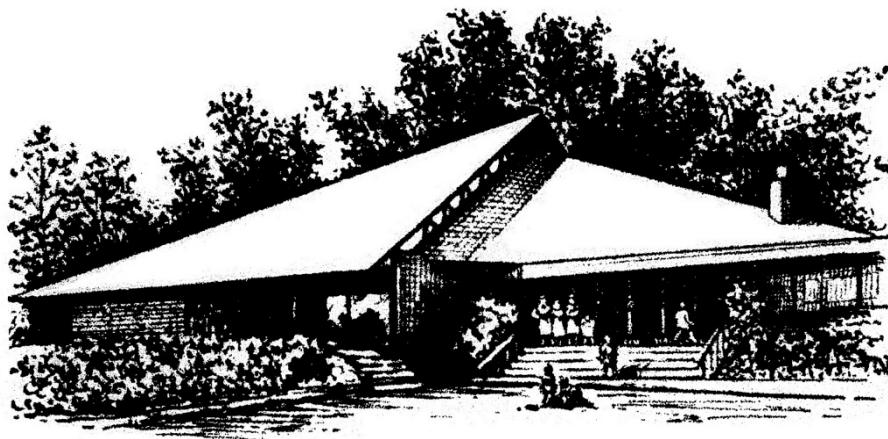


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# ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

**SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 2019**



Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
at White Plains  
468 Rosedale Avenue  
White Plains, NY 10605

*Founded 1909*

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## **Mission Statement**

Nurture each other  
in our spiritual journeys,  
Foster compassion and understanding  
within and beyond our community, and  
Engage in service  
to transform ourselves and our world

## **Vision Statement**

Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
at White Plains will be a welcoming “sanctuary without walls”  
that promotes diversity, fellowship, spiritual growth,  
and inspiration, while committing to people and the planet  
through social action and service.



## Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation at White Plains

### 2018–2019 Annual Report

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**Board of Trustees**

**2018–2019**

'19 Dean Silverberg, Chair  
'20 Albino Rocchi, Vice-Chair  
'19 Chris Kortlandt, Treasurer  
'19 Terri Kung, Secretary  
'19 Karen Dreher  
'21 Aimee Katz  
'20 Paula Meighan  
'21 Stephen Miller  
'21 Joann Prinzivalli  
'20 Lori Saccardi  
'19 Adine Usher

**Nominees for**

**Board of Trustees**

**2019–2020**

'20 Chris Kortlandt, Treasurer  
'20 Terri Kung, Secretary  
'22 Joe Majsak  
'22 Debbie Manetta  
'22 Alexander Sehdeva  
'20 Nicole Turygin

## ■ NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee is charged with identifying a slate of candidates to fill open seats on the CUUC Board of Trustees each year. The Committee is comprised of six CUUC members, each serving a term of three years. The election of members is staggered such that each year two members rotate off and are replaced by two new members.

The Nominating Committee hereby presents the following slate to be voted on at the June 2, 2019, Annual Meeting:

- **For three-year terms as BOT representatives, Joe Majsak, Debbie Manetta, and Alexander Sehdeva;**
- **For a one-year term to fill a vacant BOT seat, Nicole Turygin;**
- **For a one-year term as Secretary, Terri Kung; and**
- **For a one-year term as Treasurer, Chris Kortlandt.**

As well as developing the slate of candidates for the Board of Trustees, the Nominating Committee works with the Board of Trustees to identify new members for our Committee.

- **Nominating Committee in consultation with the current Board of Trustees recommends Karen Dreher and Randy Marshall for three-year terms as members of the Nominating Committee.**

Many thanks to the Nominating Committee members: Chris Breault, Jane Dixon, Julie Gans, Bevin Maguire, and Carole Mehta for their conscientious work on this Committee.

*Submitted by David Bowen, Chair*

## ■ NOMINEES

*The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following members of the Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation at White Plains as nominees for the Board of Trustees and for the Nominating Committee, to be voted on at the Annual Meeting on June 2, 2019.*

### **Chris Kortlandt (for a one-year term as Treasurer)**

Chris and Catherine Kortlandt have been attending CUUC for over twenty years. All their children attended the RE program, and Chris has served in various leadership roles over the years, including the RE Council and a previous stint on the Board of Trustees around 2000-2003. Since then he has been very active in the annual Auction, Annual Giving Campaigns, and served for many years as Chair of the Finance Committee. In his professional life Chris has been employed by Rabobank for over 25 years in the Global Client Solutions financing area. Chris is honored to be nominated for another year as Treasurer.

### **Terri Kung (for a one-year term as Secretary)**

Terri became an official member of the congregation in 2017. She currently serves as Secretary on the Board of Trustees, is a member of the CUUC Choir, facilitates a Journey Group, and is on the Refugee

Resettlement Social Justice Team. Terri is also a PlaceKeeper and regularly takes part during Days in Place. Professionally, Terri has over twenty years' experience teaching English as a second language. Her experience extends to curriculum and program design, materials development, language teaching, teacher training, and program management in the United States, Asia, and the Middle East. Most recently she was the Program Director at the Chinese Language School of Connecticut for 5 years. When she is not managing her household and family affairs and is not busy with CUUC activities, she sings, crochets, and plays Scrabble. Terri lives in Harrison with her husband, Darwei, and her son, Madison.

**Joe Majsak** (for a three-year term as Trustee)

Joe was born on Feb 8 1955, and raised in Plainville, CT, the eldest of four sons and one daughter born to parents Walter and Anne Majsak. He graduated from Bates College in Lewiston, ME, in 1977 with a BA majoring in Religion. He has worked for Proctor & Gamble, Liberty Mutual, and General Reinsurance Corp/General Star and Genesis subsidiaries, where he ultimately served as SVP/Chief Marketing Officer until his retirement in May 2017. Joe has been married to his college sweetheart Anne (Allen) Majsak since 1979, and they are the parents of Caroline (Majsak) Eichmann, David Majsak, and Emily Majsak, and grandparents of Ava and Jack Eichmann. Joe has served the CUUC community on Finance Comm., Grounds Comm., Mission Statement Comm., Annual Pledge Comm., Goods and Services Auction Comm., Summer BBQ, Journey Group facilitator, and Religious Education instructor. He has also served as a facilitator for various sessions during Sunday services, when requested. His current hobbies include being a professional motorcyclist working as an official for professional bicycle racing competition; seeking to become a US Triathlon Official and US Triathlon motorcycle pilot; hiking with Anne; and physical fitness activities at the White Plains YMCA. Anne and Joe enjoy the outdoors and plan to visit our National Parks in retirement, amongst other outdoor adventures on their rapidly growing "list of adventures." Joe is president of Westchester Beemers Motorcycle Club, whose activities include community service such as providing pro bono motorcycle marshal protection for participants in the National Multiple Sclerosis Society annual "Bike NYC" and other regional charity bicycling events. He celebrated his 60th birthday by riding solo from San Francisco to NYC in 49.5 hours, after riding cross country from White Plains to San Francisco in 5 days (Iron Butt Association "50 Sea to Sea" event).

**Debbie Manetta** (for a three-year term as Trustee)

Debbie Manetta discovered CUUC about 11 years ago after holding a memorial service here for her mother, who had passed away in Debbie's hometown of Chicago. Debbie's family did not practice any religion when she grew up, but her father is Jewish, and culturally she identified with Judaism. Her mother was half Jewish and half Protestant. Nearly two years ago, Debbie wanted to give CUUC a try and, after doing so, quickly realized it would become a regular part of her life. She loves the services, the choir, Adam's piano playing, and so much more, including the many new friends she has made. Additionally, she enjoys co-facilitating a wonderful Journey Group. Debbie is finishing her 11th year as Director of Communications for Mamaroneck Public Schools. As a writer/editor, media spokesperson, and marketer, she has managed PR for national consumer magazines; served as vice president for an entrepreneurial sports and entertainment company; held the position of Press Secretary for a U.S. Senate candidate in Illinois; and conducted national campaigns for Fortune 500 consumer clients at

Edelman Public Relations Worldwide. A graduate of Northwestern University, Debbie and her husband Ed have three children – Lindsey, Nicki and James – and reside in Larchmont.

**Alexander Sehdeva** (for a three-year term as Trustee)

Alexander Sehdeva and his family started attending CUUC in the summer of 2014. Since then he has taught RE in the 4th–5th and 8th–9th grades including 8th–9th OWL (Our Whole Lives) and Coming of Age. His daughters have attended RE regularly since they were 5, and will be graduating elementary school in June. Alex, Laura, Claire, and Keira enjoy attending the monthly Family Journey Group and are looking forward to taking a more active role in the group next year as the inimitable Montrose family departs the group. Alex works as a computer programmer and market risk manager. In his spare time, he practices classical guitar and studies artificial intelligence.

**Nicole Turygin** (for a one-year term as Trustee)

Nicole joined CUUC in April 2019, after several years of involvement in community projects at CUUC. She grew up in Florida and arrived at CUUC after living in several states including Washington, D.C., Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Indianapolis, Indiana. Nicole has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology and works as a psychologist. She loves yoga, travel, gardening, poetry, and languages (she speaks four!). Nicole says that CUUC is a community that supports her spiritual expression and her practice to live the first principle of the faith.

**Karen Dreher** (for a three-year term as Nominating Committee replacement)

Karen Morrison Dreher arrived at CUUC with her husband and two daughters in September 1992. Coming from different faiths, Karen and Ted were seeking a spiritual home for their family that embraced their shared values and also accepted their different religious backgrounds. They quickly knew they were in the right place. During the last 27 years, Karen has been very involved with many different aspects of life at CUUC. She has served on both the Personnel and Nominating Committees, spent many years as a “Matzah Mama” (the group of women who organized CUUC’s Passover Seder), and had the pleasure of interviewing and hiring Louise Jacono, one of our wonderful church administrators, who worked at CUUC for many years. Karen played many roles in RE: she served two three-year terms as a member of the RE Council (at that time called the RE Board), chaired one year, and was a member of three different DRE search committees as well as the DRE Relations Committee for two different DREs. Karen also taught RE classes for about four years and was a Coming-of-Age Mentor one year. Karen led the process for the name change at CUUC (from Community Unitarian Church) and chaired the What’s In A Name committee. In recent years, Karen was a journey group leader and has just completed a three-year term on the Board of Trustees, including a year as vice chair. Professionally, Karen is a clinical social worker and works part-time as a bereavement counselor at Hospice of Westchester. She also has a private psychotherapy practice in Hartsdale.

**Randy Marshall** (for a three-year term as Nominating Committee replacement)

Randy Marshall is a longtime member of CUUC and has played many roles in the congregation including teaching in RE, member of the RE council, work on the Economics Social Action Team, Board Chair, and member (and Chair) of the Committee on Ministry. He is happy to take up a new role on the Nominating Committee.

## ■ BOARD OF TRUSTEES

How time does indeed fly by! This year's annual meeting marks the end of my two years as Chair of the CUUC Board of Trustees.

It has once again been a very busy – and productive – year for the Board of Trustees. As in the past, we have closely collaborated with our ministerial and professional staff, including Pam Parker, our Congregational Administrator, and Michele Rinaldi, our Coordinator of Religious Education; as well as with the Program Council; Religious Education Council; various committee chairs; and Members and Friends of CUUC.

First, a brief note about the Board, three members of which you will elect today for three-year terms. Every year three members of the Board finish their terms and rotate off the Board, to be replaced by a newly elected slate proposed by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee. In addition to these three new Members, you also will be electing another Member for a one-year interim term to complete the term of a Board Member who is departing after two years.

The Board slate being proposed to you today includes Joe Majsak, Debbie Manetta, and Alex Sehdeva, each for three-year terms, along with Terri Kung, our Secretary, and Chris Kortlandt, our current Treasurer, who have each graciously agreed to be nominated for those positions again for another year. Nicole Turygin will join us for the one-year interim term. They all will be joining current members Al Rocchi, Paula Meighan, Aimee Katz, Steve Miller, and Joann Prinzivalli. Those completing their three-year terms are Karen Dreher, Adine Usher, and myself.

Let me share with you some significant highlights and developments from a Board and Congregational perspective.

**New Director of Religious Education** On July 1, we will be joined by our new DRE, Tracey Breneman, a seasoned religious educator. She comes to us from her most recent dual positions as part-time DRE at UU congregations in Hastings and Mount Kisco. Current part-time DRE Perry Montrose and CRE Michele Rinaldi have graciously agreed to stay on until mid-August to assist with an orderly transition.

**Sabbatical Minister** After six (6) years in the CUUC Pulpit, our Rev. Meredith Garmon will be taking his well-deserved six (6) month Sabbatical. Filling in for Rev. Garmon will be the Rev. Kimberley Debus, who many of you recall shared the pulpit with Rev. Garmon for our Sunday Service on May 19. During that weekend Rev. Debus had an opportunity to meet with many groups and committees, including the Board, the Committee on Ministry, Social Justice Teams, the RE Council, Caring and Sharing, the Welcoming Committee, and others.

Rev. Debus will join us officially on October 1, 2019, when Rev. Garmon begins his six-month Sabbatical. He will return on April 1, 2020.

**Second Westchester Joint Congregational Service** On March 17, 2019, CUUC hosted the Second Annual Westchester inter-congregational Sunday Service joining together the ministers, musicians, and congregants of the five Westchester Unitarian Universalist Congregations in a single service in our sanctuary. As with last year's service, this combined service was well attended and a warm spiritual glow permeated the sanctuary atmosphere. A large thank you to Board member Adine Usher for drawing on the administrative "game plan" she co-developed last year for enabling the day to be smooth sailing all the way, and a special thank you to Jane Dixon for making the day a success. Thanks

also to Tom Rosenbaum and team for handling the larger than usual number of worshipers in the sanctuary.

**Cultural Diversity and Awareness/Board Retreat** In my Report last June, I informed you that the Board had been in regular communication with Rev. Erica Baron, Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Kingston, NY, concerning the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (“DMIS”) for measuring cultural awareness and diversity, and that Rev. Baron had agreed to present a half-day DMIS program for our Congregation. On Saturday, October 20, 2018, Rev. Baron conducted the workshop, which was attended by the Board of Trustees and twenty others. After the Workshop, Rev. Baron participated in the Board’s Retreat that afternoon to directly assist the Board in continuing to explore issues of cultural awareness and diversity.

**Refugee Resettlement Committee** CUUC will again be participating in the financial and other support of a second Afghan family to be settled in Westchester County. Thank you to Jane Dixon and Robin Rocchi, our CUUC liaisons to the group of Westchester Congregations – ICNA (Interfaith Council for New Americans) – that will welcome the newest family.

**Building Committee/Strategic Planning Update** The Strategic Planning Committee has been hard at work. A special thank you to Committee Chair Creighton Cray and team. Earlier this month, CUUC engaged architect Mark Behr and his firm, Richard Henry Behr Architect P.C., to begin the initial phase of preparing preliminary designs, costs, and duration estimates to, among other things, make the main level of our building and lower level of the sanctuary accessible to individuals with disabilities, and to design restroom improvements to create code compliant facilities. More information will be available as the initial phase progresses.

**Rentals Committee** As described more fully elsewhere in this Annual Report, CUUC continues to derive a significant amount of income from our tenants. Among our more noteworthy rentals are longtime tenants the Montessori Garden preschool program, and the Westchester Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy (WCSPP). Overseeing the Rentals Committee this year were Tom Wacht, Russ Gold, and Gail Johnston, with our Congregational Administrator Pam Parker managing our overall CUUC rental program. Although the rentals are expected to come in slightly below budget, in addition to our regular rentals we have had a few television and film production rental fees that were used to re-supply the Building Fund. In this connection, because of our ideal location (close enough to Columbus Circle that New York City-based unions will work locally) and the generous size of our parking area and building spaces, we benefit from television and film productions who use us to park their vehicles and provide meals to their cast and crews during location shoots.

**Community Courtesy Rates** In addition to our market-rate rentals, we are honored to continue to serve the wider community by providing meeting space at courtesy rates for religious, charitable, and non-profit organizations such as Westchester Community for Humanistic Judaism, League of Women Voters, Amnesty International, Furniture Sharehouse, and the Westchester Council for the Blind. Our unique sanctuary continues to be selected by renters as an inspiring location for memorials, celebrations, and concerts.

**Safety Committee** A sub-Committee of the Board, led by Aimee Katz and Paula Meighan, has been looking into various safety issues for CUUC. Among other matters, CUUC hosted a CPR and Safety workshop presented by the American Red Cross, and the Safety Committee arranged for a “walk

through" by the White Plains Police Department to assist us in evaluating safety issues at CUUC. The Committee will also work closely with the new DRE as we update our CUUC Safe Congregations Policy.

**The Visual Display Committee (VDC)** The VDC has developed a Policy for reviewing display requests. In keeping with CUUC's policies and protocols for reviewing new policies, a 60-day review period will be undertaken by the stakeholders: Program Council, Congregational Administrator Pam Parker, and Rev. Meredith Garmon.

**Summer Worship** As summer approaches, plans are already well underway for our upcoming Summer Worship Services. Longtime Member Tom Rosenbaum will be coordinating the worship services and speakers and Kim Force will be arranging for musicians. Please look for opportunities to participate.

*Respectively submitted by Dean Silverberg, chair*

## ■ MINISTER

**Rev. Meredith Garmon**

**2018–19**

53 Sundays of 2018–19

Sunday	In Pulpit?	Sermon Title (if "in"), or explanation (if "out").	Guest Preacher Or Service Leader
Jul 1	Out	Vacation	Rev. LoraKim Joyner
Jul 8	Out	Vacation/attended service	John Bell
Jul 15	Out	Study	Catherine Torpey
Jul 22	Out	Study	John Schwam
Jul 29	Out	Study	Jef Gamblee
Aug 5	Out	Guest Preaching: Croton	Karen Leahy
Aug 12	In	"Truth: Who Needs It?"	
Aug 19	In	"Poetry Celebration: Nikki Giovanni"	
Aug 26	Out	Guest Preaching: Queens	Lara Campbell
Sep 2	Out	Attended service	Nate Walker
Sep 9	In*	"Ingathering: Water Communion" (All-Ages Service)	
Sep 16	In	"Living Your Faith"	
Sep 23	In	"Forgiveness, Kavanaugh, Cowbirds"	
Sep 30	In	"The American Idea"	
Oct 7	In	"Discovering America"	
Oct 14	In	"Learning to Love Diversity"	
Oct 21	In	"Holy Anger"	
Oct 28	In	All Hallow's Eve	
Nov 4	In	"Why We Vote & Why We Don't"	
Nov 11	In	"Welcome the Stranger"	
Nov 18	In	Thanksgiving	
Nov 25	In*	"The UU Path of Zen"	w/ Truta, DeMatteo
Dec 2	In	"Curiosity and Dead Cats"	

Dec 9	In	"Justice on Earth"	
Dec 16	In*	Christmas Pageant	
Dec 23	In	"Reality Amid Ideology"	
Dec 30	Out	"Forgiveness"	Rev. Arlin Roy
Jan 6	In	"Simplicity"	
Jan 13	In	"Question Box"	
Jan 20	In	"What is White Culture?"	
Jan 27	In	"God is Not One"	
Feb 3	In	"Creature Comforts"	
Feb 10	In	"Grief Amid Denial"	
Feb 17	In	"Deepest Desire"	
Feb 24	In	"What Anger Does"	
Mar 3	In	"Humility"	
Mar 10	In	"Hope Amid Despair"	
Mar 17	In*	Joint Justice Sunday	Joint Westchester
Mar 24	Out	Vacation	Prinzivalli, Arrien
Mar 31	In*	Canvass Kick-Off Musical	
Apr 7	In	"Renewal"	
Apr 14	In	"Animal Blessing (Fragility/Resilience)"	
Apr 21	In	Easter	
Apr 28	In*	Passover Seder Service	
May 5	In*	Flower & Music Celebration	
May 12	In	"Beauty"	
May 19	In*	"The Beauty of Differences"	w/ Rev. Kimberley Debus
May 26	In	"War! Hunh! What is it Good For?"	
Jun 2	Out	"Borders, Boundaries, and Edges"	Catherine Kortlandt
Jun 9	In	"Crossing the Line"	
Jun 16	Out	RE Sunday	Perry, Michele, et al
Jun 23	Out	Juneteenth	Petra Tombs
Jun 30	Out	TBA	John Bell

\*Did not preach a full sermon; participated substantially in the service.

2018–19 was my sixth year as CUUC's minister, and my 15<sup>th</sup> year as a UU minister.

Blogging: Throughout the year, as I have since arriving in White Plains, I maintained two blog sites: "The Liberal Pulpit" is our message out to the world. I post mostly sermons here – and occasionally other commentary. The Liberal Pulpit has a wide audience of readers all over. "CUC Matters" is where I post news specifically about CUUC developments or events. Naturally, this one has a more limited readership.

### Themes of the Month

Our theme-based ministry program finished its sixth year in 2018-19, and our Journey Group program finished its fifth year. Since our Journey Groups did not begin until summer 2014, the 2013–14 themes were used only for preaching topics.

Starting in summer 2015 our themes have also been the themes used at First Unitarian Society of Westchester (Hastings), and, starting in summer 2016, all Westchester UU Congregations have been using the same themes.

When the theme-based ministry concept was launched in 2013, I envisioned that there would be only 30 themes. The 10 themes in a given year would repeat on a three-year cycle. In the summer of 2016, on the verge of starting the second time through the cycle, the Westchester ministers decided on a modified approach. Under the new plan, each year's themes duplicate many (about half – 5 or 6) of the themes from three years before – allowing for returning to important themes and exploring them in more depth, and from the different vantage point at which we find ourselves after three years. At the same time, 4–5 slots were opened up each year for wholly new themes.

The themes for 2019–20, however, do not include any wholly new themes – which seemed a good idea for a year in which I will be on sabbatical for six of the 10 months. Of the ten 2019–20 themes:

Three were themes three years before, and not six years before (Awe, Compassion, Grace).

Four were themes six years before, not three years before (Authority, Redemption, Ecospirituality, Vision).

And three were themes both three and six years before (Covenant, Joy, God).

By the Jun 2020, we will have had themes of the month for 70 months, during which we will have explored 43 different themes, 21 of them twice, and 3 thrice.

	<u>2013-14</u>	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>2015-16</u>
Sep	Vision	Faith	Renewal
Oct	Evil	Death	Wonder
Nov	Covenant /Democracy	Forgiveness	Hospitality
Dec	God	Hope	Letting Go
Jan	Ecospirituality	Justice	Resistance
Feb	Religious Authority	Love	Desire
Mar	Redemption	Brokenness	Liberation
Apr	Freedom	Transformation	Creation
May	Mercy	Transcendence	Blessing
Jun	Happiness/Joy	Presence /Mindfulness	Simplicity
	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>
Sep	Covenant*	Forgiveness*	Letting Go*
Oct	Awe	Death*	American Experiment
Nov	Evil*	Mindfulness*	Hospitality*
Dec	God*	Embodiment	Curiosity
Jan	Mystery	Resilience	Simplicity*
Feb	Grace	Love*	Desire*
Mar	Mercy*	Wandering	Humility
Apr	Compassion	Faith*	Renewal*
May	Joy*	Truth	Beauty
Jun	Freedom*	Justice*	Borders/Boundaries

<b><u>2019-20</u></b>	
Sep	Covenant*†
Oct	Awe*
Nov	Compassion*
Dec	Grace*
Jan	Authority†
Feb	God*†
Mar	Redemption†
Apr	Ecospirituality†
May	Joy*†
Jun	Vision†

\*Theme re-visit from three years before

†Theme re-visit from six years before

The creation of *On the Journey* – a monthly 12-page magazine of exploratory writings on the theme of the month along with questions, exercises, and a session plan for Journey Group meetings – has been a major undertaking of my ministry. It takes me about 25 hours each month to find, curate, and write the content, and do the layout, to produce an issue of *On the Journey*, and I have found the work deeply rewarding.

All issues of *On the Journey* are available as PDF files at: [cucmatters.org/p/journey-groups.html](http://cucmatters.org/p/journey-groups.html).

*Submitted by Rev. Meredith Garmon*

## ■ LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Lifespan Religious Education Ministry at CUUC continued to be vibrant through a year of transition in 2018–2019. Previous full-time Director of Lifespan Religious Education and Faith Development Perry Montrose stayed on as a quarter-time Director of Faith Development to hold the RE vision, facilitate Faith Development Friday programming, be onsite one Sunday month, and give direction and support to the new three-quarter time onsite Religious Education Coordinator, Michele Rinaldi.

The Religious Education Council Co-chairs, Laura Goodspeed and Christine Haran, assumed additional responsibilities for organizing programming and helping to lead the RE ministry. They were stupendous volunteers in the year of transition. The other REC members were Sabrina Cleary, Cindy Kramer, Laura Sehdeva, and Janice Silverberg.

The RE Covenanting Ceremony kicked off the year and two grades were in each of the **RE classes**.

**Curricula** were as follows: Pre-K – Chalice Children; K-1<sup>st</sup> – A Discovery Year; 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> – This I Believe (Affirmation Year); 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> – Toolbox of Faith; 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> – Riddle and Mystery; 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> – Our Whole Lives; 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> - Youth Group. Our Whole Lives was also held for 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. There was a Teacher Orientation and two mid-year Teacher Enrichment Programs, facilitated by Perry Montrose and Michele Rinaldi, that focused on teachers as mentors, how to make classes less like formal school, and addressing teachers' questions and concerns.

In the **Youth Program**, Chandeerah Davis resigned as the Youth Program Coordinator mid-year due to life circumstances. The Youth Group struggled to gain momentum with Chandeerah's absences and then resignation. Although Julie Gans and Cyndi Tillman provided a consistent presence as Youth Advisors, attendance dwindled. There was a lack of response to programming offered, although the youth did host the Halloween Party for the younger children and Pancake Brunch as a fundraiser to support the Variety Show. In the fall, the RE Council and new Director of Religious Education will envision how to rebuild Youth Group and keep the youth connected.

Lyra Harada continued as Children's Music Director and Educator to add **Music Enrichment** to Children's Worship and class lessons two Sundays a month. Lyra created brief lessons that were separate from the Sunday curricula topics. In this way, she had more freedom to present music appreciation in whatever format would engage the children. Lyra also led one Special Sunday music program about "performers of color" and conducted the children for a song at the RE Sunday Service.

We continued to find opportunities to connect congregational groups and non-teachers with the children in RE. **Special Sundays** included: a session led by Jane Dixon and the Welcome Committee on the service of welcoming newcomers in the congregation; making cards and gifts for the Holiday Care Project to reach out to homebound congregants; Deck the Halls crafts; MLK Sunday focused on racial justice; the annual dance/movement program with LaToya Wigfall from Alvin Ailey Dance Company; Environmental Sunday led by the Environmental Practices Group that focused on our carbon footprint, recycling, and composting; the Easter Egg Hunt and Activities; and one on animals facilitated by Michele Rinaldi.

**Multigenerational experiences** included the Water Ceremony, Blessing of the Bags, Backpacks, and Briefcases, Thanksgiving Service, Deck the Halls, Christmas Pageant, Christmas Eve Service, Westchester UU multi-congregation Earth Day Service, Passover Seder Service (included all Seder elements in Sunday service with table seating and meal afterward), Animal Blessing Service, RE Sunday Service, Family Journey Group (parent group with simultaneous children's group), Wonder Box Stories, and Music for All Ages (with Adam Kent and musical guests). The Caring and Sharing Committee worked with RE leadership to enable families to make gift deliveries to homebound congregants during the holidays. The Special Friends Pen Pal Program included 34 children and adults paired as anonymous pen pals, who then met at a special breakfast.

**Social Justice** endeavors included: the brunch fundraisers (4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Grade Chili Sunday and Youth Group Pancakes); Backpacks for Brighter Futures facilitated by Amy Swiss from the Hunger and Homelessness SJT; the toiletries collection for the homeless shelter; book and toy collection for the Ecumenical Food Pantry; Mitten Tree; MLK Justice Sunday; welcome cards for refugee families; and the Variety Show, led by Liz Suvanto and Kate Breault, that raised over \$4,200 for PrideWorks, an LGBTQIA youth conference.

There were also special 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade Social Justice Sunday Programs that included: a transgender workshop facilitated by Tony Arrien and Joann Prinzivalli from the LGBTQIA SJT; Diversity and Music led by Lyra Harada; Animal Care and Animal Rights facilitated by Michele Rinaldi; Eco Experts and Recycle Rangers led by the Environmental Practices Group; and Homelessness with special guest Ivan Smith of Coachman Family Centers.

**Adult RE** was somewhat reduced during this transition year but the Common Read was still discussed and Faith Development Friday continued to be a big hit once a month, with pizza dinner, a circle song,

and then programming that included Family Journey Group and Faith Like a River. Journey Groups continued to be a core spiritual practice and opportunity for connection. The various Social Justice Teams held adult learning presentations and programs. Science and Spirituality, Tai Chi, and Zen meditation met regularly.

For **communication and administration**, Google Groups were used again for each class and Google Drive was used for teaching information. An opening paragraph in the weekly E-Communitarian linked to the RE News on the blog site and included wonderful articles by Michele Rinaldi about the meaningful aspects of our weekly activities. There were 81 children and youth enrolled in RE with an average Sunday RE attendance of 30. 35 teachers and 6 staff members, with many others helping with specific projects, were part of the Sunday RE teams.

There is great appreciation for the work Michele Rinaldi did as a new Religious Education Coordinator who grew in her understanding and ability to lead as each month passed. CUUC was fortunate to have her presence for this year of transition. Perry Montrose provided knowledge and continuity in his part-time transitional role.

Tracy Brenneman, an experienced religious educator based in Westchester, will be arriving at CUUC as the new full-time Director of Lifespan Religious Education. The congregation looks forward to her arrival and the next chapter in the Religious Education ministry. Religious Education remains at the heart of the congregation's mission and a vital web of connection for congregants of all ages.

*Respectfully submitted by Perry Montrose, Director of Faith Development; Laura Goodspeed and Christine Haran, RE Council co-chairs; and Michele Rinaldi, Religious Education Coordinator*

## ■ COMMUNITY MINISTER

### Rev. LoraKim Joyner

I have now been a Community Minister affiliated with CUUC for five years. It has been an honor and a privilege for which I am deeply grateful. The emphasis of my work is in Multispecies Ministry, where I promote community, intersectional justice, spirituality, and Unitarian Universalist faith in the context that all beings have inherent worth and dignity.

At CUUC I have shared my ministry with others during the past year by:

- leading the Multispecies Perspective Journey Group;
- facilitating the 8 session, "Wise Aging" discussion/support group; and
- attended Animal Social Justice Group when in town and assisting with various activities.

Beyond CUUC I have shared my ministry with others by:

- growing "One Earth Conservation" with an ever larger budget and volunteer base (see [oneearthconservation.org](http://oneearthconservation.org) for more information);
- working in five Latin America countries doing direct parrot conservation work (Guyana, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Paraguay);
- facilitating the UU First Principle Project and leading efforts at General Assembly 2018;

- participating in a book signing for *Conservation in Time of War* at the UUA Bookstore during the 2018 General Assembly;
- teaching "Loving Animal Nature" a 6-part webinar series with the Nonviolent Communication Academy;
- leading Nurture Nature workshops and Wild Walks at area UU congregations;
- preaching at area UU congregations;
- publishing a discussion guide book, much like CUUC's Journey Groups, "Nurturing Discussions and Practices: Nurturing Nature, Yourself, and Your Relationships"; and
- facilitating and distributing a documentary on our conservation work in Honduras, "Poachers and Protectors." ([youtube.com/watch?v=jDnfim9xJXU](https://youtube.com/watch?v=jDnfim9xJXU)).

For the coming year I plan to:

- extend conservation efforts to Suriname and French Guiana in 2019-2020 (I will be traveling extensively for much the time that Rev. Garmon is on sabbatical);
- facilitate Nonviolent Communication at the UU Mid-Atlantic Community (summer family camp) as the week's theme speaker; and
- continue to support UU congregations in Nonviolent Communication by leading workshops.

*Respectfully submitted by Rev. LoraKim Joyner, D.V.M*

## ■ COMMUNITY MINISTER

### Rev. Deb Morra

Career-wise, I remain in my job of over four years working for a major insurance company as a Care Manager, coordinating MLTC (Managed Long Term Care) services for plan members who qualify for this enhanced level of Medicaid coverage. My members are poor, and mostly older, infirm folks who represent an underserved population, and are often unsophisticated consumers of health care (without access to internet resources, often non-English speaking).

At CUUC, it has been a light year. Although I have taken a break from some activities in which I participated in past years, I continue to have a regular presence as Worship Associate, and remain available to collaborate with our Parish Minister as desired in matters of concern to CUUC.

I would like to express my gratitude to Meredith, the CUUC staff and Board, and to the entire congregation for their continuing support.

*Respectfully submitted by Rev. Deb Morra*

## ■ TREASURER

### Fiscal Year July 2018 – June 2019

This report will give an overview of the Congregation's financial operations and its current fiscal condition. The congregation funds are organized into three main funds, the Operating Fund, The Building Fund, and the Endowment Fund, with a few smaller accounts holding monies used for restricted or specific purposes.

**Operating Fund:** All income and expenses for the daily operations of CUUC are accounted for in the Operating Fund. The money is held in bank money market and checking accounts. Attached is a summary of the CUUC's income and expenses for the current fiscal year through April 30, 2019.

Our canvass collections (for 2018/19) through April 30, 2018, are running slightly below the original budget, and we will be slightly short at the end of June. Please look for a letter if your pledge has not been paid in full by June 30, 2019.

Dean Silverberg, Al Rocchi, and the rest of the Board have done a good job of leading us through a productive year and planning for the future. Our two major tenants, the Montessori Garden, and the Westchester Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy (WCSPP) continue under multi-year contracts. Rental income is supplemented from time to time through temporary parking lot and catering space rentals to film and television production businesses, though this past year movie rentals were limited.

**Endowment Fund:** This is essentially CUUC's savings and rainy day fund. The current balance is \$1,374,000 as of 5/13/19, before an expected endowment transfer for the operating budget: Each year we budget some of the Fund's investment income to use for operating purposes. The Endowment Fund is healthy and is invested in several different no-load mutual index funds managed by The Vanguard Group. By using eight different mutual funds, the Endowment Fund is diversified by security type and maturity. This strategy has somewhat protected our fund during the period of market unrest. During the five-year period ended 5/13/19, the Fund has earned approximately 5-6% on an annual basis and approximately 6% over the last 12 months alone.

It is anticipated that we will need to draw down a smaller amount this year than budgeted from the Endowment. At this point, we expect a draw of \$30,000 versus a budgeted draw of \$40,000.

In previous years, the Board and Finance committee have informally agreed to maintain an absolute minimum Endowment Fund level of one year of operating expenses or about \$625,000, which we are well above, and ideally we like to keep two years of operating expenses.

**Music Endowment Fund:** Several years ago a member made a generous donation of \$50,000 to create an Endowment Fund to use the earnings to support the Congregation's music program. The Fund continues to be invested in a conservative way similar to the Endowment Fund, except with a higher proportion of fixed income investments. The current balance is \$54,600 as of 5/13/19.

**Building Fund:** The Building Fund is currently invested in a Vanguard Federal Money Market Fund (\$91,000 as of 5/13/19). The building fund was established in 2008/2009 after CUUC fundraised to upgrade the building. Even though the major upgrade was deferred at that time due to the very deep financial crisis, the fund has been used to pay for the individual repairs and (upgrade) projects over the years.

These past few years, the Congregation had approved expenses including re-caulking windows in various areas of the building as well as supplementing the expense for re-doing the parking lot. The remainder of expenses for the parking lot came from an anonymous donation from one of the CUUC members as well as from past movie rentals. In the coming year, the Board along with the Building and Grounds Committee will continue to assess and plan the ongoing needs for a period of 5 years. Future TV/Film Production rentals, if any, will likely be used to replenish the Building Fund, subject to Board approval. The Board is currently looking at the various maintenance projects, including making bathrooms

handicapped accessible, adding handicap accessibility to the sanctuary, and one or more new roofs on the RE side, and looking at a capital campaign financing these rather expensive propositions.

**Escrow Account:** The Escrow Account holds the security deposits associated with the Montessori School and WCSPP rentals. The current balance is \$6,012

I would like to specially thank our bookkeeper, Diane Pearson, who has done a very nice job with the day-to-day financial operations at CUUC. In addition, a thank you to Tom Rosenbaum and his team for their help with the offering each Sunday morning, and Pam Parker for her administrative support. Finally, I'd like to thank the Finance Committee for continually bringing insight and stability to managing the overall finances at CUUC.

It has been a pleasure working with all members of congregation regarding our finances. I will look forward to continuing my role as treasurer and a special thank you for everyone's patience with me in my role gatekeeper of the finances.

*Respectfully submitted by Chris Kortlandt, Treasurer*

**As of April 30, 2019, Comparison Actual Income-Expenses to Annual Budget**

	2018/2019 Annual Budget	10 months Actual as of 4/30/19	12 months Projected Full Year
<b><u>Income</u></b>			
Pledge Income	390,000	339,901	385,000
Contributions for use of Space	115,426	94,486	111,437
<u>Other Income</u>	<u>79,000</u>	<u>71,392</u>	<u>76,517</u>
Total Income	584,426	505,779	572,954
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>			
Ministry	123,188	95,374	119,907
Sabbatical reserve	25,000	25,000	30,000
Religious Education	93,413	54,608	68,387
Administration	131,965	96,696	121,934
Buildings & grounds	147,347	125,779	164,404
Parsonage	10,730	6,322	9,600
Programs	22,625	14,349	19,740
Music	51,583	38,859	50,770
<u>Denomination</u>	<u>19,041</u>	<u>18,541</u>	<u>19,041</u>
Total Expense	624,892	475,528	603,783
Surplus/(Shortfall)	(40,466)	30,251	(30,829)
Expected Net (Income-Expenses) for last 2 months:		(61,080)	
Full Year Expected shortfall*		(30,829)	

\* To be taken from Endowment Funds

## ■ AUCTION COMMITTEE

On Saturday, November 3, 2018, our sanctuary was transformed into an “Under the Sea” paradise for our annual auction. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we raised over \$46,000 for CUUC’s operating budget. In keeping with the theme, there was a grotto, sunken treasure and a captain’s “prize” wheel. The delicious food was an assortment of “sea” inspired items (including a smoked trout dip, seafood and vegetarian paella, cod brochettes, and sea “pearls” for dessert), with a special barracuda drink! There were 17 “Bid & Bump” dinners and events at various price ranges, and 5 events were available as “bid-only,” including a cocktail party and a wine and chocolate tasting. Silent auction items, grab bags, and the always entertaining live auction rounded out the evening. Our largest fundraiser brings together the community, with over 40 volunteers working together to make it happen. From planning, marketing, soliciting donations, decorating, food prep, coordinating and organizing, there’s a job for everyone. We are always looking for new volunteers. It’s a great way to get to know your fellow congregants. Plans are underway for our next Auction – November 16, 2019 when we will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Woodstock. Pull out your “hippie” clothes and get ready to party!

*Respectfully submitted by Janet Bear, Scott Damashek, Patricia Goettel, and Anne Majsak*

## ■ BUILDING COMMITTEE/STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

During the summer of 2018, the Board of Trustees appointed a Building Committee. Its members include Creighton Cray (Chair), Scott Damashek, Russ Gold, Nicky Klemens, Chris Kortlandt (Board Liaison), Tim Lynch, Rhonda Miller, and Audra Russell.

Based on its discussions with the Board of Trustees, the Building Committee set key goals for its work:

- Make the building accessible to persons with disabilities;
- Make the building more environmentally sustainable;
- Address immediate building structure/maintenance issues;
- Improve the attractiveness of CUUC as a rental; and
- Develop a set of recommended improvements that total around \$500 K.

The committee held a series of working sessions and developed three recommendations that total \$635 K:

- Carry out needed maintenance focusing on replacing roofs and furnaces, painting, and replacing lighting (\$345) over the next five years;
- Build two bathrooms in the center of the building for all persons including individuals with disabilities (\$250 K); and
- Replace the outside ramp and make the Sanctuary accessible to persons with disabilities (\$40 K).

In December 2018, the Board of Trustees asked the Building Committee to move forward to select an architect to explore options to:

- Make the main level of the building and the lower level of the Sanctuary handicapped accessible and to create emergency egress from lower level of Sanctuary; and
- Improve the restrooms by providing new fixtures, fittings, lighting, accessories, partitions, finishes, and accessories as well as make one restroom handicap accessible.

The Building Committee issued a RFP to four vendors. The vendors were asked to provide work in three phases:

- **Phase I:** Provide design for scope of work; cost estimate and project duration estimate;
- **Phase II:** Prepare construction documents to include all necessary improvements to meet codes, standards, rules and regulations and for the Owner's intended use. Develop list of qualified contractors and conduct bidding; and
- **Phase III:** Act as Owner's representative in preparing and filing documents for Owner's signature as required by government agencies. Prepare Agreement Between Owner and Contractor. Administer the contract for construction.

The committee selected Richard Henry Behr Architect (Mark Behr). Key drivers for the selection include:

- Low cost bidder;
- Had a strong design approach; and
- Has a strong interest in the building, and father did previous work at CUUC.

The Committee will communicate out to the congregation as work with Mark Behr progresses. As a next step, the Board of Trustees will plan to launch a Capital Campaign to raise funds.

I thank the Building Committee members for their hard work and dedication.

Respectfully submitted by Creighton Cray, Chair

## ■ BUILDING AND GROUNDS

It continues to be a challenging year for our building and grounds. Recognizing that our property requires on-going, long-term investment for continued operations, the Board formed a Building Committee to identify major infrastructure projects that require funding outside of the annual B&G budget for on-going expense and maintenance. Long-term projects identified (within the next five years or so) included replacement of the roofs over the pods, the eventual replacement of the ten furnaces that heat the classrooms, replacement of the furnaces that heat the sanctuary, upgrading the lighting throughout the building to LED technology (not only for energy savings but hazardous waste stream reduction), repaving the upper parking lot, and improvements to IT and communications systems throughout the building. Additionally, doors to the building will require upgrade to reduce maintenance and to improve security. Other security upgrades include inside locks on classroom doors, video and electronic door locks on front doors, and a building wide intercom. Several costly code upgrades (CO detectors, backflow preventer, electrical system upgrades) will be required eventually but not at the moment. Unfortunately, replacing the single pane building windows and sanctuary doors is cost prohibitive at this time when compared the other required upgrades.

One immediate goal identified by the Committee was to improve accessibility to the lower sanctuary and provide true handicapped accessible the bathrooms. Since these two projects have multiple approaches and will significantly impact the building, an architect has been hired to recommend several alternatives for the Committee to consider. The work of the architect is still in its early stages and as of this writing, the Committee is anticipating the architect's preliminary recommendations, which it will review and develop into final set of recommendations that will be made to the Board.

On another front, this past winter was particularly hard with much rain falling in the area. Runoff from our property resulting from a silted over (and previously unknown) retention pond added to the water already running down Sycamore Lane from above our property to cause severe deterioration of the road in front of our driveways. Several new property owners along Sycamore Lane above our driveway entrance have formed a group to address on-going maintenance of this private road. In late winter, they invited CUUC to join in discussions since our property abuts about one quarter of the roadway along Sycamore. No formal agreement exists regarding the responsibility and participation of property owners in the care and maintenance of Sycamore Lane. This group has decided to repave, at their expense, the portion of Sycamore from our driveway to the top of Sycamore. In keeping with being a good neighbor, CUUC patched the potholes that developed in front of our driveway and has decided to repave the roadway in front of our driveway and will attempt to reach an agreement with the property owner at the bottom of Sycamore regarding repaving the lower portion. This work will begin soon.

Additionally, starting with this coming winter, the estate of the owner of the property at the top of Sycamore will no longer pay for snow removal as they had been doing for many years. This bridge has yet to be crossed but likely will be discussed over the coming months.

There are other B&G issues that are less urgent but equally important building and equipment upgrades that we will squeeze in over the next few years as budget and priorities permit.

*Respectfully submitted by Tim Lynch*

## ■ CARING AND SHARING CIRCLE

The Caring and Sharing Circle consists of assigned monthly caregivers to check the congregations pulse.

We give **temporary** support until long-term solutions can be arranged, if needed. Circle members also call upon a group of volunteers who have signed up for assisting with certain tasks.

We have been busy the last few months with members of the congregation needing assistance, sending cards, flowers, making home and hospital visits, preparing meals, shopping, providing transportation to medical appointments, and helping families with memorial services.

*Respectfully submitted by Astrid Rogers*

## ■ COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

The Committee on Ministry was formed in the spring of 2014 and its mandate is to help the congregation fulfill its mission by providing feedback and recommendations to the Board of Trustees and Minister from reviews of the Minister and CUUC's four areas of ministry: Worship, Social Justice, Education, and Pastoral (congregational member) Care.

For the 2018–2019 congregational program year, the Committee on Ministry evaluated the Social Justice program. We met several times among ourselves to prepare a congregation-wide survey. We consulted with the Social Justice Coordinators, Jeff Tomlinson and Mary Cavallero. A final survey was sent out to the congregation via Survey Monkey, by email, and on paper. We received 87 responses out of 200 congregants contacted. Overall the responses were very positive, with a strong majority of respondents reporting that the Social Justice Teams provided a way to get involved with causes they felt passionately about, and that participation enhanced their relationships within the congregation, and provided spiritual growth. A final report was submitted to the BOT in May, 2019.

Another mandate of the Committee on Ministry is to manage conflict as it arises amongst congregants and staff. Two main conflicts were handled this year, and resolved for the most part satisfactorily.

*Respectfully submitted by Committee on Ministry Members: Randy Marshall (chair), Claire Kuczinski, Carol Selinske, Tom Wacht, Denise Tomlinson, Rev. Meredith Garmon*

## ■ FINANCE COMMITTEE

The members of the committee are: Chris Kortlandt, Barry Litcofsky, Drew Swiss (chair), and Alex Zisson.

The primary functions of the Finance Committee are:

1. General oversight of the finances of the Congregation;
2. Investment of funds of the Congregation;
3. Input for the annual operating budget; and
4. Review of Insurance matters where required (advisory: Joe Majsak)

The Finance Committee meets monthly, except for December and August. At the meetings, we review reports of the Treasurer and Investment reports. When appropriate, the Finance Committee makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees (but does not make policy) and when requested, studies the financial considerations, if any, of proposed policy decisions by the Board. Since 2009 the Finance Committee has been asked to give its input as to a Building Fund, as it relates to funds raised from the capital campaign. Capital campaign funds are currently invested in a Federal money market fund (low risk/low return) and are segregated from the Endowment Fund.

Furthermore, CUUC received a grant a number of years ago from Hans Hopf to be used for the Sunday morning music program. The committee invests this amount, also segregated from the Endowment Fund and named Music Fund, in a similar manner as the Endowment Fund, except its investments are geared more toward conservative investments, including bonds (70%). The moneys in both funds

(Endowment and Music) are invested in low cost index funds across a range of different market sectors in order to achieve diversification.

Due to the diversification and re-balancing of the portfolios (with a mix of stocks and bonds), the values in the Endowment Fund continued to increase (+6% return for a 12-month period, and about 6.8% over the last 3 years). Over the last 12 months and past 3 years, the Music Fund increased by 5.3% and 4.5%, respectively, due its more conservative investment nature.

Any additional information can be requested by contacting CUUC.

*Respectfully submitted by Drew Swiss, chair*

## ■ GIVING CAMPAIGN

The 2019–2020 Annual Giving Campaign, "Our Dreams Are Inspired," kicked off on Sunday, March 31, with Rev. Meredith Garmon sermon/skit "Sound of Money" (a takeoff on *Sound of Music*), which drew a standing ovation for the players involved, and was followed by a congregational brunch.

For the 2019–2020 fiscal year, the Canvass Committee set a goal of raising \$395,000 and a 100% participation rate. The funding target was set to help fund the Board of Trustees key objectives:

- Grow the overall programming (Social Justice, Religious Education, Events, and Summer Services) for our congregants and to increase our membership base;
- Continue to competitively compensate our staff; and
- Carry out required building repairs.

Several of the key activities the Committee undertook were:

- Holding a kick off brunch for the congregation on March 31;
- Hosting a leadership thank you event for last year's leader donors;
- Sending out mailings and emails;
- Submitting articles in the Communitarian;
- Creating banners and posters; and
- Sending out thank you notes to all who pledged.

I want to thank the Canvass Committee members who worked diligently behind the scenes this year to help carry out a successful canvass, including Scott Damashek, Jane Dixon, and Diana Echevarria for all their help. Finally, I would like to thank all the CUUC members and friends who pledged. As of mid-May, we estimate that we will total \$395,000 in pledges even though to-date we are still slightly short of this goal. We are also slightly short of our 100% participation goal, but hopefully we will get there.

So please pledge, if you have not done so.

Thanks to everyone's financial generosity, CUUC will be able to achieve its goals.

*Respectfully submitted by Chris Kortlandt, on behalf of the Canvass Committee*

## ■ MUSIC COMMITTEE

For the 2018–19 year, members and friends of CUUC once again had a variety of opportunities to enjoy and participate in spiritual life through music.

Our Sunday morning worship services incorporate music of the highest caliber, beginning with our talented Music Director, Adam Kent, whose outstanding abilities as a pianist add immeasurably to our religious experience. In selecting the music for each service, Adam and Lisa Meyer, Choir Director, work with Minister Meredith Garmon, colleagues on staff, and the Worship Committee to ensure that the selections enhance the monthly theme and the weekly focus. In addition, Adam was able to arrange for many diverse musical guests including cellist Peter Prosser, Flamenco artist Fernando Barros, clarinetist Pascal Archer, jazz pianist Valerie Capers, as well as our own singers Kim Force, Mary Lane Cobb, and Lisa Meyer. Our choir accompanist Georgianna Pappas performed on several Sunday's in Adam's absence. Both Adam and Lisa provided "Music for All Ages" presentations during the Centering Music to our morning services, which included interactive talks on musical subjects and conversations with guest performers. In addition, Adam contributes weekly blog postings about the Sunday morning music on CUUC's blogsite, [cucmatters.org](http://cucmatters.org).

Twice a month the CUUC Choir, under the direction of Lisa Meyer, provided a meaningful component to our services with a varied repertoire that further enhanced the worship experience. The choir continues to grow under Lisa's leadership, with our largest membership in recent memory. This spring, CUUC hosted the joint UU worship service for the five Westchester congregations. Lisa provided important organizational leadership for the choirs in attendance, and directed the combined choir.

In addition to the Choir's contributions, volunteerism in other forms continues to be a vital component of CUUC's music program. CUUC member Kim Force offers hymn leadership on a regular basis, and she has created a weekly "slide show" displaying the Order of Service and words to the hymns on a large screen on the chancel.

Completing its 17th year, the Music at CUUC Concert Series continues to bring some of the finest performing artists in classical music, jazz, choral repertory, and song to Westchester County. Diversity is a cornerstone of UU values and it is also a guiding principle of our concert series. This year, our series began with Adam Kent offering an all-Schumann solo piano recital, including a skit reflecting an interaction between Schumann's fiancée Clara Wieck (Kim Force) and her father Friedrich Wieck (Craig Hunt).

December followed with the CUUC Choir performance of Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*, led by Lisa Meyer and featuring Kristi Shade on harp. Also included were favorite seasonal songs sung by the CUUC Choir. In April, our Spring Concert featured pianist Adam Kent and clarinetist Pascal Archer performing works by Brahms, Poulenc, and Honegger. The CUUC Choir, in honor of what would have been Leonard Bernstein's 100th year, performed a medley from *West Side Story* and the *Chichester Psalms* as well as the Kyrie from Schubert's *Mass in G*, and Randall Thompson's *Alleluia*. We concluded our series in May with our annual *Jazz Fest* concert. Valerie Caper and her trio provided an evening of jazz standards from all genres of this uniquely American musical form. Concert receptions provided a time for fellowship, allowing newcomers and longtime church members to interact and celebrate the spiritual gift of great music together. Decorative staging by Claire Flower graced these receptions.

This year, the Music Committee continued its support of musical opportunities in our R.E. program. Lyra Harada, our Children's Music Director, has worked with the R.E. students, enhancing their appreciation of music and leading several song performances at Sunday services by our youngest members.

This committee also works to ensure a musical presence at summer worship services, coordinating professional accompanists on occasion with volunteer musicians from the congregation.

The goal of this committee, the music staff, and the musicians of this congregation, is to live out CUUC's Mission Statement, which calls for us to nurture each other in our spiritual journeys through music from many different world, religious, and secular sources. We look forward to nurturing fellowship and community through music and song in the coming year.

*Respectfully submitted by Janet Bear and Lois Holt, co-chairs*

## ■ PATH TO MEMBERSHIP (aka Welcome Committee)

The Welcome/Path to Membership Committee 2018-2019 was composed of Jane Dixon, Robin Rocchi, Carole Mehta, Johanna Bauer, Janet Bear, Mary Lane Cobb, Laura Goodspeed, Karen Leahy, Paula Meighan, Janet Press, Nancy Scollard, and Karen Schatzel.

From July 1 to May 1, CUUC had 72 visitors (comparable to other years) and 7 new members.

The mission of the committee remains to provide a welcoming, inclusive experience for visitors from the time they first walk through our doors through their first year of membership.

Our goals were to find new ways to strengthen our alignment with our mission. To that end we made several changes this year:

- We used brightly colored visitor name tags
- We used yellow name tags for returning visitors through the first year
- We encouraged the congregation to stand in a "U" shape rather than a closed circle during coffee hour
- We worked with the LBGTQIA Social Justice Team to change the visitor name tags and the Visitor Book pages to include preferred pronouns. That team will continue working with us to change name tags to add that information.

Monthly "Visitor Conversations" were held after the service on the last Sunday of the month. The committee also held 2 new member recognitions during services and scheduled a new members/friends reception for June.

This committee's successes are solely due to the hospitality and commitment of its members.

*With gratitude for the opportunities to serve this congregation, Jane Dixon*

## ■ RENTALS COMMITTEE

Rentals continued to provide significant income to the CUUC this past year, with a diverse group of tenants and activities. Our major tenant was the Montessori Garden pre-school program, whose enrollment and usage has been expanding; and we have another significant tenant in Westchester Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy [“WCSP”].

Other users included the Humanistic Judaism congregation, and on a regular but less intense basis the Rug Hookers, Hoff-Barthelson Music School, League of Women Voters, Furniture Sharehouse, Westchester Council of the Blind, Amnesty International, exercise classes, and some memorial, social, and musical events. At times we do waive fees for social justice or community organizations with limited resources.

We also are an occasional backup and support site for television and film production companies, and received significant film rental income this past year; TV/film rentals go into our Capital Fund per BOT protocol. Overall rental income this past year exceeded our budget projections.

We continue to receive rental inquiries and explore additional tenants and users compatible with our facilities and our own programming needs.

Many thanks to Pam Parker for her diligent efforts in supervising current rentals, fielding rental inquiries, generating rental agreements, coordinating space and calendar requirements and limitations, and in frequent communications with the Rentals Committee

*Respectfully submitted by Tom Wacht, Russ Gold, and Gail Johnston*

## ■ SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY GROUP

Participants: between 8 and 12 people each meeting

Mission: To select thought-provoking books and articles concerning science and spirituality and provide a place for wide ranging discussions about the reading material and other appropriate information participants are interested in discussing.

Goal: To provide a place for science and spirituality lovers to have stimulating discussions.

Meetings are normally held at CUUC on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month, with discussions and occasional films of scientific interest. Recent topics that have been discussed include:

- Various articles from Scientific American and other journals and newspapers;
- *What to Think About Machines That Think*: (short essays from many leading scientists and others); and
- *2001: A Space Odyssey* (reading articles and screening the film, with discussions).

Often we have a potluck luncheon on the second Thursday of June. New members are welcome!

*Respectfully submitted by Barbara Mair*

## ■ SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAMS

The third part of the mission of this congregation is to engage in service to transform ourselves and our world. Indeed, it is through social justice work that many congregants find their deepest connection to their UU values. Our faith calls us to this work and we often feel a sense of fulfillment by helping others.

We began this year with a Social Justice Fair with representatives of each team available to explain their goals and to encourage others to join them. We will have a similar fair on Sept. 15, 2019.

In addition to time and energy we give to the teams, CUUC members and friends financially support social justice and charitable organizations most of them sponsored by a Social Justice Team—through our Share the Plate program. Below are this year's recipients and, where available, the amounts each received as 50% of our non-pledge Sunday collections.

### 2018–2019 Plate Share

Summer – Rowe Camp/Unirondack Scholarships (\$474 to each)	\$948.00
September – PrideWorks	\$1,171.00
October – Westchester Community College Emergency Programs	\$1,064.50
November – Ecumenical Food Pantry of White Plains	\$1,095.00
December – Coachman Family Center	\$1,562.00
January – Interfaith Council for New Americans (ICNA)	\$949.50
February – MLK Institute for Nonviolence	\$1,050.50
March – Lifting Up Westchester	\$941.50
April – Furniture Sharehouse	\$1,429.00
May – Westchester Community College	
June – Refugee Resettlement	

This has been another busy year for many of our Social Justice teams. I invite you to read the report from each team below.

*Respectfully submitted by Mary Cavallero*

### ***Animal Advocacy***

After two years as AASJT's founding leader, Doreen Rossi will be moving out of the area, and the AASJT will be joining the Environmental Practices Group to help support the intersecting missions of Environmental Practices and Animal Advocacy. Doreen leaves behind a much honored and exercised AASJT mission: *The Animal Advocacy SJT will be an ongoing effort to foster understanding and respect for the community and experiences of all species, and to open ourselves and others to greater compassion and kinship with all animals.* And as Doreen embarks on her transition to a new and promising life chapter, she leaves a legacy of deep gratitude for her compassionate, skillful, and determined advocacy, which has enriched our CUUC community. Happy trails, Doreen!

Here is a summary of AASJT's 2018–2019 activities:

AASJT participated in the September 16 Social Justice Team Fair, and attracted the interest of 5 new people, 2 of whom regularly attended our meetings.

At the September 16 SJT Fair, and on September 23 at a table in FH, AASJT collected \$1,286 from the congregation and from a generous donor for the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) Disaster Response Fund to help animals affected by Hurricane Florence.

AASJT hosted a very well-received vegan coffee hour on February 3, where a (surprising to some) delicious selection of vegan food and coffee was presented along with posters illustrating the healthfulness of a vegan diet.

In mid-February, AASJT refreshed its bulletin board to focus on animal agriculture's impact on our environment, which includes water pollution and consumption, land use, world hunger, wildlife extinction, and rainforest destruction.

At this year's combined Westchester UU service on March 17, the AASJT displayed posters and information about how our food choices affect the health of ourselves and our planet, and the quality of life of the animals that share our planet, including powerful quotes from this year's UUA Common Read *Justice on Earth*.

On March 24, AASJT hosted a compelling presentation and conversation with inspiring vegan environmental activist Jill Carnegie, accompanied by plentiful, and much complimented, delicious vegan main dishes and desserts. There were 25 attendees, and the Q&A lasted for an hour.

With the help of Michele Rinaldi, Rev. Deb Morra, and Chris Force, AASJT members and friends hosted this year's CUUC Animal Blessing Service on April 14, crafted with wonderful creativity by Rev. Meredith, and beautifully enhanced by the music of Adam and cellist Caleb van der Swaagh, and followed by an AASJT coffee hour with a wide selection of delicious vegan snacks.

As part of the RE Grades 2 and 3 team, AASJT members led several RE sessions during the year that reinforced the ideas that we are all part of the earth, that we can all help and celebrate the earth and its fish, animals, insects, and plants, and that there are ways people who care about the earth and its living things can make a real difference.

*Respectfully submitted by Norm Handelman*

### ***Economic Social Justice***

The Westchester Community College programs that support low-income students through their Emergency Transportation Fund and Food Pantry were the recipients of two Share the Plate monthly collections this year. This was a joint effort of the Economic Social Justice Team and the Racial Justice Team and was led by Jim Cobb, a member of both teams.

The goal of our team is to launch one or more initiatives that will work toward amelioration of some of the economic injustices that are present in our community, in our region, and in our country.

*Respectfully submitted by Jim Walkup*

### ***Environmental Practices Group***

The Environmental Practices Group (EPG) is the Social Justice Team focusing on the environment. This year we continued to work on "Reducing the Waste Stream," and a major step in this effort was to introduce new recycling bins throughout our building, to keep as much as possible out of the trash (all

our trash is eventually burned in Peekskill). Last fall, in addition to new signs on all recycling/trash bins, we added food scrap recycling bins to both the kitchen and Fellowship Hall, in order to capture food waste during meal preparations and food events. Unfortunately, White Plains hasn't begun food scrap recycling, but we are monitoring the amount of food scraps created and hope to present our findings to the appropriate authorities in the future.

We continue to educate the congregation on ways that each of us can "reduce the waste stream." In many of the weekly e-Communitarians we included a short "Did You Know..." statement of what we are doing at CUUC and what each congregant can do to help our environment.

In an effort to further educate our congregants on the importance and intricacies of recycling, we did a "show and tell" during an Our Congregation segment, displaying specific items and advising if they can or can't be recycled. We also worked with the RE students on two different Sundays. On the first Sunday we taught them about worm composting, their carbon footprint, and recycling Dos and Don'ts. On the second Sunday we trained our 4th–7th graders to be "Eco Experts." The "Eco Experts" have created Q & A cards about recycling, which will be displayed on brunch tables and the students will be available to help congregants dispose of your brunch trash properly.

In early February, we sponsored a well-attended "Energy Forum" with Pace Law Professor Karl R. Rábago, Executive Director of the Pace Energy and Climate Center. Professor Rábago provided a general understanding of the NY Power Grid sources and distributions and helped us understand our role with respect to CCA (Community Choice Aggregation) and its environmental impact. Those who attended the forum increased their knowledge about energy source selection.

On Earth Day, Monday, April 22, EPG sponsored a trip to the Yonkers Recycling Facility to further understand what happens to our co-mingled and paper recycling materials. About 25 CUUC members and friends saw the Westchester County facility in action and, based upon the volume of materials processed, have a better appreciation of the need for each of us to REDUCE our consumption!

As this congregational year comes to a close, we are pleased to welcome those members of the Animal Advocacy Social Justice Team who are joining forces with the EPG. During the next congregational year, we expect our work to broaden to include the concerns of the Animal Advocacy. All of these actions, and more, are important for our community and our future.

*Respectfully submitted by Janet Bear, co-chair*

### ***Gun Safety***

The team presented a forum on December 2 with Royce Battleman, a representative from the Westchester chapter of "Moms Demand Action" that was attended by about 35 congregants. She provided us with information on pending gun legislation, strategies for change, and trends with gun safety issues.

The team was pleased to report that in April two gun reform bills were passed in New York State – the first time in 25 years. One to force background checks at gun shows and online and one to increase the 3-day wait period to 10 days.

*Respectfully submitted by Emily Economou*

## ***Hunger & Homelessness***

The key members included Nicole Turygin, Jane Dixon, Mary Cavallero, John Cavallero, Amy Swiss, Ray Messing, and Vicky Van Wert

Hunger and Homelessness remained an active group and focused on service projects to provide support for organizations that serve people in Westchester county who struggle with food and/or housing insecurity. The team prepared three meals for HOPE kitchen, and began to invite children to assist with portions of the food preparation project. The year kicked off with a collection of gifts for children of women who are incarcerated at the Bedford Correctional facility. The holiday season brought a drive food for the Ecumenical Food Pantry, drives for toiletries, books, and gently used toys, as well as the yearly mitten tree. In the new year, the congregation supported a project to provide backpacks and school supplies for area children, and April concluded with a small appliance drive for the Furniture Sharehouse and sports equipment drive for the Coachman Center. Supported by a team of dedicated volunteers, and support from the congregation, Hunger and Homelessness continues to effectively impact the community.

*Respectfully submitted by Nicole Turygin*

## ***LGBTQIA***

Tony Arrien and Joann Prinzivalli attended a service at the Hastings UU congregation last September and met with members of that congregation to reinforce the idea of the two congregations joining forces and collaborating on LGBTQ Social Justice. Since then the team has held Zoom meetings on Sunday evenings to make it easier for members of the two congregations to meet.

Starting in 2019 the renewal process for Welcoming Congregations will be yearly. A minimum of two LGBTQ sermons as well as involvement with four other LGBTQ events per year will be required.

Our Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) Ceremony was held on Nov. 18 after service. During this service pictures of the trans people whose lives were lost last year to violence in the USA were shown and their names were read. Bethany Edwards, a member from First Unitarian Society of Hastings, participated in the ceremony as a name reader. Our own Mary Cobb read a special poem she wrote after last year's TDOR Ceremony. We recorded the ceremony on video and uploaded it to YouTube as an example of a complete TDOR ceremony that any congregation could do. Adam Kent and Chris Force and visiting flutist Kara Allen performed music which enhanced the ceremony.

On January 15th three members of the LGBTQIA Social Justice Team (Janet Wafer, Joann Prinzivalli, and Anthony Arrien) went up to Albany for the legislative vote on GENDA and the bill to ban Conversion Therapy. The bill passed in both the Senate and the Assembly on January 15, signed into law on January 21, and became effective as a law on February 25, 2019.

The LGBTQIA Social Justice team is happy to report that PrideWorks won the pitch for the Variety Show funds this year. The other two organizations that were pitched were GLSEN Hudson Valley and The LOFT LGBT Community Center. We were glad to see PrideWorks win the pitch, because that organization was in severe financial distress due to the weather cancellation two years ago that depleted their resources when they refunded the registration fees and absorbed the cost of all the food they had to give away to homeless shelters before it spoiled.

Tony Arrien participated again this year on the PrideWorks Conference Committee meetings via ZOOM. Team core member Janet Wafer also volunteered at the Conference. During the PrideWorks conference on March 20, 2019, Tony gave his updated PowerPoint presentation "The Incomplete Guide to Trans and Non Binary Identities" - one version for youth and the other for adults/school counselors/mental health professionals. For this year Tony also proposed to the committee that Joann Prinzivalli give two talks which were accepted. One was a PowerPoint presentation on Trans History/Legislative Advocacy and the other was a panel of experts workshop he proposed called "Ask the Lawyers" for which Joann was a major participant. All four of the workshops by Joann and Tony were very well received.

On March 24th Joann Prinzivalli and Tony Arrien conducted the Sunday Service on "Gender and Spirituality." They included the 30-second video they made last year to commemorate Transgender Day of Visibility. This satisfies two of the new requirements for renewal as a Welcoming Congregation.

The team continues to work on the addition of pronouns that individuals use to name tags. This allows individuals to feel more comfortable when they attend because they can immediately see that our congregants are trying to be aware that not everyone is cis (as in "cisgender").

The *UU World* Article – "After L, G, and B" was discussed with the controversial response to it. Tony and Joann agreed that the author had good intentions and should not be demonized, but lessons can be learned from this article and some of the responses to it were discussed at our last meeting. Some of the responses were shared in the E-Communitarian.

In May, a subcommittee of the team worked in a multi-age class on the "pronoun project" and to explore gender issues. The book *Red, The Crayon Story* was discussed.

For the end of this year Joann and Tony are planning to do a joint Sunday Sermon for Transgender Day of Remembrance on November 17, 2019. Tony will also give his Trans and Non Binary Identities presentation after services November 3, 2019.

The team has begun a very long term project of forming a consortium of organizations to investigate the possibility of creating emergency housing for transgender young adults who have become homeless because of rejection by their families. We are investigating templates of other successful efforts in the surrounding region as a preliminary step to determine viability. Tony is now appointed to the Board of The LOFT LGBT Community Center and has had some encouragement that the organization may be helpful in finding possible solutions.

The team continues to meet on the second Sunday of the month via ZOOM conference call at 7:30pm. That time, chosen via Doodle Poll, seems to be yielding much more attendance than the previous face to face meetings yielded at 9:00am before Sunday services.

*Respectfully submitted by Anthony Arrien*

## **Racial Justice**

The Racial Justice Team/In the Spirit of Truth had a very active year.

In June 2018 we led the Juneteenth summer service, with Petra Thombs presenting the sermon.

Over the year, Jim Cobb and other CUUC congregants organized meetings with staff at Westchester Community College exploring how CUUC could help students succeed at the school. A Student Scholarship Fund was explored and eventually dropped. However, CUUC continues to contribute through the plate share to the student emergency funds providing financial assistance in times of immediate needs so that students can sustain their enrollment in school. A CUUC ad hoc committee has also established that there are volunteer opportunities such as tutoring for congregants to further assist students.

Adine Usher initially presented the Equal Justice Initiative Summit in Montgomery at CUUC in May 2018, and she then took this presentation on the road this year and presented at five other churches, including All Souls Church in New York City.

Petra Thombs presented on the Doctrine of Discovery on October 7 and November 25.

Two members of the RJT participated in the Intercultural Competence Sensitivity Workshop led by Rev. Erica Baron, a UU minister from Kingston, NY.

Two RJT members have been attending several of the monthly MLK Institute Beloved Community Dinners, where racial justice issues are discussed.

Jeff Tomlinson attended two Faith Based Anti-Racism Coalition meetings in New York on February 28 and May 14. The coalition is in development and planning to organize efforts to help faith communities address racial justice in our congregations and in the community.

The RJT invited Eddy Fried, a congregant at the UU Congregation of Hudson Valley, to present the Faith-Based Anti-Racism Coalition in NYC at a meeting after the joint service of the five UU congregations in Westchester on March 16.

Multiple RJT members have attended “Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)” meetings.

Jeff Tomlinson has represented CUUC at two “Poor People’s Campaign” meetings.

Jeff Tomlinson led the *White Fragility* presentation on May 5, and the team is planning a follow-up discussion on June 2.

The RJT is now planning the upcoming Juneteenth summer service.

*Respectfully submitted by Jeff Tomlinson*

## **Refugee Resettlement**

The mission of the Refugee Resettlement SJT is to assist in the resettlement of refugee families in Westchester County under the umbrella of ICNAW (Interfaith Committee for New Americans of Westchester), a multi-faith group of congregations. The first family (two parents and three children) arrived in November 2017, and we are about to welcome our second family (two parents and two children) in May 2019, both from Afghanistan. We also work with the Westchester Refugee Initiative (WRI) and other organizations to support their work. We inform our team and the wider CUUC

community of issues, initiatives, and events related to refugees. Our team has approximately 50 members, including core members Jane Dixon, Ted Kuczinski, Terri Kung, Paul Meighan, Al Rocchi, and Robin Rocchi.

Highlights of our activities over the past congregational year include:

- Continued to support the first family by driving the children and mother to/from summer camp, nursery school, ESL class, extracurricular activities, and medical appointments;
- Hosted a cooking demonstration, lunch, and discussion with two Afghan refugee families;
- Sponsored a table at coffee hour at which members wrote almost 100 postcards to our federal representatives regarding the historically low refugee ceiling;
- Hosted an ICNAW celebration to mark the one-year anniversary of the arrival of the first family. The volunteers shared their personal stories of what the experience has meant to them and the family expressed appreciation for the kindness and support they received;
- Supported a Westchester Refugee Initiative (WRI) winter clothing drive for local refugees;
- Attended the premier screening of *The Interpreters*, a film about the plight of SIVs trying to get to the U.S.;
- Raised \$949.50 for ICNAW in the January plate share;
- Sponsored an author talk for the book *Bubby's Stories*; and
- Supporting tag sale benefitting refugees in May in Larchmont.

In addition, Jane Dixon has served as the co-chair of the ICNAW Executive Council and has devoted significant time to many of the details of the first family's needs.

Looking forward, the Refugee Resettlement SJT will be busy over the coming year in working with the new family that will be arriving shortly. We welcome the involvement of all CUUC members and friends in making their transition as smooth as possible.

We thank all of the CUUC members and friends who volunteered in a variety of ways over the past year!

*Respectfully submitted by Jane Dixon and Robin Rocchi*

### ***Women's Issues***

The Women's SJT are thrilled that some of our goals of the past few years have been met. New York State has finally passed the Reproductive Health Act that we've been supporting, and the Comprehensive Contraceptive Coverage Act has passed both New York legislative houses and has been signed by Gov. Cuomo.

The team has decided to go dormant for the near term, however we will remain in readiness mode! We remain concerned about the threat to an overturn of Roe vs Wade on the federal level.

In addition, there are still many women's issues and causes that could benefit from CUUC's energy and enthusiasm, and so we welcome any team members or congregants who are interested in taking on a sole or joint leadership role for this team. If this is something you are interested in pursuing, contact Julie Gans (julieagans@gmail.com).

*Respectfully submitted by Julie Gans*

## ■ USHERING

Some 25 members of the congregational community have served as weekly collection ushers during the 2018–2019 church year. Many thanks go to these people, who always respond cheerfully when asked, sometimes at the last minute.

The usher work groups in the interest of the uninterrupted progress of religious services, on Sundays and for special services at the Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation at White Plains. During the church year Marianne Milzoff, Johanna Bauer, Norm Handelman, Anne Hintermeister, Charlie McNally, Lauren Taylor, and Tom Rosenbaum have constituted the usher group. The thanks of the congregation appropriately go to these people for their dedicated and careful effort. Each member of the group participates in one or more of the aspects of setting up and helping to assist with religious services; staffing the entry to the sanctuary; running the sound system during services; receiving the collection; and assisting with filling coffee and tea pots prior to the conclusion of services. Among the functions undertaken prior to the beginning of services are unlocking the doors to the building and unlocking the doors/windows, which also serve as fire exits; setting up the pulpit area, including the chalice lighting and the Sunday candles of the season; setting up the candles and the book of joys and concerns; endeavoring to assure that the appropriate microphones are available to service leaders; percolating the coffee and heating the hot water for tea; placing coffee hour supplies on the tables; placing the collection baskets and receiving the weekly collection; distributing orders of service as they enter the sanctuary.

We continue to express special thanks to Chris Kortlandt, who almost always counts the collection, relieving the group of having to attend to this responsibility while putting away items following the service and closing the building. Chris generously and cheerfully counts the collection and completes the paperwork, allowing a briefer day for the ushers. We also thank Chris for occasionally, as needed, helping to receive the collection, and for his readiness to do so.

We continue to thank Sara Caldwell, who has designed progressively simpler ways for us to record sermons. We now need merely to report to her the times of certain parts of the service, and Sara has conceived, and now administers, the digital system that produces the recording. We continue to thank Charlie McNally, who, in its earlier iteration, figured out how to run a recording system. Doing so required a considerable amount of work, which Charlie undertook with all good humor and no little sophistication and investment of time. He continues to work with us as a member of the usher group to help facilitate the progress of religious services, and we feel fortunate indeed. We also continue to thank Kim and Christian Force for their role in figuring out and attending to the playing of videos and the showing of the hymns on a screen on Sunday morning.

We offer a special appreciation for the work of Anne Hintermeister, who has served as a member of the usher group from its inception, some seven or eight years ago and who has elected to withdraw from the usher group at the end of the current congregational year. Anne has an acute sense of the details that require attention prior to, during, and following a religious service. She keeps sharp eye out for matters that may or do require attention and common sense. She knows the work particularly well, and carries it out efficiently and with understanding of the requirements of the service and the congregation.

*Respectfully submitted by Tom Rosenbaum for the usher group*



