

# Annual Report

2020 – 2021



**The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleborough**  
**25 South Main Street**  
**Middleborough, MA 02346**

**FUUSM – Annual Report**  
Edited by Bob Waterman

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## **Ministry**

Report contributors: Rev. Sarah Person; Sue Curtiss, *Pastoral Care Team Lead*; Bob Waterman, *Committee on Ministry Lead*

### Minister's Role and Responsibilities

*"The Minister and the Congregation shall share responsibility for the leadership and ministry of the Congregation. Achievement and maintenance of this collaborative relationship likewise shall be shared. The Congregation shall look to the Minister for spiritual leadership and initiative, for assistance in setting and articulating its vision, and for professional and inspired performance and oversight of the Congregation's programs, in collaboration with the Parish Committee and the Congregation's committees."*

### Minister's Overview

Your staff and lay leaders have continued to do their best to offer worship, programs, and activities that capture our energies and intentions. This past church year, there have been three major influences on our Congregational life: gradual easing of pandemic precautions with the advent of vaccinations; the Black Lives Matter movement and our racial justice activities in response to deaths of BIPOC adults and children by violence; and the generosity of FUUSM's members and friends helping to maintain our services and programs. We are still limiting access to the building (including masks & social distancing). At present, only our Church Administrator and Custodian are in the building on a regular basis. We do have weekly renters who keep their distance from each other. I have been working primarily from home, except for offering virtual services on Sundays. This will continue for the foreseeable future until reopening the Church is safe. A task group of lay leaders and staff is crafting a safe reopening policy and protocol. I have begun to make visits under safe conditions.

*I continue to be grateful for your energy, willingness to engage, and generosity. I look forward to a great year ahead expanding our membership, pastoral care, hospitality, adult education, and social justice initiatives. Thank you.*

### Summary of Minister's Activities

Since my last report to you, I have led 34 worship services, and hosted the Sunday services and times of fellowship. I officiated at a renewal of vows ceremony and an interment service. I met regularly with our Racial Justice Task Group, participated in the Racial Justice Film Discussion series, and met weekly with the Lay Pastoral Ministers, the Social Justice Team lead, and staff members. I have hosted weekly virtual get togethers: Coffee with the Minister and Let's Do Lunch. I have offered pastoral care to 17 individuals by phone or video.

*To meet with the Minister, please call the office (508-947-1935) or my home study (508-967-2763), or email me at [minister@uumiddleboro.org](mailto:minister@uumiddleboro.org) if you would like to get together by phone or video during the week. If you would like to call the church, the office hours are as follows:*

|           |                         |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| Monday    | Day off & office closed |
| Tuesday   | 9:30 to 2:30            |
| Wednesday | 9:30 to 3:00            |
| Thursday  | 9:30 to 2:30            |
| Friday    | 9:30 to noon            |

### Worship

Our worship theme for the year was “Bending the Arc of Justice”. As the months progressed during the pandemic, our average worship attendance has gone back to our steady moderate numbers (between 55 and 60). Parents regularly connect with our Director of Religious Exploration, and some attend worship as well. A few members do not or cannot connect with us by Zoom and are looking forward to returning to in-person services.

A team including staff, lay leaders, and tech advisors is planning for multi-platform ministry and programming. This means that we will create mechanisms by which we can offer live music and worship that welcomes virtual attendees in real time, and is also available afterwards to interested members of the public.

### Pastoral/Parish Care

This year, as we emerge from the trauma of the past year, we find things are somewhat better but still difficult for many. A number of our members and friends had serious health issues, including long-term after-effects from the virus. Violent incidents across the country and the world left their mark on our community. We are a diverse community politically, which added a layer of complexity in this election year. Yet, though we may span the political spectrum, our shared commitment to our principles is strong.

We have mourned losses in our church family: **Renee Feeley; David Trzeciak; Dorothy Greene; Carl Rantz**, husband of Ellen Rantz; **Helen French**, mother of Kimberly French; **Molly Low**, mother of Jeannie Gagne; **Lucille Moquin**, mother of Pam Buck; **Alan Alber**, husband of Susan Becker; **Dolores Lawlor**, mother of Patty Simon; **Curtis Wilbar Sr.**, father-in-law of Nicola Wilbar; **Jan Bertaut**, mother of Murray Kidd; **Sharon O’Hara**, mother of Kevin O’Hara. And we also acknowledge private losses for a number of families this difficult year.

There were also times of affirmation and joy. **Lauren and Michael LaFrance** celebrated their tenth anniversary by renewing their vows. A number of our families have welcomed children and grandchildren.

We want to honor the accomplishments of our youth and young adults.

Our Parish Care Teams have been busy offering deep listening and practical support to many of us over the course of the year. They are:

- Lay Ministers: Sue Curtiss, Sue St. Germain, Dave Kraemer
- Meals Coordinator: Juli Gould
- Rides Coordinator: **open**
- Cards Ministry: **open**
- Knitting Ministry: Juli Gould & volunteers
- Caring Choir: Valerie Fontaine

Our Teams continued to offer drop-off meals, send cards, and deliver shawls. We have not been as active offering rides or Caring Choir visits and will begin doing so when pandemic precautions lift. We are happy to welcome Dave Kraemer to our Lay Pastoral Ministry Team. Our four-member team has been calling members and friends who are not currently participating in regular virtual group activities, and may be having some life challenges – especially during the pandemic. Music Director Susan Hotchkiss and Director of Religious Exploration Kelly Lownds are staying connected with families and music volunteers. *If anyone would like a call from any of us, please email or telephone us directly or leave a message at the church.*

#### Discretionary Fund

The Minister's Discretionary fund helps Church friends and members, but primarily helps individuals in our surrounding communities with emergency situations. This fund is supported by the Scott Trust, our Cash in the Plate collections during the year, and my contributions from compensation for conducting dedications, weddings, and memorial services. I work with our Care Teams, the Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, Middleborough Gas and Electric, Middleborough Public Schools, the Matthew Mission, other clergy, and our Veterans Agent in town to offer emergency assistance to individuals and families experiencing financial crises.

Our balance as of May 16, 2021 was \$10,167.24. The amount is unusually high due to the pandemic-related moratorium on evictions and service cut offs. As a result, quite a few consumers have accumulated bills that will have to be paid after the moratorium has ended. Our Congregation, as well as the providers we collaborate with, has been prepared for the coming deluge of requests for support.

This year we spent \$1,364.55 to help with food, rent, and utilities before the moratorium, emergency shelter, school equipment for a child with disabilities, and gas. As you can see, this is dramatically less than in previous years. The food pantry, public schools, and the YMCA have continued to distribute food to needy individuals and families. *Again, thank you for your generosity. You have made and will make a real difference in their lives at a time when they needed it most.*

#### Denominational Activity

**Ballou Channing Chapter of the UU Ministers' Association.** I continue to serve as one of two Good Officers for the Ballou Channing, offering advice and counsel to my colleagues.

**New England Region of the UUA.** I participate as a Peer Facilitator. At least twice a year, I meet with UU congregational boards to facilitate their visioning and planning processes.

#### Community Outreach

**Middleborough Area Assistance Coalition (MAAC).** Monthly host.

**Old Colony YMCA.** Fifth year as a member of the Board of Governors.

**Veterans Day and Memorial Day Ceremonies.** I have offered invocations and benedictions at these annual town-wide services.

#### Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry consists of Bob Waterman (Lead) and Rev. Sarah. The Committee's purpose is to help strengthen ministry in our Church. The Committee operates on the principle that while it is the job of the professional minister to provide leadership and perform in a specialized role, overall ministry belongs to the membership of the Church as a whole. Ministry, therefore, refers to all activities that carry out the Church's mission. Accordingly, the Committee serves two main purposes: (1) To serve as a conduit for information and feedback concerning the effectiveness of ministry in our Church; the Committee seeks out and is open to input from the Congregation; (2) To serve as a sounding board and support resource for the minister. The Committee met over the course of the Church year, discussing and processing feedback from the Congregation and providing support and feedback to the Minister.

## Religious Exploration

Report Contributors: Kelly Lownds, *Director of Religious Exploration*; Greg Stevens, *Youth Advisor*; Christine Hoyle, *Religious Exploration Committee Chair*

### Program Notes

Unexpected Heroes was the theme for this year. We talked about many heroes, Emmet Joseph Brickowski, Harvey Milk, Superman, Manny, Antoinette Brown, Lewis Robinson, Doctors and Nurses, Moms and Dads, Grocery Store Workers, Teachers, Sonia Sotomayor, and many more.

We drew from our seven principles and our six sources to discuss our UU values. These values included fellowship, stewardship, valuing uniqueness, worship, witness to justice, signs of caring, memorial rituals and faith in leadership. Many of our heroes were examples of the values that UU's appreciate.

### Classes and Attendance

This year, the children met each week at 10 am until 10:30 am. We had 2-6 children each week. There is a new child in our group who we have welcomed. Kelly taught the children's classes every Sunday morning. We had one guest teacher, Christine Hoyle, who covered a couple of the Sunday classes.

The Junior Youth met every other week, once virtually and once in person. The last two months of the year they joined with the Senior Youth. There are two youth who attended regularly and at the beginning of the year, two of the senior youth also joined the group. Greg led the group. We completed the "Be the Change!" curriculum and enjoyed pizza and snacks.

The Senior Youth met twice a month, once in person and once virtually, from September until April. Then the groups met outside monthly. The group had eight youth, seven of whom attended regularly. A new adolescent joined in December. Greg and Kelly led the group. We completed the "Be The Change!" curriculum and talked about anti racism. We shared pizza monthly and played games each class. The youth helped organize the Holiday Service and the Youth Service.

|                    | 2020/21 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2017/18 | 2016/17 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Average Attendance | 10      | 10      | 11      | 18      | 19      |
| Highest Attendance | 15      | 19      | 26      | 26      | 34      |
| Lowest Attendance  | 1       | 2       | 2       | 9       | 11      |
| Number of Teachers | 3       | 10      | 23      | 27      | 28      |

## Special Events

A Teddy Bear Sleep Over was held in the Parish Hall and virtually. The children brought their teddy bears and then virtually joined them for s'mores, games, and snack time. The teddy's each received a sleeping bag to take home and some of the snacks to share with their friends.

Holiday Deliveries. The younger children each got bags delivered to their homes with items for crafting, some reusable and recyclable straws and storage items, and some small gifts and candy. They received these bags in November, December, February, and April.

Junior/Senior Youth met three times to take walks outside together at Massasoit, Pratt Farm, and the Herring Run.

## Worship

Religious Exploration led two services this year – the Holiday Service and the Youth Service.

## Service Projects

We did two community service projects. We sent notes to all the older members of our church. The children also painted flower pots for foster parents. Almost all the children had an opportunity to paint pots.

## RE Committee

Christine Hoyle was the RE committee chair and she, Nancy Kidd, Barbara Bancroft, Kim Correia, and Greg Stevens met on the first Wednesday of each month. Maria Pucillo-Dunphy continued to act as our CORI liaison.

## Next year

Our preliminary theme will be related journeys. For the children, we will use the Faithful Journeys curriculum and discuss how our UU values translate into our life choices and everyday actions. We will combine Junior and Senior youth. Junior youth will meet from 4-6 and Senior youth will meet from 5-7. There will be an overlap of an hour to share conversation and snacks, and there will be pizza once a month. There will be outreach to the Taunton church to discuss options for holding Owl with the youth that are getting old enough to attend. Kelly will be recruiting teachers again and will be looking for people to be with younger children and the older youth so there will be opportunities in the morning and in the evening.

We are immensely grateful for all the teachers and volunteers who helped us this year. It is greatly appreciated that you all take the time to speak with the children when you see them. They love to be recognized and feel noticed and cared for by everyone.

## Music

Report contributors: Susan Hotchkiss, *Director of Music*; John Mullen, *Music Committee Chair*

### Program Notes

This has been a unique year for music making due to the pandemic. All worship services have been virtual, through Zoom, which required pre-recording all music. The current music library includes over 300 recordings categorized as piano, organ, solo and ensemble, hymns and congregational songs, virtual choir, and archival selections from prior live services. Virtual services have included all the elements of in-person worship: prelude, offertory, postlude, special music offerings, service music responses, and congregational songs. The growing collection of pieces has been filmed and edited by Dan Hotchkiss. The compilation of music into a Zoom format has been done by Alan Melchior. We could not have had the quality of music in virtual worship without the work of Dan and Alan.

Tony Soares (host) and Stephen Larrett (tech wizard) directed, filmed, mixed & mastered a successful virtual fundraiser for New Year's Eve called "REBOOT 2020." Recordings were made by appointment following Covid safety guidelines, with wide participation from church musicians and the added benefit of raising funds.

Members of the Chalice Choir have met every Tuesday evening for Zoom rehearsals, which has kept us in touch and singing. Several singers have added songs and games to our gatherings. Generally, after vocal exercises, we learned new songs from the Justice Choir Songbook and other sources, reviewed old repertoire, and producing two virtual choir anthems. Kudos to Bet Giddings for mixing and mastering the virtual choir selections: "Draw the Circle Wide" and "You Are the New Day."

We celebrated Jazz Sunday on March 21 with guest musicians Jeannie Gagne and Stan Strickland. Jeannie and Stan created all their own recordings which were assembled by our tech team. Members of the Music Committee provided service elements including readings and reflections.

We celebrated Music Sunday on April 18 with MUSIC IN THE TIME OF COVID: A one-year celebration of transitions and transformations. In addition to personal reflections from members of the Music Committee, there were vintage clips of prior Music Sunday performances in 2017 and 2018 and high spots from this past year, including REBOOT 2020.

Last summer, we met a few times for outdoor singing and have started up again with our first "SING" this year on May 23. We hope to meet again in July and August, and by then we'll have a better idea of how to proceed with choral music for the Fall.

Regular members of Zoom Choir this year include: Dody Adkins-Perry, Katie Allen, Nancy Backus, Marese Barry-Belanger, Cindy & Rick Benard, Jim Bonnar, Joan Breen, Sue Curtiss, Valerie Fontaine, Bet Giddings, Dan Hotchkiss, Dorine Levasseur, Mal Marvill, John Mullen, Andrea & Ed Priest, Patty Simon, Tony Soares, Jeff Stevens, and Nicola Wilbar. Kudos to Rev. Sarah for joining us in virtual choirs.

## Music Committee

Your Music Committee supports the music program from behind the scenes. We are always looking for new members to help generate new ideas. The Committee includes Valerie Fontaine, Linda Thompson, Katie Allen, Dody Adkins-Perry, Nancy Backus, and our newest recruit, Bet Giddings, who joined our merry crew in September 2020.

The learning curve has been continuous and challenging as we explore new ways of creating worship and building community. We are hopeful the improving outlook for the pandemic will allow us to begin thinking about in-person rehearsals and performances. Music has always been an integral part of what UU Middleboro is about, and we expect to maintain that tradition.

Recently, the Music Committee began looking at ways we might turn some of our efforts towards ways to help with fundraising for the Church. A number of ideas were floated and investigated. To date, we have targeted a "Road Rally", which we hope will be fun while bringing in some additional funds for the work of the Church. Work is underway to make this happen in the fall.

The Music Committee echoes our director's praise of the efforts of Dan Hotchkiss and Alan Melchior. It is hard to see how we could have accomplished a fraction of what was presented during this Church year without their expertise and hard work. We and the choir also wish to recognize our Director, Susan Hotchkiss, for her efforts. Susan went above and beyond again and again to keep the music program functioning and contributing to the life of the UU.

Special Note: A little over a year ago, on May 23, 2020, Joshua McKiernan, long time choir member and valued member of the Music Committee, lost his battle with cancer. His loss continues to be felt by everyone who knew and admired him.

## Church Life

Report Contributors: Bob Waterman, *Vice President of Parish Committee, Fundraising Coordinator*; Dorine Levasseur, *Membership Development Team*; Rev. Sarah Person

Thanks to you, ours is vibrant community always busy with many activities and events that have engaged members, friends, and our surrounding communities. The hard work and dedication of many committed and talented individuals help makes these a success. Many of these have continued virtually during the quarantine.

## Small Groups

We have several small groups that meet regularly:

- The Spirituality Group, led by Bob Waterman, provides a safe, quiet space to explore personal spirituality, learn more about teachings and practices from a variety of traditions, and share life's journey with fellow travelers.
- Sangha Meditation, led by Tom Tanguay, provides an opportunity to develop a deeper meditation practice.
- A book discussion group, led by Carleen Loper, provides a wide array of thought-provoking material and interesting conversations.
- Moon Mediations, offered by Natalie Johnson, follow the cycle of the new and full moons each month and give an opportunity to gain wisdom from various spirit guides.
- Coffee with the Minister and Let's Do Lunch, led by Rev. Sarah Person, provides an opportunity to gather for fellowship and connection with the Minister.

The Church also hosts a CUUPS chapter which meets regularly and contributes to several of our worship services. The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) is an organization dedicated to networking Pagan-identified Unitarian Universalists (UUs), educating people about Paganism, promoting interfaith dialogue, developing Pagan liturgies and theologies, and supporting Pagan-identified UU religious professionals.

## FUNdraisers

Our fundraising programs continued to be not only a source of funds, but also a wonderful addition to our Church life. Bob Waterman and Andrea Priest helped coordinate the overall schedule of offerings, trying to balance events with all the other offerings, meetings, and needs of the Church. These events support the work of the Church, help keep us connected, and give us a chance to have some fun together.

In October, Andrea Priest coordinated Soup's On, offering curbside pick-up of homemade soup, bread, and a goodie ready to bring home for supper. Soups featured were our classics - Portuguese Kale and Autumn Squash.

In November/December, we held a virtual Holiday Crafts & Services Offering, led by Bob Waterman. There were many creative items contributed.

On New Year's Eve, "REEBOOT 2020" was presented. Tony Soares and Stephen Larrett directed, filmed, mixed, and mastered this virtual celebration of music and poetry.

In March, Andrea Priest coordinated another Soup's On with Chili this time. Offerings were Chicken Barley Soup, Beef Minestrone, Veggie Minestrone, Turkey Chili, and Veggie Chili.

In May, our annual Plant Sale was held virtually, thanks to the tremendous efforts of Mike Schroeder.

In June, a Spring Auction, coordinated by Bob Waterman, was held virtually.

### Membership Development

The Membership Development Team, consisting of the members Dorine Lavasseur (Lead), Sandy Smiley, Sue Sherman, and Rev. Sarah Person, continue to address ways to both attract people to the Church and help them to become involved once they arrive. Team members have made extra effort to connect with people who are newer to the Church to help them to find their way to increase participation and find roles that might be of interest to them.

### Public Relations

The Public Relations Team continues to spread the good word about all of the wonderful things our Church has to offer. Contributors include Mark Belanger, Maria Pucillo-Dunphy, JR Pucillo-Dunphy, Valarie Ortelt, and Rev. Sarah Person.

The Team seeks to get information in a timely fashion to as many people as possible in as many ways as possible, and works with the various committees and teams to facilitate and coordinate information flow. Avenues include our website, social media sites, email updates/alerts (UU Updates, E-tree), features in local newspapers, and specialized brochures.

Everyone has a part in helping spread good PR about our Church. The easiest way is to interact through the Church's social media sites. You can comment on posts, and share them with family, friends, or to a broader audience.

|                             |  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
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## **Social Justice**

Report Contributors: Rev. Sarah Person; Lauren Haugh, *Social Justice Team Lead*; Sandy Smiley, *MAAC Representative*

Social Justice is widely viewed by this Congregation as an opportunity to strengthen our commitment to our faith, our connections to one another and the surrounding community, and as a means to engage our children and newcomers to our larger principles.

### Projects/Initiatives

The Racial Justice Task Group, led by Deanne Bonnar and Natalie Johnson, organized activities over the course of the year in three areas: Self-growth, Education, and Action. The group met regularly and a comprehensive resource list was developed, including books, articles, and films. A film discussion series, organized and led by Deanne Bonnar, Natalie Johnson, and Sandy Smiley, with contributions by Dorine Levasseur, Bob Waterman, and Dody Adkins-Perry, was offered twice a month, examining the history of the treatment of Black and Native American citizens in this country, and studying the effects of White supremacy and White privilege.

The Social Justice Team, comprised of Lauren Haugh (Lead), Deanne Bonnar, Natalie Johnson, Sandy Smiley, and Dody Adkins-Perry, started meeting in February 2021. The team's initial task, working in conjunction with the Governance & Policy Team, was to draft and finalize a Team Charter. The Charter defines the Social Justice Team's aim to lead the Congregation in initiatives and activities that address societal inequities and help create positive change in the Congregation, community, and the wider world.

The Team's first project stemmed from conversations during Racial Justice Task Group meetings and Congregational listening circles. The Team recommended the purchase and display of a Black Lives Matter banner on the exterior of the church. After multiple discussions and meetings, the Congregation overwhelmingly approved the proposal. Then on May 25th, 2021, the year anniversary of George Floyd's murder, a silent dedication was held on the Church lawn.

The team currently meets on a monthly basis. The team has made recommendations for recipients for the Church's Cash in the Plate collections. Future plans include doing individual research on local organizations that can recommend initiatives that the Congregation might participate in once the Church year resumes in the fall.

Several in our Congregation continue to hold vigil on the Church lawn on a weekly basis to bear witness to systemic racism and the continuing deaths of people of color. We continue to garner attention and support from our neighbors and the surrounding community as we stand for peace, equity, justice, and Black Lives Matter.

### Cash in the Plate donations

Each month, we donate our "cash in the plate", i.e., any cash not designated toward pledges, to local worthy causes. *Thank you for your incredible generosity.*

| Month               | Recipient(s)  |
|---------------------|---|
| July & August       | The Matthew Mission in Taunton, MA<br>Old Colony YMCA in Middleboro, MA<br>Pan Mass Challenge (PMC)<br>Anchor Academy in Middleboro, MA in memory of Joshua Michael<br>St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry in Middleboro, MA<br>Minister's Discretionary Fund |
| September & October | Direct Relief (a disaster relief organization)<br>Minister's Discretionary Fund   |
| November & December | Food Pantries<br>Minister's Discretionary Fund  |
| January & February  | Fuel Assistance<br>Minister's Discretionary Fund  |
| March               | UUA Disaster Relief Fund for Texas winter storm   |
| April               | AAPI and Mass Asian American Commission   |
| May                 | RIA House   |
| June                | Salvation Army Backpack Donation program  |

MAAC

The Middleborough Area Assistance Coalition (MAAC) is an area wide coalition that represents agencies and organizations dealing directly or indirectly with conditions that are detrimental to the health, safety, or social well-being of individuals and/or families in the service area. Our Church has been involved almost since its inception. This year, Cheryl MacQueen served as the Church's representative to the group until retiring after the September 2020 meeting. Cheryl had been a member since the group's beginning, and we thank her for all her years of service to both the Church and our community. Sandy Smiley began attending as the Church's representative in October 2020.

The group changed its organizing structure in 2020 to no longer have specific officers or collect dues. Rev. Sarah has continued as group facilitator. The existing funds in the group's bank account were distributed to the Salvation Army, Matthew Mission, and the YMCA for their assistance programs. The group also changed to meeting on the second Thursday of the month at 2:30 pm. Meetings have been virtual since the March 2020 shutdown. Rev. Sarah and Sandy continued to attend regular meetings and report back to the Church on the group's initiatives and projects.

Sandy has reached out to MAAC members on behalf of the Church's Social Justice Team for suggestions for recipients for our Cash in the Plate collections. They recommended the Salvation Army's program that provides backpacks of essential items such as hygiene kits to the homeless. The PC approved this program for the Cash in the Plate collection in June.

## **Governance/Administration**

Report Contributors: Bob Waterman, *Vice President of the Parish Committee, Governance & Policy Team Leader, Leadership Development Team Leader, Staff Support Team Leader*

### Parish Committee

The Parish Committee worked continuously this year to address many issues from mundane to more significant to the life and future of our Church. Key items included:

- Quarterly budget meetings and ongoing budget decisions.
- Listening circles, held in the winter and organized by Bob Waterman. They were well-attended, well-received, and provided valuable feedback and engagement. The PC followed up with a summary of the feedback to the Congregation.
- Design and planning for our Annual Pledge Drive, a substantial project. Gil Cote and Marc MacQueen led a task group to contact pledge units.
- Leading the Congregation, with assistance from the Social Justice Team, through a process to consider displaying a Black Lives Matter banner.
- Forming task groups and teams.
- Addressing update and revision of policies and procedural guidelines.

### Governance/Policy

The Governance/Policy Team, comprised of Bob Waterman (Leader) and Rev. Sarah Person, serves to: (1) Examine current governance and management structures and methods, and make recommendations on revised or new approaches; (2) Draft and facilitate implementation of changes to Church by-laws; (3) Create, review, and revise policies as needed; (4) Design mechanisms for effective communication of policies (e.g., Policy Handbook, postings on website).

This year's projects included: (1) Developing charges and charters for task groups and teams; (2) Preparing proposed revisions to policies and procedural guidelines.

Thanks go to the committees, teams, and individuals who assisted with the above.

### Leadership Development

The Leadership Development Team consists of members Bob Waterman (Leader), Jim Bonnar, Norm Grenier, and Rev. Sarah Person. The team's purpose is to assist with the cultivation of leadership in the Congregation. Specific objectives include: (1) Helping define and establish the mission and vision of leadership in the Church; (2) Assessing needs for leadership development opportunities; (3) Developing and delivering leadership development activities, such as training, retreats, and meetings for Church leaders; this may include identifying outside activities at the regional level, UUA, or other sources, and identifying resources to provide activities in-house; (4) Assisting with seeking out and identifying individuals in the Congregation who have the skills, abilities, experience, and willingness to serve in leadership positions on committees, teams, and task groups.

This year, the team: (1) Facilitated a retreat for the Parish Committee at the start of the Church year; (2) Sought candidates for Parish Committee positions for the upcoming year.

### Staff Support

The Staff Support Team, consisting of Bob Waterman (Leader) and Marc MacQueen, provides support to the Church's professional staff and to the Minister, as staff supervisor. This year, the team examined staff compensation and benefits issues, and made recommendations for staff salary increases for next year's budget.

## Physical Plant/Infrastructure

Report Contributors: Sue Sherman, *Building & Grounds Team Leader*; Alan Melchior, *Technology Team*

It takes many hands to keep our Church in good working order. Our glorious old building and surrounding grounds continue to delight, but also present many challenges to keep things presentable and functioning properly. Many thanks go to all those who work tirelessly to see after this very important work.

### Building & Grounds

Susie Sherman continued to lead the efforts to oversee the work of maintaining the building and grounds. She notes that there are many individuals who contribute to this work, and the regular contributors are Alan Melchior, Marc Mac Queen, JR Pucillo-Dunphy, and Bill Sherman. Susie does a good bit of hands-on work, as well. Steve Page, our Sexton, also contributes to our general upkeep in addition to his regular maintenance duties. The summary below captures only some of the major work that was done during the year.

Upkeep and maintenance:

- Susie, Bill, and Steve replaced the Parish Hall filters three times.
- The filters in the Sanctuary are still not dirty and we hope to seek and upgrade to the filtering of air into the sanctuary.
- Robert's roofing replaced the second third of the roof: 1. Final part of the parlor, 2. Driveway entry organ addition, 3. two gable rooves. Also repaired some shingles at the base of the gable facing the driveway.
- Alan produced an RFP, and Susie and Alan arranged for paint work and repairs to trim of the exterior. Paul Macuch of Macuch Restoration and Painting secured the bid for Portico, water-table, and first, second, and third floor painting and repair of trim. A revision to the original proposal was required for this work. Macuch and one of his carpenters replaced the sill beam of the steeple facing the Memorial Garden.
- The batteries in the lights on the back stairs were replaced twice.
- Steve added paneling to the ceiling of the downstairs back hallway, in preparation for installation of a dropped ceiling. He also encased the back hall heat duct with paneling in preparation for installation of cabinet in the back hall.
- Steve continued to handle pest control.
- Veterans Lawn Service continued to do lawn mowing.
- Susie removed the South Main Street facing ivy from the stone foundation.

In the works:

- Alan, Susie, and Susan Hotchkiss have met with Paul Macuch, Paul's plasterer, and Mike Eaton of Andover Organ regarding the planned painting and repair of the Chancel ceiling and walls. Mike Eaton submitted a proposal for safely removing the organ pipes that might be affected by detritus fall or in the air during the planned work. We expect a proposal from Paul Macuch for planned work which also includes the construction and finishing or railing on both sides of the chancel stairs.

Elevator Inspection - The state inspection of our elevator was done November 4, 2020. According to current regulations, inspections must be done every two years, meaning our next inspection needs to be done on or before November 4, 2022. Above and Beyond Elevator technicians must do the pre-inspection maintenance one month before the inspection.

### Expansion

The Expansion Task Group has been inactive this year.

### Green Sanctuary

Though inactive this year, the Green Sanctuary Team still serves to advocate for engaging in environmentally responsible and sustainable practices in all that we do, including purchase and use of goods and materials, energy conservation, and recycling.

### Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden Team, led by Mike Schroeder, oversees maintenance and care of the Memorial Garden, which is the repository for ashes of former members of our Church. The Garden is a place of contemplation and remembrance, and many hands have contributed to its upkeep and beautiful presentation. Spring garden clean-up was facilitated by Susan Hotchkiss this year.

### Technology

The Technology Team keeps our technical systems and equipment in working order, maintains our Church website, social media accounts, and email addresses, and records and distributes for broadcast our Church services. Contributors include JR Pucillo-Dunphy, Maria Pucillo-Dunphy, Rob Dragunas, Mark Belanger, Alan Melchior, Valarie Ortelt, and Rev. Sarah.

This Year:

- Rev. Sarah purchased a personal Zoom license through the UUMA and coordinated its use by the Church over the course of the year. The Church recently purchased its own Zoom license for general use, and it will be managed by the Office Administrator.
- Alan, Dan, and JR secured equipment and arranged temporary wiring to support broadcast of weekly worship services over Zoom.
- The Church upgraded its Comcast internet service (at no additional cost) to support the use of Zoom in the building.
- An informal task group, including Rev. Sarah, Susan Hotchkiss, Kelly Lownds, JR Pucillo-Dunphy, Dan Hotchkiss, Steve Larrett, and Alan Melchior met to: (1) Begin exploring the technology required for continued broadcast/livestreaming services following return to regular worship services in the fall, and (2) Begin identifying both equipment needs and short-term changes in wiring and lighting that might be included in work to be done on the Chancel ceiling.
- JR procured and installed cameras for the outside of the front of the church to cover the area where the new Black Lives Matter banner is installed.

## Finances

Report Contributors: Marc MacQueen, *Treasurer*; Bob Waterman, *Fundraising Coordinator*

### Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget Highlights

- Some pledge units have indicated that while they will try to complete their pledges for this year, they may be unable to do so.
- We had an overwhelming response to our special ask for contributions in the spring of 2020, many of which were received this fiscal year.
- We had carryover funds from the Paycheck Protection Program grant secured at the end of the last fiscal year.
- The budget included a more modest amount than usual for fundraisers, given that all would need to be held virtually. The Congregation responded well and we managed to exceed our projected take.
- Expenses were lower than usual, mainly due to decreases in staff professional expenses and committee budget allocations. The decreases in staff professional expenses were not consistent with Fair Compensation principles; however, staff members were willing to forgo much of the benefit due to decreased opportunities to participate in professional development activities during the pandemic. There was also some decrease in expenses due to the building being mainly closed for the year.
- We expect the net result to be a fairly significant budget surplus at the end of the fiscal year.

### Funds in Checking Accounts

| <b>Account</b>    | <b>Fund</b>                   | <b>Balance as of May 31, 2021</b> |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Church Debit Card | Operations-Unrestricted       | \$1,219.80                        |
| Church Operations | Cash in the Plate *           | \$1,100.00                        |
| Church Operations | I Love My Church              | \$8,240.00                        |
| Church Operations | Minister's Discretionary Fund | \$1,480.00                        |
| Church Operations | Prepaid Pledges               | \$20,360.00                       |
| Church Operations | Checkbook Balance             | \$32,053.50                       |

\* Cash in the Plate Funds are in account pending check disbursement to recipients.

## Investments

The Church has several investment funds, some that are restricted, and one general fund that is unrestricted. The Investment Team, consisting of Bill Howe (Lead), Marc MacQueen, Gene Phillips, and Alan Melchior, oversees the investment strategy for the managed funds.

| <b>Investments</b>    | <b>Balance as of 5/31/20</b> | <b>Balance as of 5/31/21</b> | <b>Change</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| Unrestricted Fund     | \$92,384                     | \$153,708                    | + \$61,324    |
| Scott Trust           | \$19,343                     | \$25,039                     | + \$5,696     |
| Mary Fuller Fund      | \$25,581                     | \$33,113                     | + \$7,532     |
| I Love My Church Fund | \$19,675                     | \$7,675                      | - \$12,000    |
| Organ Fund            | \$1,029                      | \$1,332                      | + \$160       |
| Memorial Garden Fund  | \$1,172                      | \$1,517                      | + \$345       |

### Notes:

- Annual Net Growth percent for our investments was 17.7%.
- \$12,000 from the I Love My Church funds was used to pay for repairs to the Church roof.

### Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget Notes

- This year, the Parish Committee undertook the work of the Annual Pledge Drive. Gil Cote and Marc MacQueen led a task group to contact pledge units. Much thanks to Jim Bonnar, Dan Hotchkiss, Bill Howe, Dorine Levasseur, Cheryl MacQueen, John Mullen, Tanya Trzeciak, and Bob Waterman for their hard work and commitment to this effort. So far, the amount pledged exceeds last year's total; however, we fell somewhat short of our goal of \$180,000, needed to fully fund next year's budget.
- We expect to increase the income from fundraisers, as we will have opportunities for in-person events.
- We hope to continue to move toward fair compensation for our staff. However, we expect to again offer decreased amounts for staff professional expenses.
- We expect to increase committee budgets, notably RE and Music, as they gear up for in-person activities.
- We hope to continue to support the UUA's Annual Program Fund.

For the past several years, the Congregation has been focused on maintaining a fully funded budget, something we managed to achieve in the prior two fiscal years, despite the challenges of the pandemic. Looking ahead, as we emerge from pandemic life, our hope is for increased participation by current members and friends, and newcomers who may have found us during virtual Church life over the last year.