact information for POC: cree@uucch.org

Other Committee Participants: Cheryl Dunican-Hein, Rohn Hein, Rosemary White, Jennifer Lauby, Mahdi ibn Ziyad, Ruth Biemer, Amelie Harris McGeehan, Lucie Lenore, Nancy Hillman, Jill Chiciak, Sue Camlin, Val Sadwin, Carol Suboleski, Holly Willett, Peg Willard and others. Rev. Margret is a consistent and active member.

Committee Accomplishments this Year

- CREE used the Social Witness policy (passed by the BOT in 2022) to endorse/co-sponsor community events in a timely fashion.
- Since CREE has several active task forces, we have been meeting every other month, rather than monthly. Pre-COVID, CREE met in person and switched to Zoom during the pandemic. We continue to meet via Zoom, and this seems to suit the active members.
- We helped initiate the 2022 VOTE FORWARD initiative by hosting the Sept 1, 2022. “Co-Creating UU Supper Night.”
- CREE chose to support the VOTE FORWARD efforts in GA. UUCCH members and friends mailed 640 pro-vote letters to low-engagement voters in that pivotal state.
- CREE members engage with LGBTQIA+ youth advocacy coalitions, members participated in several community/schools meetings and advocacy events.
- We continue to use CREE’s covenant as a guide for meeting check-in or reflections. CREE leadership also has a covenant.
- We explored, but put on hold, lighting options for outdoor events.
- We bought a cart to hold and easily transport CREE materials.
- CREE is represented at Leadership Council meetings and is very willing to partner with other UUCCH groups. While most of our partnering this year was with other community groups, CREE has previously partnered with COW, Womyn & Religion, and Music Ministry, among others.
- CREE task forces maintained current partnerships with other community organizations and developed additional relationships, for example, Rise Against Hate, Kol Ami (formerly M’kor Shalom) and the UU Congregation of the South Jersey Shore, which has joined in the CREE Immigration Task Force.
- CREE members participated in many rallies off-site including those for reparations, reproductive rights, gun violence prevention, emancipation of enslaved people, LGBTQIA+ rights, and more.
- The Immigration Task Force worked with an interfaith group of faith communities to provide furniture, transportation, ESL, computers, cribs, bicycle, employment support, recreational companionship and friendship. Multiple UUCCH members are working with an Afghan family of 12 in Glassboro.
- New task force, [the Environmental Team](#), formed in the winter of 2023. The Environmental Team has already co-led an Earth Day Sunday service and post-service computer access for environmental petitions and activism. Team members participated in educational forums and council/commissioner meetings. Through the Environmental Team’s efforts, UUCCH members and friends sent 120 cards to legislators thanking them for establishing an organic farming board.
- CREE has members participating on several UU FaithAction NJ task forces: Gun Violence, Reparations, Criminal Justice, Immigration and Environmental Justice.
- UUCCH is well recognized in the community as an advocate for social justice.

Reparations Task Force

- The UUCCH Reparations Task Force is the model upon which UU FaithAction NJ developed its own Reparations Task Force.
- The Reparations Task Force created and distributed many paper and electronic brochures: “New Jersey: Slave State of the North.”
- The Reparations Task Force held public forum “DNA of Racism: Jim Crow in NJ” and co-led a Sunday service “DNA of Racism.”

Reimagining Public Safety Task Force

- The Reimagining Public Safety Task Force is active, with Rise Against Hate and other local groups re: the Paterson police-involved killing and Cherry Hill police-involved death of citizens experiencing mental health issues. This includes communication with local officials to learn more about ongoing initiatives to promote including behavioral health professionals during law enforcement calls and to promote greater behavioral health awareness and use of alternatives.
- The Reimagining Public Safety Task Force staffed a table in the Commons for Mental Health Awareness Month. UUCCH will also be represented at the Camden County Mental Fair.
- Reimagining Public Safety Task Force members participated in the UU FaithAction NJ Fall Issues Conference, providing a short presentation on our collaborative initiatives with local groups in 2020 and 2021 on Behavioral Mental Health and Youth Restorative Justice.

Plans for Next Year

- We will be actively recruiting for new leadership. Susan Druckenbrod has taken on leadership with UU FaithAction NJ. Bill Warner is nominated for the BOT and, if, elected, will continue as a member of CREE but not as a co-chair.
- CREE will assess what priorities will be ongoing.
- CREE will assess initiatives to supporting voters’ rights/democracy in which to engage.
- Leadership skill development will be encouraged in committee members.
- The Immigration Task Force will continue to support immigrants’ rights, dignity and acceptance. The Immigration Task Force plans to assist Christ Our Light’s efforts to sponsor a refugee family in the Cherry Hill area.
- The Reimagining Public Safety will continue advocating for mental health response options and building on coalitions.
- The Reparations Task Force will provide community events on historic and current structural racism and disparities. The NJ Reparations bill is currently not advancing; however, the Reparations Task Force and others advocate for and are acting in the spirit of the bill.
- The Environment Team will continue to focus on environmental justice, specifically concerning waste management & incineration and stopping LNG transport.

Committee Strengths

- CREE members possess passion and commitment for racial and economic equity.
- The group frequently shares resources with one another, and generally works well together in the spirit of cooperative collaboration.
- CREE enjoys collaborating with other UUCCH groups and committees.
- We are fortunate to have a minister who supports CREE, engages in social justice activities, and plans Sunday services to highlight various social justice issues. Furthermore, the entire staff at UUCCH supports CREE’s social justice efforts.

Describe how the group’s activities connect to our church’s vision and mission:

The purpose of CREE is to confront injustices of a racial and/or economic nature. CREE’s covenant reflects and attempts to live into the 8th Principle. The group attracts individuals who are disturbed by the existence

of injustice and want to see change. We recognize we can accomplish more together and in partnership with other groups than any of us can do alone. This is often slow work that does not offer quick rewards. CREE's strives for structural change. Legislative and social improvement take persistent time, money and resources. However, this calling does afford CREE participants the gratification of working with others including people from other faith traditions who also want to see change. This can be experienced as inspiring, socially supportive, and spiritually uplifting. We welcome new participants and encourage anyone interested in becoming involved to contact us at CREE@uucch.org.

Report from Environmental Team (under CREE and Social Justice)

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Sharon Hardy & Walt Nadolny

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: Sharon.hardy@gmail.com

Other Committee/Team/TaskForce/Program Participants: We have 30 members of a google group/email list

Group Accomplishments this Year

- Formed a google group and have 32 members as of 4/27/23. Send out action items and alerts on local environmental issues. Post the NJFA EJT newsletter monthly.
- Sharon, Walt and Nina Scarpa have attended several educational forums and council/commissioner meetings in Q1 to raise concerns and make comments.
- Conducted a Thank You Postcard campaign in conjunction with NJ Faith Action EJT. Developed mailing labels for state legislators in congregant districts and mailed 120 cards thanking legislators for voting to establish an organic farming board.
- Walt Nadolny posted 2 OpEd pieces on whale deaths NOT being related to Offshore Wind survey vessels which were run in several national newspapers.
- Participated in Earth Day Service and had volunteers at computer stations during social hour for congregants to take actions supporting environmental issues. Led bird walk in the Arboretum and documented 25 bird species.

Plans for Next Year

Working closely with the EJTF of NJ Faith Action, we have several state-wide Environmental Justice goals to work towards. In addition, we will work specifically on issues of waste management; influencing local and state officials to move away from incineration and stopping Covanta from any expansion. We will also work towards stopping LNG transport through the area by rail or truck.

We do not plan to hold meetings, but to work through posting opportunities to take action locally in person or through petitions, letters, political lobbying or other online actions.

Group Strengths.

Walt has a strong background in environmental issues and we work closely with the NJ Faith Action EJT leadership. Sharon is maintaining communications for the google group; members are invited to take action and share concerns and initiatives.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

We serve the mission through **"Serving Others and confronting injustice, achieving more together than each can do alone"**. We serve the vision by **"nurturing civic, social, and environmental justice."**

We seek to make it easy to keep congregants and friends informed of issues and make taking action easy.

Report from the Gift and Endowment Fund

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Paul Dice

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: pdf701@comcast.net

Other Committee/Team/Task Force/Program Participants: Helen Ewan, Keith Spigel, Connie Roggio, Valerie Sadwin

Group Accomplishments this Year

Article III of the Enabling Resolution of the Gift and Endowment resolution states: The Gift and Endowment Fund shall be the property of the UUCCH. The Gift and Endowment Fund shall be administered as a fund, separately from all other property of the UUCCH, for the purposes and in the manner stated herein. The Gift and Endowment Fund shall consist of:

- (1) assets received by way of a will, a bequest, a gift, or in any other legal manner and
- (2) earnings, income, dividends, interest, and distributions from those assets.

The Trustees are mindful of our responsibilities for oversight, setting risk tolerance, acting as risk managers, making socially responsible investments.

The Trustees are appointed for three-year terms with a two-term maximum. In November, the term of Rob MacIver expired. Rob was a knowledgeable and dedicated member of our group. Valerie Sadwin was appointed by the Board of Trustees in November for her first three-year term. Paul Dice's second term expires at the end of June. He was an able and dedicated Chair of the Trustees and he will be missed. Paul Asman will take a seat as a Trustee starting at the end of May.

Except for a small checking account for immediate needs, all funds are invested in the Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment. This fund invests in companies that align with Unitarian Universalist Values. Below are the financing objectives of the UUCEF:

The Fund seeks to achieve consistent returns within a moderate risk tolerance over the long term, sufficient to allow Congregations take regular distributions and maintain the value of principal after adjustment for inflation and after all expenses. These objectives are consistent with the needs of many UU Congregations, which typically draw 4.5% to 5% of their investment balance each year to support their activities.

UUCCH withdraws 4% per month for operating expenses.

During the renovation process, the congregation was presented with two opportunities to contribute to the cost of the renovation. The Endowment Trustees passed a resolution to cover the amount of money not immediately paid.

The amount approved in the first fund raising drive: \$147,920.

The amount repaid to date: \$72,829

The balance due: \$75,091

The amount approved in the supplemental drive: \$46,892.

The amount repaid to date: \$16,583

The balance due: \$30,309

Quarterly, the funds repaid are forwarded to the UU Common Endowment Fund.

The UUCCH Endowment Fund also disbursed funds for needed equipment replacements.

A disbursement in the amount of \$16,000 was made for air conditioning compressor replacement.

A disbursement in the amount of \$65,000 was made for fire suppression pump replacement.

Plans for Next Year.

The UUCCH Endowment Trustees will continue its association with the UU Common Endowment Fund.

We will work to assure the financial stability of the church, to assure the long-range financial future of the church, and to “fund capital needs and special projects that further the mission of the church.” (enabling document)

We will continue to be a source of support to the Board of Trustees. We will continue to encourage members to consider UUCCH in their estate planning.

Group Strengths.

The strength of this Committee is in the varied experience of the members in the financial field and in their broad and deep experience in the life and history of our Church.

Describe how the group’s activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

Everything the Gift and Endowment does makes our mission and vision possible. The stewardship of this group makes sure that the care and nourishment needed for growth and stature in our area continues into the future.

The table below shows the balances in the Endowment Funds since 2019.

	6/30/19	6/30/20	4/30/21	4/30/22	3/31/23
Restricted Endowment Accounts					
Betsy Nemser	\$17,089	\$10,142	\$10,270	\$10,287	\$10,301
Piano Fund	\$945	\$854	\$864	\$866	\$762
Gene Draper	\$10,101	\$9,947	\$10,073	\$8,589	\$8,600
Total Restricted Endowments	\$28,135	\$20,942	\$21,208	\$19,741	\$19,663.00
Unrestricted Endowment	\$1,653,555	\$1,684,015	\$1,402,327	\$1,199,084	\$1,059,823
Total Endowment Balance	\$1,681,690	\$1,704,957	\$1,423,535	\$1,218,826	\$1,079,486

The table below shows the interest and appreciation of the Unrestricted Endowment for the years since 2019.

	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023 Thru March
Unrestricted Endowment					
Avg. Balance	\$1,122,681	\$1,639,232	\$1,641,925	\$1,360,435	\$1,045,426
Interest and Appreciation	\$62,932	\$20,777	\$306,981	-\$112,822	\$47,264
% Avg. Balance	5.61%	1.27%	18.70%	-8.29%	4.52%
Distributed to UUCCH Board of Trustees	\$26,048	\$42,030	\$54,209	\$53,660	\$40,878

Report from Everyday Spiritual Practice Discussion Group

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Robert Schindler

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: robert.schindler@rutgers.edu

Other Committee/Team/Task Force/Program Participants: Paul Dice, Sue Renton-Dice, Peter Knerr, Phyllis Knerr, Judy Isaacs, Louise Marshall Kelly, Patty Lynn, Nancy Sue Hillman, Armandine Kelly, and others

Group Accomplishments this Year

We experimented with some new sources of essays. In September, we read and discussed the first chapter of *The Miracle of Mindfulness*, by Thich Nhat Hanh. From October through April, we read and discussed the seven essays in the book, *The Seven Principles in Word and Worship*, edited by Rev. Ellen Brandenburg. We wrote discussion questions for each of these essays, and had enjoyable and worthwhile discussions.

During this year, we phased out the Thursday meeting option and had only one meeting option, the third Saturday of the month, from 10-11:30am over Zoom. Attendance at these meetings ranged from 6 to 9 people.

We have listed our meetings on the Meetup social media platform. We have had attendees from Meetup, and we currently have 160 Meetup followers. In addition, the decline of covid during this year has allowed us to restore the monthly book table at Sunday services. At this table in the Commons, we promote the group and sell (at cost) copies of the books we are discussing during the year.

Plans for Next Year

For each of our eleven meetings (September through July) of the 2023-2024 year, we plan to read and discuss selected essays among the 60 essays included in the books *Everyday Spiritual Practice* (edited by Rev. Scott Alexander) and *Faithful Practices* (edited by Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom).

Our tentative plan is to keep the Saturday morning meetings over Zoom, and re-establish the Thursday evening meetings (7:30-9:00pm) in person, in the Horsch Room. The same essay is discussed at each of these two monthly meetings. The purpose of having two is to give participants the option as to which meeting they'd like to attend. Our plan is to use Meetup more actively to promote both meetings, and in particular the Thursday evening in-person meetings.

Group Strengths

One strength of the Everyday Spiritual Practice Discussion Group stems from the nature of essays we discuss. Each essay is of a length that enables it to be read aloud in 15-20 minutes. Similar to the length of many sermons, this seems an amount of material that can provide depth, richness, and interest without being overwhelming. The essays from *Everyday Spiritual Practice* and *Faithful Practices* are written mostly by UU clergy, with an occasional essay by an extremely experienced UU layperson. This separate authorship of the essays gives each essay a freshness of perspective that cannot be duplicated by reading multiple chapters of a book written by a single author.

Further, each of the essays in *Everyday Spiritual Practice* and *Faithful Practices* is written by a religious person about his or her own personal spiritual practice. The editors of these books have skillfully commissioned the essays so that they range across many typical areas of life such as exercising, romantic relationships, parenting, grieving, preparing and eating food, buying clothes, and expressing oneself through the arts. The result of this is that each essay stands as a real-life illustration of effective spiritual practice. Each is an invitation to observe and reflect, with a gentleness that is rarely present among books that claim to teach spirituality.

A second strength of the group comes from the structure of our meetings. As in the UU fellowship groups, our group uses the technique of deep listening. For each “round,” a person speaks and then gives the floor to the next person. When everyone has spoken, then the next round begins. There is no explicit responding to any one person’s comments. Typically, each meeting consists of six rounds. The first round is check-in. The second round is reading aloud the month’s essay; usually, each person reads two paragraphs. The third through fifth rounds involve speaking in response to stimulating questions about the essay, and the sixth round is each person’s reflections, reactions, and/or anything else he/she wants to say.

We typically find that the hour-and-a-half-long meetings go by very fast. The activity of listening to other people speak from the heart is engaging, often moving. We are repeatedly struck by the depth possible in the topic and by the many dimensions and personally relevant aspects of the topic that become apparent.

How the group’s activities connect to our church’s vision and mission

From this group we come to more deeply know others and ourselves. The deep listening format leads us to relax our opinions and self-concerned thoughts and draws us in an accepting way into the minds of others. This not only increases our respect for others, but it opens our own minds. It has been, and continues to be, deeply satisfying to see the personal spiritual growth that is encouraged and facilitated by this group.

Report from the Fellowship Groups

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: John Nielsen, Libby Pontillo, Larry Solow

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: jnielsen401@gmail.com

Other Committee Participants: Diane Baker-Hallowell, Lynn Richter, Paula Horton

Group Accomplishments this Year.

Focusing on topics aligned with the church’s monthly worship themes, we coordinated five Fellowship Groups (FGs) with approximately 35 people participating. During these turbulent times, we continued to incorporate the opportunity for participants to share “What’s on your heart?”—a safe space to voice feelings about themselves, the church, the country, and the world within the safe, “deep listening” environment of the FG.

We navigated the return to in-person/dual platform/Zoom only groups during this year. With grace and compassion shown by all, each of these different ways to be in community were effective.

This year, some FG facilitators were able to utilize their facilitation skills to support invitational “Listening Circles,” designed to gather input from the church community. Created as part of a church-wide process to renew our behavioral covenant, these circles asked participants to identify desired values and behaviors for today and the future.

Plans for Next Year.

Our plan is to “stay the course” in the coming year. We will continue to explore how different meeting venues can be utilized to maximize the opportunity for any interested person to participate in FGs.

We will continue to link FG topics to church worship service themes or other relevant topics. We also hope to grow our facilitator ranks so we are prepared to hold as many groups as are needed to satisfy the needs of those who wish to participate.

Group Strengths

The group of facilitators work splendidly as a self-organizing team. With no defined “chair,” members willingly contribute their skills and experience to “spread the wealth” and get the work done without putting an undue burden on any one person.

The monthly planning meeting provides a way for facilitators to share our own experiences and support each other. Rev. Margret’s active support, participation, and facilitation is valued and appreciated.

Describe how the group’s activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

Fellowship Groups are a fertile seedbed of right relations within our community. They are centered around the spiritual practice of being fully present to one another. As such, they are also one of the best places to gain a sense of trust and connection, and to make lasting friendships within the congregation. By listening deeply, without debate, to the feelings and experiences of others, we learn from their wisdom, come to value them in the fullness of their humanity, and serve our community by building deeper connections as we recognize ourselves in one another.

The Fellowship Group’s covenantal agreements, structure, and process are designed to be inclusive and welcoming. Participants need not be members, or even “friends” of the church to attend our groups – they are open to the community at large.

Report from Finance Committee

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Nicole Gillespie

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: nicolemgillespie@gmail.com

Other Committee Participants: Dave Gift, Lee Phillips, Ken Slight, John Nielsen

Staff Support: Rev. Margret A. O’Neill, Julie Rigano

Committee Accomplishments this Year

The finance committee welcomed John Nielsen as a new member in FY2023. Our committee's focus continues to be maintaining financial systems and accuracy of financial reporting, ensuring that assets are protected, spending is properly approved and maintaining confidentiality of donor records. We facilitated the congregation's application for an ERC (Employee Retention Credit) in the amount of \$16,333. Our application was accepted and we received a payment of \$12,094 on August 16, 2022.

Plans for Next Year

Next year, the Finance Committee will continue to work on clarifying and documenting financial policies and procedures with the goals of creating a robust, flexible and transparent financial system that can evolve as our congregation grows.

Report from Flower Ministry Committee

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Heidi Bernard

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: heidi.bernard@verizon.net

Other Committee Participants: Shirlene Abrams, Sylvia Barclay, Barbara Flewelling, Denise Fox, Beth Arnold-Messick, Gina Hertzog, Lynn Richter, Lisa Winkler, and Sharon Hardy

Committee Accomplishments this Year

- It felt so good to be able to be back in our Sanctuary and arrange flowers for Sunday services.
- We were able to provide personal items to display for services. We had a display of hearts and snowflakes on natural twigs. We also had a birdcage filled with hand knitted birds.
- We were able to arrange a flower workshop that was facilitated by Lise Neely, long time member and friend of the church. This workshop added five new members to our committee. Yay!
- We received a gift from Sue Druckenbrot of three wooden statues to be used in future displays. Thank you Sue.
- It was so much fun to be able to decorate the Sanctuary for the Holidays again.
- We arranged the display for the Flower Communion service by providing many vases for flowers to be placed into. We continue and will continue to arrange flowers for those wishing to honor or remember someone special in their lives.
- We. work with the Minister and the Worship Committee in providing meaningful flower arrangements that honor the sermon topic.

Plans for Next Year

- We will continue to provide beautiful and meaningful flower arrangements. We will continue to work with the Minister and the Worship Committee on the themes of the services.
- We will continue to attract new members to our committee.
- We will continue to raise our own funds by offering flower arrangements in honor or memory of a loved one at a Sunday service.
- We will continue to have flower workshops to increase our knowledge of flower arrangement.

Committee Strengths

We are very fortunate and lucky to have a talented and artistic group of flower arrangers who are not afraid to express themselves. We work well together as a group as well as individuals. The ideas keep flowing with the encouragement from each other and of the congregation. Your kind words mean so much to us so keep them coming. It is fun to work with the different themes of all the Sunday services. This encourages us to use our ideas as a group as well as individuals to provide not only beautiful flower arrangements but to also use artifacts along with or without flowers. We love using whimsy like hearts on twigs and hand knitted birds in a cage. This makes us smile!

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

We believe that flowers are an integral part of ministry. We encourage all of you to join us on this spiritual journey of flower ministry.

Report from Humanist UUs: *Embracing Science, Reason, and Humanist Values*

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Helen Ewan

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: humanist@uucch.org

Other Committee/Team/TaskForce/Program Participants: Charles Bittner, Linda Coolsen, Ed Erde, Ken Ewan, Lud Pisapia, Connie Roggio, Val Schmid-Sadwin

Group Accomplishments this Year

This year we continued to meet virtually on the first Tuesday of each month to discuss topics of interest, such as:

- Humor and Humanism
- The Definition of Humanism as Viewed Through Its History
- The Flourishing of Humanity Through the Use of Technology
- What Do We Owe the Future?
- Separation of Church and State
- Music and Humanism

This year we have enjoyed having joint meetings with the Humanists of Southern Delaware.

Plans for Next Year

We will explore ways in which we can alternate in-person gatherings with virtual meetings.

We will review our group covenant.

Group Strengths

We offer congregants, friends, and visitors an opportunity to explore the thread of non-theist Humanism that contributes significantly to the richness of Unitarian Universalism. We provide a safe environment where non-creedal beliefs can be examined and discussed.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

We welcome questioning minds.
We value the richness of Unitarian Universalism.
We are a beacon of liberal, non-creedal religion.

Report from Labyrinth Committee

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Jenn Snively

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: labyrinth@uucch.org or Jenn1004@gmail.com

Other Committee Participants: Marilyn Masur, Rowen Stuffer, Paula Horton

Committee Accomplishments this Year.

- Presented in-person Labyrinth Journaling and Art Class in March. Encouraged individual and small group independent use of our UUCCH labyrinth.
- Encouraged online/virtual engagement with Veriditas and Labyrinth Society events via social media and regular email updates.
- Maintained UUCCH Labyrinth Facebook page and MeetUp Group to spread the word about activities and events, as well as enrich interested followers' understanding of the variety of labyrinth activities, meditative styles, and beautiful works of art all over the world.

- Hosted World Labyrinth Day Walk as One event, which was well attended by both UUCCH and greater community members.
- Put plans in place to host our 2023 series of Friday evening guided walks, once a month May through November.
- This year we have added an additional Wednesday daytime walk each month as well, giving us a total of 13 committee sponsored guided walk events. Guides have also assisted the greater community by leading walks in conjunction with other UUCCH events and space rental events.

Plans for Next Year.

- Continue our work educating the UUCCH and greater community about use of the labyrinth as a spiritual and meditative tool.
- Continue to teach creative and informative Labyrinth classes through Lifespan Education.
- Work with Lifespan Education and Ministry teams to incorporate use of the labyrinth more fully into the spiritual life, education, and rituals of UUCCH.
- Our long-term goal is that whenever there is a milestone to celebrate, a transition to mark, or a loss to grieve, it will be our instinct as a community to turn to the labyrinth as one of the available tools to help us move through that time.
- Increase the number of volunteer guides and frequency of guided walks, creatively incorporating music, dance or any other medium which will lend itself to spiritual awareness and growth.

Committee Strengths.

Committee members are dedicated, creative, and passionate about sharing the secrets of the labyrinth with others. The committee has shown an aptitude for working with other UUCCH groups and incorporating their concerns into our plans and programs. This committee affords a wonderful opportunity to creatively introduce a type of spiritual practice, which while ancient, is personally new to many at UUCCH and in our greater community.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

The labyrinth itself is uniquely suited to further both the Mission and Vision Statement of UUCCH. Each time we walk a labyrinth, we gain deep insights into our own minds and hearts. In sharing those experiences, we learn about the others with whom we share our life's path. Through this spiritual tool we learn that although we seem at times to be going in different directions or at a wildly disparate pace, we are in fact all on the same path together as one. The labyrinth has the power to foster a feeling of community and of peace like few tools available to us in our hectic, modern times. These aspects increase the likelihood that prospects will become members, and members will stay on. We are passionate about teaching others how to use this spiritual tool, inviting the greater community into our sacred space to join us in fostering understanding of ourselves and one another, and encouraging interfaith dialogue. This raises the profile of UUCCH as a beacon of liberal religion by putting us in a position to be a regional labyrinth pilgrimage site, raising awareness of UUism and our facility's rental potential for programs and events. We are actively seeking new committee members who would like to learn more about labyrinth meditation and how to become a guided walk volunteer guide, (committee membership is not required to be a guide).
Join us on the path!

Report from the Leadership Development and Nominating Committee (LDNC)

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Sharon Hardy

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: sharon.hardy@gmail.com

Other Committee Participants: Bill Warner, Armandine Kelly, Ron Enfield, Lisa Nagasuru, Amelie Harris-McGeehan, Cathy Marsh, Lynda Odessey, Jane Garner Phillips, Louise Marshall Kelly

What has LDNC accomplished this year?

- **Leadership Council formed**
 - LDNC began the year in August-Sept with planning, inviting and holding the first meeting of the Leadership Council – a group representing committee/group chairs or delegates. The group has been excited to meet, share and collaborate.
 - The Leadership Council (LC) met in October and November, and then went to every other month starting in January and March; May is upcoming.
 - Leadership Council developed a Purpose statement and a covenant. Purpose:
 - *The Leadership Council's purpose is to create collaborations and promote cohesion between the many committees and groups of UUCCH. We do this by creating partnerships and shared activities among Council groups and committees; participating in leadership development; and working to deepen the foundations of individual groups and committees.*
 - **Tagline: Connection, Collaboration and Consistency**
 - The council submitted descriptions of their groups for updating on the UUCCH website and a two-page document was created and share at the Leadership Service in Feb. We intend to share this with the congregation and new members to foster engagement.
 - Several groups have found new ways to support and collaborate with each other.
 - Organized a Leadership Service 3/27 with some members of LDNC and LC offering reflections on “meaningful engagement” and a skit to demonstrate collaboration.
 - Supported the church covenant process by facilitating listening sessions and participating in creative writing sessions
 - LDNC developed a covenant for ourselves and Paula has begun a toolkit that we can use and offer to Leadership Council and all groups to develop meeting skills, processes and leadership skills. LDNC updated/renewed their Mission, Vision, Purpose and Goals 2020-2022.
 - LDNC members did their own leadership development at each meeting in the form of planned guidance from Paula Gribble, LDNC staff support.
 - Conducted a successful search for nominees to fill open positions: four in the LDNC and four on the Board for the June elections.
 - Preparing for a hybrid Annual Meeting with voting conducted both in person and on Zoom.

Plans for Next Year

- Continue to work with the Leadership Council; move from LDNC Chair to a co-chair model and set their own goals for this year.
- Work closely with the Board on leadership development within and for the congregation, and to support their agenda as we seek a new minister
- Continue to make best use of the google shared drives and google groups, and train groups on how to use these tools.
- One of our goals for the future is to think in 5-year cycles instead of 1-year cycles.

Committee Strengths.

This group works very collaboratively and has diverse skill sets and personalities. We have continued on Zoom for all meetings, with one in-person gathering in the summer, and have managed to work effectively together. We are seeking to develop a strong foundation for future LDNCs to connect all areas of leadership in the church and help them work more collaboratively.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

“Learn – Value – Serve” is the mission of the church. LDNC plays a critical role in all three, providing opportunities for personal and leadership development, including furthering that growth through service to the church in elected office and making denomination connections to Leadership and Educational resources through UUA.org and the Central East Region.

We seek to develop leaders, through educating LDNC and LC members and engaging in the work of the church/Board, and to develop a strong slate of candidates for Board and future LDNC nominations. We also seek to highlight and support meaningful engagement opportunities for all members, primarily through the leadership council.

Report from the Lifespan Faith Engagement Team

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Paula Gribble, DLFE

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: dre@uucch.org

Other Committee Participants: Susan Druckenbrod, Lisa Nagasuru, Karen Nowicki, Larry Solow, Kate Sloan, Holly Willett

Committee Accomplishments this Year.

The LFE Team spent the year working to grow the program for children and youth, and offering 1-session classes for adults. Highlights include:

- A “State of the Team” meeting to look at where we are, and where we’d like to go.
- Sharing space and partnering with multiple committees to increase connection across the church.
- Working on classes for all ages that focused on bonding and connection, with connections or stories around Faith Development. We were again able to split into two classes for children and youth.
- Offered a church-wide Skating Party where 30 children, parents and adults attended.
- Held a “What About These Pronouns” class that had 30 people engaged and learning.
- Held church-wide events when possible after COVID restrictions to allow whole church connection.
- The team repeatedly adjusted for needs of children as well as adults.

Plans for Next Year.

Plans as of this date are loose, with the announcement of Paula Gribble’s leaving. We plan to have a one-room schoolhouse for Summer. Before Paula’s departure, she will work with the Team on transitions and Fall programming possibilities.

Summer 2023 will be a time of clean-up, securing supplies, and re-organization of classrooms, children’s library, and Window Room.

We plan to continue the practice of partnering with other team and groups in the congregation.

We plan to offer more outside the church activities for all ages, and well as continue church-wide events, such as Parents’ Night Out and the Skating Party.

Committee Strengths.

The LFE Team works exceedingly well together. We are able to pool our skills and strengths together to create diverse and dynamic programming. One of the great strengths of this group is listening to one another, and strong commitment to serve the congregation. LFE Team sets their own desires aside and focuses on the needs of the congregation.

Another of the LFE's strong characteristics is to stay in the wider picture of things and not get mired in the details.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

Aligned with and in service to the mission of UUCCH (to Learn, Value, Serve), the Lifespan Faith Engagement Team's mission is to guide and support the congregation by creating a safe and enriching environment for the exploration of spiritual, ethical, and religious growth. We strive to facilitate the intellectual, physical, and relational development for all ages in the congregation. We commit to carry out this mission through the lens of our Unitarian Universalist Principles and values.

Report from the Philosophy Group

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Lud Pisapia

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: lpisapia@aol.com

Group Accomplishments this Year.

Philosophy is an area of human knowledge that might be summarized as "ideas about ideas," aka, "metaphysics." The Philosophy Group selects readings and videos that explore ideas of specific philosophers (e.g. Plato, and Spinoza), as well as the philosophical underpinnings of mind/brain science, and political/economic/social-cultural issues/values, such as democracy vs authoritarianism, capitalism vs socialism, liberty vs order, Critical Race Theory, individual vs group identity, climate change issues, etc.

In 2022-2023 (from 9/14/2022 to 5/31/2023), we met weekly on Wednesday mornings, using Zoom, from 10am to 11:30. During these sessions, we used selected videos and readings from the Internet, as well as covering about 25 pages per week of the following books:

- *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Sigmund Freud, W.W. Norton, 2010
- *Liberalism and Its Discontents*, Francis Fukuyama, Farrar, et. al., 2022
- *The Road to Unfreedom*, Timothy Snyder, Tim Duggan Books, 2018
- *Betraying Spinoza*, Rebecca Goldstein, Schocken Books, 2006
- *Spinoza, A Very Short Introduction*, Roger Scruton, Oxford Press, 2002

Plans for Next Year

This summer, we schedule one session (July 19th this year) to meet and discuss a fictional reading. A likely candidate this summer is [Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?](#) by Philip K. Dick.

This book is a prelude to our 2023-2024 season's initial topic of Artificial Intelligence, when we will discuss readings and videos of thinkers expert in AI such as Ray Kurzweil, Max Tegmark, Yval Harari, and Nick Bostrom. The Group decides specific readings and topics as the season proceeds. It starts with Wednesday, 9/14/2023, and ends on 5/29/2024.

Group Strengths.

Individuals attracted to Philosophy Group discussions often have interested and creative minds, and are possible candidates for helping to formalize and clarify plans, goals, meanings and purposes for selected group activities within the Church, depending on their values and personal interests.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

The Philosophy Group embodies toleration and mutual understanding through free and open discussion of the unique and diverse viewpoints, values and ideas of each of its individual members. All topics and readings used by the Group have the effect of promoting deeper understanding of critical social issues, including extensive focus on justice, truth, democracy, and individual freedom.

Report from the Property Committee

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Dan Nichols

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: dnichols@ragandesign.com,
property@uucch.org

Other Regular Committee Participants: Lee Phillips, Pam Anderson, Patty Lynn, Amélie Harris McGeehan, Rich McGeehan, Chris Sandy, Greg Newcomer

The Property Team would like to express our sense of loss on the passing of Ken Arnold, noted landscape architect, founder of the UUCCH Arboretum, expert confectioner, and loveable curmudgeon. His wisdom, wit, and humor were long a staple of Property Meetings until his “retirement” (from meetings) almost 10 years ago. We are all richer for having known him and his memory brings a smile.

Committee Activity this Year

This year we seemed to have reprieve from snow removal and tree removal costs which allowed Property focus on building and other site maintenance issues arose. Of note, the building's water pressure pump for the fire sprinkler system was replaced early last Fall, and valves related to the HVAC systems reached the end of their service lives during a cold snap in December and January and required replacement.

Plans for Next Year

Although we have renovated the Sanctuary and Commons, significant components of our now 23 year old facility are coming due for significant maintenance or replacement. Preventative maintenance initiatives are working to extend the service life of systems and reduce the incidence of surprise failures, but still all items eventually wear out and we must address them. We plan to do a cleaning of the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall ductwork this summer during the “slower” usage times.

Property and Grounds continues to rely solely upon volunteers to mow the lawns on the UUCCH campus. We express our thanks to Lee, Chris Sandy and others who have braved heat, bugs, and rash inducing vines to keep our lawns in check. Speaking of weeds and vines, the Arb Work Group has done a stellar job over the last year(s) in facilitating the reemergence of the woody and flowering beauty of the Arb, which had gradually become obscured by vines and other invasive plants...many thanks all around.

Committee Strengths

The Property Committee is bolstered by a group of committed members, each with their own areas of knowledge and talent who work well together at finding solutions to issues that arise, who come together

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once a month for a lively, enlightening, productive, and very often, entertaining Zoomed roundtable meeting. As is our custom we will continue our program of fix it when it breaks; mow it when it grows; pull it if it offends; shovel, blow, or plow it if it accumulates; and diagnose what confounds.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission

The activities of the Property Committee enable UUCCH to carry on its mission and vision by providing a safe, workable, and hopefully pleasant facility in which to gather, work, and play. Our actions as a committee are shaped by the standards set in the Community's Mission and Vision statements.

Report from Subcommittee Arboretum Work Group (ArbWG)

Subcommittee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader:

- **Points of Contact:** Pam Anderson, Patty Lynn, Susan Van Alstyne, arbcomm@uucch.org
- **Chair/Leader:** Different members facilitate the Arboretum Work Group meetings each quarter of the year.

Subcommittee participants: Pam Anderson, Heidi Bernard, Susan Carroll, Jes Finnegan, Denise Fox, Barb Flewelling, Patty Lynn, Amelie Harris-McGeehan, Rich McGeehan, Lynn Richter, Chris Sandy, Susan Van Alstyne, Paul Asman (Liaison)

Committee Accomplishments this Year:

- **Governance:** The group continues to follow a democratic decision-making model with meeting facilitation rotating quarterly among members. In the spring of 2023, the ArbWG adopted a Covenant to govern how members communicate and treat each other as the Group works to fulfill its mission.
- **Gardens and Labyrinth:** The gardens surrounding the church continue to be maintained by individuals in the ArbWG. Two new garden areas were designated during the year (Condenser Garden and Sanctuary Front). The Garden Management Policy, including a list of garden managers, is updated annually.
The Pollinator Garden was expanded to accommodate more native pollinator plants. The Oakleaf Hydrangea (in the wire enclosure as a temporary measure to protect it from the deer nibbling on it), is doing well.
- **East Terrace Landscaping:** Lawn area outside the East Terrace was reseeded.
- **Arboretum:** Work continues restoring areas of the Arboretum, including clearing overgrowth and weeding around trees and shrubs. Property & Grounds assists in picking up collected piles of debris around the property.
- **Collection Inventory and Signage:** The identification of existing plants, the upkeep of the print card file, and the addition of records to the Arboretum at UUCCH [plantsmap.com](https://www.plantsmap.com) (<https://www.plantsmap.com/organizations/uucch-arboretum>) site continues.
- **Other Projects** – The group created a trifold display panel for the Commons area with updated maps and illustrations highlighting seasonal points of interest. A new Arboretum illustrated brochure was also designed and updated during the year.

Plans for Next Year

- Enhance congregational interest in the gardens and grounds.
- Increase Arboretum Work Group membership.

- Continued discussion of governance and budgetary issues.
- Continue clearing the Arboretum of invasive plants enabling existing plants to thrive.
- Continue the inventory of existing specimens and add plant signs, as appropriate.
- Continue supporting the Flower Ministry Committee as appropriate.

Group Strengths

The strength of the Group is the dedication of its membership in giving their time and energy to the maintenance and improvement of our shared outdoor surroundings.

Group Challenges

The physical demands of maintaining the Church's 17-acre campus purely with volunteer labor poses a continuing challenge for the Group whose members have an average age of over 62.

Invitation to others

The ArbWG welcomes others interested in joining the team, either officially or sporadically, on the grounds, as time permits. All contributions of time, energy, and encouragement are appreciated as we continue this important work that benefits both members and guests.

Annual Report from the Sanctuary Team

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Libby Pontillo

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: pianissimo@comcast.net

Other Committee/Team/Task Force/Program Participants: Pam Anderson, Terry Berge, Mary Cregan, Rich Cunliffe, Barbie Flewelling, Greg Newcomer, Nancy Newcomer, John Nielsen, Lynn Richter, Jennie Stone, and others

Group Accomplishments this Year

At the very end of the last church year, in June 2022, after the submission of our 2021-22 Annual Report, we approved a Sanctuary group covenant, a project that had been on our "to-do" list for a number of years.

At the suggestion of Terry Berge, after concluding our reading of *Jesus and After*, we hosted a screening of Martin Scorsese's film, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, in the Horsch Room on July 31. Because of this special event, we decided to forgo our July and August meetings. Having resumed in-person meetings last spring, following UUCCH COVID protocols for masking/distancing, we have adopted a consistent hybrid format, allowing for participants to join either in person or over a Zoom link.

At our June 2022 meeting, we chose *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life* by Richard Rohr as our next group read. Collectively, we have found this book to be both relevant and challenging. We will finish discussion of it in June 2023 and vote on a new book.

Plans for Next Year

With pandemic restrictions eased, we hope to resume our August perusal of *The Unitarian* magazines from the 1880's and '90's, a much-anticipated annual ritual. We will start reading a new book together.

Group Strengths

Sanctuary was created in November 1991 to be a nurturing and supportive space where participants could explore and share their beliefs in God/Spirit/the divine or higher power as Unitarian Universalists. Stressing the importance of listening to each other without judgment, we share many of the principles of a Fellowship

Group. Unlike a Fellowship Group, however, we invite respectful dialogue and discussion. It is not our goal to judge or direct others' spiritual paths, but rather to support each other on our individual journeys, and to build a foundation of trust and connection within our congregation. For over 30 years, participants have been gaining insights from listening to each other.

Over the years, Sanctuary has broadened its focus, while maintaining a commitment to providing a sacred space for reflection and dialogue. Reading widely across the spectrum of religious and philosophical works, we welcome people with widely varying perceptions of the divine or "spirit," supporting and encouraging each other in our spiritual inquiries. We welcome those who wish to "drop in" for a session, a season, or many years.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission.

We support the church's mission by fostering ongoing learning about ourselves and each other, and by honoring the personal experience of everyone who sits at our table. We strive to act with sensitivity and compassion, remaining curious about and open to the views of those who may disagree with some among us, or with the authors of the texts we have chosen. We find that spiritual growth results not only from discoveries within the material we read, but also from the process through which we have welcomed and engaged others with disparate views.

We encourage and promote "direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life." As we strive to listen to each other, our ever-changing group has evolved from a haven for theological debate into a safe space for reflection, belonging and deeper connection. May it always be so.

Report from the Stewardship Team

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Ken Slight

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: kenslight08057@gmail.com

Other Committee/Team/TaskForce/Program Participants:

Planning Committee: Carol Suboleski, Louise Kelly, John Nielsen, Margret O'Neill, Pam Anderson, Rohn Hein and Connie Roggio

Visiting Stewards: Greg Newcomer, Louise Kelly, John Nielsen, Margret O'Neill, Armandine Kelly, David Gift, Paul Dice, Paula Horton, Sylvia Barclay and Diane Baker-Hallowell

Graphic Arts: Pam Anderson

Group Accomplishments this Year

- 22-23 Stewardship Campaign

Plans for Next Year

- Fund the Operating Budget
 - Enable members to live out their values by supporting the church financially
 - Ensure that all contributing members and friends feel that their contributions are important and valued.
 - Recruit more Visiting Stewards
-

Report from the Tech CRUU

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Larry Solow

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: duet1356@gmail.com

Other Committee Participants: Active: Shirley Chirico, Ken Slight, Tom Snively, Larry Solow, and Bill Warner.

Honorable mentions: Stacy LaBelle, Lisa Winkler, Rev. Margret O’Neall

Group Accomplishments this Year

This has been a learning year for the Tech CrUU. We have provided sound and video support for all-virtual services and dual platform services held in the new Sanctuary. We have also supported other church events such as meetings, concerts, weddings, memorial services, and rentals. We have been able to respond to variety of A/V needs in each of those contexts.

We have supported Rev. Margret, Worship Associates, and other presenters at the podium, small and large choirs, ukuleles, handbells, and instrumentalists. We’ve mastered the use of a variety of computers, microphones, cameras, and computer technology. We did all of this while training new members of the Tech CrUU even as we were learning ourselves.

We handled more than our share of adversity along the way. New technology did not work at all, or as expected. Settings that worked one week did not the next. Our small but mighty group dealt with it all. To provide context, there are approximately 125 steps required to set up the technology for a typical Sunday service.

Plans for Next Year

Our next biggest challenge remains adding new members to the Tech CrUU. It takes three people each week to support a Sunday service (two in the Sanctuary and one who can be remote). Today, we have only four – with different skill sets and availability. This results in Tech CrUU members needing to be “on duty” most Sundays, depriving them of the ability to fully experience the service (our attention is on the technology, not worship). We have many roles available – several can be performed from the comfort of your own home within a reasonable window of time. **Please contact Larry Solow or any member of the Tech CrUU to learn more. We need you!**

Group Strengths

Our biggest strengths are teamwork, adaptability, and resilience. Everyone pitches in. Besides getting the actual work done, we look out for each other as people.

Describe how the group’s activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

Clear audio and visual information enables UUCCH to more effectively accomplish all aspects of its mission and vision. Tech CrUU members are like plumbers. When we do our job well, no one knows we’re there. So whenever there is a group of people – for a Sunday service, Social Justice event, or social gathering – we work hard to make sure the audience can take hearing and seeing clearly for granted.

Report from Welcoming and Membership (W&M)

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Paula Gribble, DLFE

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: dre@uucch.org

Other Committee Participants: Lynda Dillon, Cheryl Dunican-Hein, Peggy Morgan, Rev. Margret O'Neill, Ken Slight

Committee Accomplishments this Year.

Welcoming and Membership (W&M) kicked into high gear with the return to in-person Sunday, welcoming a slew of new members, and working to improve overall welcoming within the church.

Highlights included:

- Reinstated the welcome table fully, and making sure we had materials and name tags available. Staffing the welcome table each Sunday. Reviewed and updated brochures we have available.
- Offered a Welcome, Greeter and Usher Training to begin to recruit for folks to help in those areas.
- Reaching out to those who'd visited several times to make sure they were engaged at the level they wanted to be, and following up with new members to make sure they were connected.
- Continued offering recognitions of birthdays and member anniversaries, and entered all updated information in ICON database.
- Purchased pronoun stickers for name and started offering those at the welcome table.
- Created new kids' name tags and station where they hang. Now when the children and youth arrive, they automatically go and get their name tag.
- Reinstated the Mentoring program to help connect new members.
- Welcomed 9 new members
- Co-led a worship on 03/26, with the new member ceremony and concept of radical hospitality
- Documented roles and responsibilities for Welcome Table, Ushers, Greeters, and Welcoming and Membership Committee Members

Plans for Next Year.

Plans include:

- Increasing the number of people available to staff the welcome table
- Offering New Member Ceremony and New Member Classes
- Continuing to recognize birthdays and member anniversary dates, including in person monthly celebration
- Continuing to update data in ICON, and utilizing the member database in new ways

Committee Strengths.

- Steady group of consistent members dedicated to the work of Welcoming and Membership
- Willingness and continued practice of reaching out to other groups to partner with and share resources
- Strong staff support, and collaboratively working together
-

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

W&M keeps its goals and work in line with the church's mission and vision always. To create the space where we encourage diversity, and are a beacon of liberal religion, we work as a team to bring welcome and engagement to those who walk through our doors. Additionally we carry out the mission by offering resources and learning opportunities, making sure our materials are in line and support the church's values, and by serving the congregation as the front line for visitors and growing members.

Report from Womyn & Religion

Program Point of Contact: Sylvia Barclay, Lynda Dillon, Lucie Lenore

Chair/Leader: Womyn & Religion is facilitated by different members each quarter of the year, so it has no set chair.

Contact information: Sylvia Barclay sraebarclay@gmail.com, Lucie Lenore lucile.lenore@gmail.com, Lynda Dillon, hdlldch@comcast.net, womyn@uucch.org for the entire group.

Other Committee Participants: Shirley Chirico, Mary Cregan, Linda Delany, Barbara Flewelling, Janet Horton, Judy Isaacs, Jackie Levitt, Pat Naylor, Lynda Odessey, Nancy Sue Hillman, Andrea Bille

Committee Accomplishments this Year.

- Summer solstice, fall equinox, winter solstice, spring equinox celebrations, held in person this year, outdoors when possible, with the exception of the Winter Solstice, which is traditionally held indoors in the Commons. These celebrations are pre-patriarchy celebrations and the entire church community is usually invited to each.
- We have rearranged our meeting's agenda. We begin with a chalice reading and then we emphasize our program, followed by a brief check-in and business meeting.
- Programs:
 - Feminist Futures videos, which are connected with the Women's March. We viewed them on our own and then discussed them at our meetings.
 - Presentation by Roxanne Sutocky, Director of Community Engagement at Cherry Hill Women's Center. She informed us of the challenges and how we can help women from out-of-state who seek abortions at the center.
 - Presentation by Lynette Medley and her daughter, Nya McGlone from No More Secrets. They spoke to us about their extensive work with Period Poverty.
 - Notable Women. Currently we are taking turns presenting and then discussing well-known and not-so-well known women at our meetings.
- We have been doing community work through SHAN, She Has a Name. We have been working with SHAN, providing them with articles needed by young women on the street in Camden. We are one of many religious groups working with SHAN.
- Another community project that we are working with is No More Secrets. NMS was founded to help young women in poverty to get menstrual products that they otherwise could not afford. Women from our committee volunteer to help them organize their resources, and we make donations of money, products and large bags to hold their products.
- We also did a project for the Cherry Hill Women's Center in which we made care packages to provide comfort for out-of-state patients.

Plans for Next Year.

- We will continue to celebrate the equinoxes and solstices in person as pre-patriarchal celebrations for the entire congregation.
- We will continue with presentations of notable women at our monthly meetings at noon on the first Sunday of each month.
- We hope to present a church service in March during women's history month, as we have done for many years.
- We hope to have our annual retreat take place in October as it has for over 20 years.
- We hope to have another feminist theology curriculum held for all women of the church community.
- We will continue to support No More Secrets in their mission to end period poverty in Philadelphia.
- We will reach out to other committees when possible to work together on projects.

Committee Strengths.

Womyn & Religion has been an active church committee for 36 years and regularly has 15 to 20 members. We meet on the first Sunday of each month with, normally at least a dozen members and guests. We continue to encourage women to join our committee. This year we have been meeting in person in the Horsch Room with a hybrid process which includes a zoom feature for those who cannot attend in person.

Several members or the entire committee meets at least two dozen times a year for various activities; there are opportunities for both short term as well as longer-term projects to pursue.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

- We learn, study, discuss and plan church services and activities relevant to women's issues.
- We value our experiences, challenges, and successes and increasingly diverse roles in the world.
- We serve by presenting church services, inviting new and long-time members to join us at meetings and activities.

*We, the Womyn and Religion Committee, welcome all women; regardless of age, sexual orientation, color or belief, to join us every first Sunday after the service. In a sanctuary of good feeling, acceptance and caring we explore ways to improve, expand and create a better world for all women."

Report from Worship Committee

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Carol Suboleski

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: specialmom123@yahoo.com, worship@uucch.org

Other Committee/Team/TaskForce/Program Participants: Reverend Margret, Linda Coolsen, Kew Ewan(Board Liaison), Kate Sloan, Julia Bernd

Group Accomplishments this Year

- Provided a supportive role, working in collaboration with our developmental minister
- Provided feedback and support to the minister in creating services that are shared in a dual platform format so that members could attend both in person and on zoom
- Solicited, received, and discussed congregant feedback about services and, in coordination with the minister, addressed issues as needed
- Planned and coordinated Poetry Sunday services
- Supported the minister in continuing the Worship Associates program

Plans for Next Year

- Continue working closely with the minister to bring the congregation thoughtful, creative, and engaging worship services
- Continue fostering a congregational presence in worship services through the Worship Associates program
- Supporting congregants and others who hold lay led services
- Plan and coordinate two Poetry Sunday services annually
- Continue to reach out to the congregation for ideas and invite new members

Group Strengths.

- Efficiency and organization: we accomplish a lot of work in a short amount of time while still having fun

- We have a clear role within the church that gives us the opportunity to reach out to congregants beyond our committee, both to solicit their feedback on services and to encourage their involvement in lay-led worship

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

We support the church's vision and mission by offering services on a variety of topics that encourage learning, community building, and spiritual growth, as well as services that directly tackle diversity and social justice issues



REPORTS FROM TASK FORCES

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
IN CHERRY HILL**

Annual Report from COVID Task Force

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Jennie Stone

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Other Committee/Team/TaskForce/Program Participants: Dan Nichols, Janet Riggs, Susan Renton-Dice, Marion Riegle

Group Accomplishments this Year

The Covid Task Force met several times during the church year to review national, state and local information about covid. Guidelines for church activities, including Sunday worship, were adjusted as needed, and/or as requested by the Board of Trustees. Guidelines for Social hour after Sunday worship and church-wide events are currently posted on the church website. The Task Force continues to work at the direction of the Board to periodically review our covid safety guidelines/procedures. The Task Force made a recommendation to the Board for a HEPA filtration system in Fellowship Hall to improve air quality/safety in that space.

Plans for Next Year

- Encourage the Board to fund the HEPA filtration system for Fellowship Hall.
 - Continue to adjust guidelines related to covid as needed.
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Report from the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force (GVP)

Committee/Program Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Helen Ewan

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Leader: gvp@uucch.org

Other Committee Participants: Amelie Harris-McGeehan, Rich McGeehan, Lynda Odessey, Carol Suboleski, Peg Willard, Diane Baker-Hallowell, Jane Phillips, Julia Gandy, Julie Vick, Kate Sloan, Liandra Pires, Sue Van Alstyne, Lisa Winkler

Committee Accomplishments this Year.

In 2022-2023, the GVP Task Force:

- Sponsored a silent vigil with other groups in response to the massacre at the elementary school in Uvalde, TX
- Created and delivered a Sunday service on June 4th to recognize Gun Violence Awareness/Wear Orange weekend and to encourage GVP work as a faith commitment.
- Attended meetings with the UU Faith Action NJ GVP Task Force, Cease Fire NJ, and other GVP programs.
- Gave testimony in Trenton in support of bills S3214 and A4769, New Jersey's answer to the Supreme Court's disastrous and misguided Bruen decision. Bills S3214 and A4769 provide safe spaces in NJ, set standards for who can own a gun and concealed carry license, among other things. The bill passed and was signed into law by Gov. Murphy before being challenged by several gun rights organizations.
- Networked with GVP groups of other faith communities, as well as with March for Our Lives, Brady, and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America and have educated our members about Extreme Risk Protective Orders and causes of gun violence.

Plans for Next Year.

The Task Force intends:

- To remain a vital part of the UUCCH Social Justice Program.
- To support legislation to keep New Jerseyans safe.

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- To focus our efforts on suicide, the leading cause of gun death in the U.S.
- To continue to network with like-minded organizations.

Committee Strengths.

The Mission of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force is to Educate, Advocate and Legislate.

As we are a small task force, we have aligned ourselves with other like-minded groups to end gun violence. We have partnerships with CeaseFire NJ, Brady, The Coalition for Peace Action, Moms Demand Action for Gun Violence in America, March for Our Lives, and the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force of UU Faith Action NJ.

GVP Task Force members are committed and action-oriented. They want to increase their knowledge about gun violence with the aim of doing something about it. Members readily help with projects aimed at raising awareness of gun safety issues and supporting gun safety legislation.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

GVP Task Force members learn about the causes of gun violence and possible solutions to this social justice issue. We nurture social justice by bearing witness to the great harm resulting from gun violence and working to support gun safety legislation as well as other solutions to this problem.

Report from Policy Work Group

Point of Contact/Chair/Leader: Pam Anderson and Libby Pontillo, Co-Chairs

Email/contact information for POC/Chair/Lead, panderson43@verizon.net,
pianissimo@comcast.net

Other Committee/Team/Task Force/Program Participants: Christine Denario, Ed Fox (to 1/23), Bill Hallowell, Connie Roggio

Group Accomplishments this Year

Since its creation in June 2021, the Policy Work Group (originally the Policy Task Force) has been absorbing information about the history and culture of UUCCH. We have also read and discussed *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership* by Dan Hotchkiss. Over the past year, we have shared many of these resources with the Board, and in 2023 they committed to undertake structural changes in church governance that will lead to greater long-term predictability, stability, and resiliency in our church.

This spring, we have begun to make solid progress in revising the UUCCH Policy Book. Working with the framework created by Ed Fox and models provided by other church Policy Books, we have drafted and obtained Board approval of several crucial sections. Gradually, we are inserting new and updated policies into the new framework. It is a thoughtful, time-consuming process, in which the Board is now engaged. We hope these changes will bring greater functionality, resilience, and trust to the way we do things at UUCCH.

Plans for Next Year

We plan to continue this process, meeting twice monthly (once on our own and once with the Board) to review and update existing sections of the UUCCH Policy Book and draft new sections for Board input and approval. One of our goals will be to support a thorough grounding of new Board members in the work that we and the Board have been doing.

Group Strengths

We are a small group, composed of members with widely varying backgrounds in different fields and different experiences at UUCCH. We bring a variety of viewpoints to the task and are committed to the health and vibrancy of the congregation.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

Our group is committed to ensuring the future of the church through structures and systems of authority, responsibility, and accountability that will sustain it financially, nourish connections in our community, and make it possible for our congregation to pursue its mission in the larger world. Clarity is essential in establishing governance structures: Who is responsible? What authority do they have? How are they held accountable for their work? Clear policies and procedures will sustain our church over time, giving us greater freedom to do the important work that our mission calls us to do in the larger world.

Report from the Renovators Task Force

Task Force Chair: Pam Anderson

Renovation Project Coordinator: Dan Nichols

Email contact: current: panderson43@verizon.net, renovators@uucch.org for group

Other Task Force participants: Paul Asman (liaison), Diane Baker-Hallowell, Sylvia Barclay, Heidi Bernard, Dave Gift, Greg Newcomer, Rev. Margret O'Neill, Ken Slight, Connie Roggio

Task Force accomplishments this year:

From July 1/22

- Additional cameras were purchased and installed; other finishing details were completed.
- The Nesting Sculpture was installed near the base of the East Terrace
- Final payments were made to Grace Construction, although there is a 1 year warranty list of items requiring attention for Grace Construction.

The last regularly scheduled meeting was held on April 26, 2022. The Sanctuary was dedicated on November 6th, 2022.

Task Force strengths

The Renovators Task Force, a Board Committee, is bolstered by a group of committed members representing those facets of the church affected by the Sanctuary repair and renovation. Each participant has their own area of knowledge and talent that contribute to finding solutions to issues that arise. The Task Force meets twice a month, or more if needed, for enlightening, productive meetings with the ultimate goal of bringing us home to our Sanctuary, and building our future.

Describe how the group's activities connect to our church's vision and mission:

The activities of the Renovators Task Force enable the Board to focus on policy and other issues while the Task Force focuses on the repair and restoration of the Sanctuary. The RTF's ultimate goal is to provide a safe, warm and welcoming worship space that ensures the comfort and safety for all members and visitors, suits the current and future needs of our congregation, and that supports exploration and varied worship experiences with inspiring space, proper lighting, and excellent acoustics.