

## Annual Report 2015-2016

### Unity Church-Unitarian

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Executive Director

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## **In Memoriam**

### **Rosamond "Roz" Jacob**

May 20, 1928 – December 13, 2015

### **Frances P. Kaschak**

December 24, 2015

### **Sue Hodgson**

May 28, 1930–February 16, 2016

### **Gordon Keeler**

December 25, 1947 – February 27, 2016

### **Mary Reed**

August 22, 1925 – April 13, 2016

### **Diane Ross**

October 20, 1931 – April 22, 2016

### **Katie Rivard**

May 7, 1948 – June 6, 2016

### **Olga Zoltai**

July 3, 1931 – June 9, 2016

### **Mary Gover**

April 24, 1935 – June 29, 2016

### **Mary Ann Huelster**

April 14, 1925 – August 12, 2016

### **Mary Barrett**

October 20, 1929 – October 10, 2016

### **Judy Gundersen**

August 23, 1954 – November 11, 2016

## **2015-2016 Annual Report**

### **Prepared by the Executive Team**

November 19, 2016

Dear Members and Friends of Unity Church-Unitarian,

We are pleased to present this Annual Report to the Unity Church-Unitarian congregation at the 2016 Annual Meeting. This report offers an overview of the highlights and growth in Unity's ministry in the 2015-16 church year. It is organized by areas of program and congregational life, and we hope it gives you a sense of the breadth and depth of the opportunities for involvement and shared ministry.

The Executive Team's work is shaped by the Mission and Ends of the Church, as they have been articulated by the Board and congregation. The Mission of Unity Church-Unitarian is to engage people in a free and inclusive religious community that encourages lives of integrity, service and joy. On page five, you will find the Executive Team's interpretation of the 2014-2018 Ends, and the measures we use to track the impact of our ministries in your lives and in the larger world.

The 2015-16 year saw many new initiatives, as well as greater visibility and partnership in the wider community. Among the examples you will see detailed in this report, new classes were offered to meet your desire to articulate your UU faith more clearly and to cultivate leadership as a spiritual practice. Over 450 members and friends participated in End of Life conversations about their wishes for their end of life care. Religious Education professionals and volunteers gathered at Unity for the first ever Teacher's Café to deepen our ministry to our children and youth. We honored the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Unity Singers and many of our choir members sang in *The Events* at the Guthrie Theater, an award-winning play by Scottish playwright David Greig. As a whole congregation, we exercised our right to ordain Ashley Horan and Rose Schwab to the Unitarian Universalist ministry.

The killing of Jamar Clark in North Minneapolis and the 4<sup>th</sup> precinct occupation drew us out into the streets and in solidarity with our neighbors in the call to racial justice. We continued to deepen our partnership with Pastor Danny Givens, Jr., and Above Every Name Ministries as Pastor Givens completed his second year of a ministerial residency at Unity. We celebrated ten years of pilgrimage and commitment to the rebuilding of New Orleans and continued to ensure that our own building is a vital meeting place for the larger community here at home. In the wider UU world, we partnered with other local congregations in the Community Solar Garden Campaign and sent one of the largest delegations we ever have to the 2016 General Assembly in Columbus, Ohio.

We are deeply privileged to work with the best staff team you will ever find! We were saddened to have to let go of a staff position, Unity's part-time Office Manager, in the 2016 budget. We are grateful to Marcy Mann-Anderson for her time at Unity Church and for her dedication to serving others. We also said goodbye to Liz Curran and thank her for her steadfast commitment to our Facilities Team through the years. Many people stepped up to support Unity's music ministry, as Ruth Palmer took unexpected medical leave last winter – a huge thank you to all of the musicians within and beyond Unity who made it possible for Ruth to take the time to heal. After 18 years of service as Unity's Executive Director, Barbara Hubbard took a well-earned sabbatical from mid-May – mid July, and returned with fresh insights into the administrative and financial work of the Church.

We encourage you to read through all of the ministry and staff reports included in this packet for the fullest sense of the rich and vibrant congregation you help to create by your presence and participation. We hope you find them helpful and informative. We invite you to contact us with ideas, questions and comments. Our doors are always open.

In faith and gratitude,

Janne Eller-Isaacs

Rob Eller-Isaacs

Lisa Friedman

Barbara Hubbard

The Executive Team of Unity Church-Unitarian

## UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN ENDS STATEMENTS 2014-2018

with Executive Team Interpretations and Measures  
V3 - August, 2015

*If these things happen, how will people's lives be changed, and how do we measure the impact?*

### **Within**

1. The people of Unity Church-Unitarian value a deeply meaningful, transforming liberal religious experience.

*That which we value, we are willing to work on. This implies that our people will take a spiritual inventory, set personal goals, and engage in regular self-reflection. We understand the role of a supportive religious community in helping people to become more vulnerable and more courageous. We affirm that transformation comes from being fully present to the beauty and brokenness of the human condition.*

#### *Measures:*

- *Spiritual Maturity / Transformation Index*
- *Annual Congregational survey*

As individuals, we

- a. Open ourselves to compassionate pastoral care in times of joy, sorrow, and transition.

*We nurture an environment where people are able to be vulnerable and to enlist the support of the church. We foster a climate of acceptance and encouragement for vulnerability and courage in all of the communities within the church. As a result, people feel empowered to risk new ways of being in the world.*

#### *Measures:*

- *Analyze participation in formal support groups.*
- *Number of Pastoral Care requests.*
- *Participation in Embracing Meditations*

- b. Develop spiritual practices that nurture reverence and encourage diverse worship services rich in beauty, serenity, community and joy

*We understand the development of individual spiritual practice to be an essential expectation of church involvement. Such practice builds our capacity for reverence and helps prepare us for a richer, more diverse worship experience. Both personal practice and congregational worship are fundamental to spiritual development.*

*Measures:*

- *Analyze participation in church-sponsored classes and workshops*
  - *Congregational surveys*
- c. Embrace our identity as Unitarian-Universalists and live out the principles of our shared faith in our daily lives.  
*Congregants know and feel a part of the unfolding story of liberal religion and make use of our stated principles as a tool for self-reflection and action in the world.*

*Measures:*

- *Participation in Heritage Week, history classes, etc.*
  - *Participation in pilgrimage opportunities*
  - *Congregational surveys*
- d. Cultivate a spirit of curiosity and welcome, growing from a desire for authentic relationship.  
*By embodying a spirit of curiosity and respect as individuals, we create a radically hospitable church. Visitors and newcomers more easily find their place within the larger congregation and the church as a whole becomes a more spirited and welcoming community.*

*Measures:*

- *Collect visitor feedback on their experiences.*
- *Participation in Pathway to Membership classes*
- *New member retention*
- *Congregational surveys – “Have you felt empowered to be a part of welcoming visitors and new members?”*

**Among**

2. Unity Church-Unitarian is a community of welcome, reverence, and deep connection.

*The Holy exists in relationships among people. Congregational participation is essential to the religious life because it opens us up to that experience of the Holy while holding us accountable to one another and our best intentions. When we are a welcoming, reverent, deeply-connected community, the Holy grows in our lives and in the world.*

*Measures:*

- *Dashboard report*
- *Congregational surveys*

- *Focused interviews (Implement a system in which ET members ask “In what way does your participation inform your experience of the Holy?” In one month each year, we ask teams in all programs to respond to a particular set of questions that will help us )*

As a community, we

- a. Sustain and encourage one another in love  
*An ever-expanding portion of the congregation embodies and takes up the pastoral ministry of the church, holding each other in vulnerable times, asking for help when we are in need, and celebrating one another’s joys and accomplishments.*

*Measures:*

- *Participation in the pastoral ministries of the church (What really counts?)*
- *Congregational survey*
- *Focus groups (In times of need, do you turn to the church for help? Is it hard for you to ask for help, and why?)*

- b. Value our shared ministry and practice it with integrity  
*An ever-expanding circle of congregants invite and feel invited into shared ministry and understand that they are living it out in their daily lives and in the life of the congregation. Shared ministry is integral to their reflections on their own spiritual well-being and growth and is an openly acknowledged aspect of their religious identity.*

*Measures:*

- *Spirit Map*
- *Congregational survey*
- *Number of leaders able to share the core teachings of the church with others. Shared ministry has come to mean two things: 1) living out our values and 2) sharing our gifts and talents with the church.*

- c. Reach out to one another across differences and stand together in the face of injustice  
*We meet faith-to-faith, engaging our shared humanity in a way that honors the particularities of our differences and allows us to work in authentic partnership while facing the uneven effects of injustice.*

*Measures:*

- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Participation in Community Outreach teams.*
- *Participation in Anti-Racism / Anti-Oppression trainings and workshops*
- *Eagerness of outside organizations to partner with Unity Church.*

- d. Foster a culture of open, inclusive leadership and meaningful engagement  
*The church is a learning community that empowers people to identify and live into their gifts. It's a place that encourages risk-taking, in which it is okay to try and fail, be forgiven, and try again. Present church leaders actively reach out and recruit people they don't know into leadership, recognizing that the best interest of the church is served by a diverse and creative leadership core.*

*Measures:*

- *Information about opportunities for leadership is readily available.*
- *Robust candidate list for open positions.*
- *Established teams include new leaders and broadly reflect the make-up of the congregation.*
- *Congregational survey*

- e. Are generous with our time, talents, resources and creativity  
*There is a widely-shared sense of responsibility for the health and well-being of the church. People are fully engaged in the church and are optimistic about its efficacy in their lives and in the world. People bring their best selves to their work as volunteers. The generosity of the people of Unity Church is an expression of their gratitude for the ways in which the church informs and nourishes their lives. They are open to creative exploration, even and especially when they are in uncertain territory.*

*Measures:*

- *The Operating budget is adequately funded by a broad base of congregants.*
- *Recruitment is easy because people wish to serve.*
- *Volunteers report having a meaningful experience.*
- *Congregational survey*
- *Newly imagined Gifts and Talents survey (moved from II.b.)*

- f. Are careful stewards of our resources and facilities.  
*Practices and decisions ensure the long-term strength and viability of Unity Church. Church facilities are well-maintained and green. We have a well-developed life-cycling program that helps us maintain and protect our facilities. Financial resources are well-managed. Opportunities for thoughtful reflection on generous participation are readily available.*

*Measures:*

- *Capital needs are addressed in a timely and thorough manner.*
- *The budget balances at the end of the year.*
- *Audits and financial reviews*
- *Participation in reflection on generosity*



## **Beyond**

3. Unity Church-Unitarian carries out the work of love in community, making a positive impact in our neighborhood and in our world. Grounded in the transforming power of our faith, we

*Our congregation's work for justice is a natural expression of our inward work and our experience of religious community. Our faith affirms that God's love is for everyone and that the choices we make shape both our lives and the world. The experience of the Holy inspires and sustains a sacred obligation to work for justice. In the work we do, we are seeking to live out God's love in the world. We seek to strengthen and expand our practice of partnership for positive change.*

### *Measures:*

- *Organizational partnerships*
- *Grants-making*
- *Congregational survey*
- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Depth and breadth of participation in community outreach teams*

1. Open our doors and our hearts to those who seek comfort, courage, and meaning

*Unity Church is a place where the larger community knows it is welcome in times of public grief, sorrow and celebration. We provide space and volunteer support for innovative responses to community needs with an emphasis on marginalized communities, including communities of color.*

### *Measures:*

- *Building use report*
- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Participation in special services and rites of passage*

2. Build authentic relationships with people across differences, in the spirit of humility and reverence

*We meet faith-to-faith, engaging our shared humanity in a way that honors the particularities of our differences and allows us to work in authentic partnership while facing the uneven effects of injustice.*

### *Measures:*

- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Participation in Community Outreach teams.*
- *Participation in Anti-Racism / Anti-Oppression trainings and workshops*
- *Eagerness of outside organizations to partner with Unity Church.*

3. Live out our commitment to racial reconciliation and to dismantling racism  
*We recognize the “tragic gap” of racial disparity in our community and in our nation. We know the disparity is systemic and that any progress in dismantling it requires both institutional and personal action. Inspired by the theological mandate that we work toward the realization of the Beloved Community, we pursue the mission of the church, keeping the work to dismantle racism and oppression at the heart of our agenda. This is difficult work and we cannot do it alone. Our commitment to partner with people and communities of color outside the church does not deny the diversity already among us.*

*Measures:*

- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Participation in Community Outreach teams.*
- *Annual Congregational Survey*
- *ARLT Annual Report*

4. Serve as a trusted and visible leader, partner, and advocate for the creation of a just society and a sustainable environment

*The “prophetic imperative” calls us to be partners in seeking to make the Beloved Community real. Oppressions, including the destruction of our environment are linked and affect us all. We recognize that the crisis of climate change calls us to act immediately to protect affected communities, the earth and future generations. We understand that “the arc of the moral universe is long.” Trust grows out of long term partnership. We commit to keep showing up, to serve, to learn and to be advocates for positive change.*

*Measures:*

- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Monitor Policy J. Insert into the Board’s monitoring calendar a schedule for reporting on ET Limitation # II.J.*
- *Participation in Community Outreach teams*
- *Annual Congregational Survey*

5. Participate actively in the larger Unitarian-Universalist community.

*We support those who seek a larger context in which to claim their UU identity. Unity will continue to be an influential congregation that leads, inspires, connects with and learns from other Unitarian-Universalist communities. We will continue to be a teaching congregation and a working partner with other congregations in our area and across the Association.*

*Measures:*

- *maintain and expand Unity Consulting*
- *volunteer involvement in larger UU activities*
- *financial contributions*
- *Congregational Survey – increase the congregation’s awareness of our current involvement in / contributions to the larger movement.*

## 2016 Congregational Survey Results

From the Board of Trustees, with gratitude to Bill Etter and Laura Park

In May 2016, 407 people filled out the congregational survey. This is a record number of participants, and we are so grateful to all of you who participated! Respondents answered questions about the extent to which they saw our church's Ends statements ([www.unityunitarian.org/mission-and-ends.html](http://www.unityunitarian.org/mission-and-ends.html)) being true. The survey results can be found online (<http://bit.ly/2016ucusurveyresults>) and they summarize what the survey has shown us about our congregation, both this year and over the past several years. Here are some of the results that stood out for us:

- The congregational survey is the board's primary way of knowing whether we're making adequate progress on fulfilling the vision of shared ministry represented by the Ends. In addition, the Executive Team reviews the results of the congregational survey at their annual retreat as part of setting their yearly priorities. The very positive results on this survey tell us that we are, indeed, making appropriate progress on our Ends.
- We see improved performance on every End when we compare the 2016 results to both the 2015 and the 2014 results. The largest gains span the entire spectrum of Ends, including "within" Ends ("Embrace our identity as Unitarian Universalists and live out the principles of our shared faith in our daily lives"), "among" Ends ("Sustain and encourage each other in love") and "beyond" Ends ("Participate actively in the larger Unitarian Universalist community").
- Loyalty to the church, as measured by the question "Would you recommend Unity Church to a friend or relative?" is at its highest level since we started the survey in 2007.
- However, evaluations tend to be lower for people who said that they or someone in their family identified as a person of color. Four of the five largest gaps were in the "Beyond" Ends (for example, "Live out our commitment to racial reconciliation and to dismantling racism"). The board and Executive Team believe that this means we still have important opportunities to enhance our ministries so that our Ends advance well for everyone, and we will continue to pay attention to how families of color see our progress.
- We also examined the impact of our programming on our sense of spiritual growth and maturity. Many of you report that Unity's programming has a significant positive impact on your spirituality, with the music program, pilgrimages, worship and meditation, and children's religious education having the highest impact.
- We decided not to include the Spirit Map portion of the survey this year because the results of this tool tend to be stable over time. However, we still continue to pay close attention to the 2015 results of the Spirit Map because they identify the church's Signature Strengths and Key Opportunities in the area of spiritual growth and development. This is information that Unity's staff find really useful in focusing our programming.
- We pay close attention to the written comments that people include. Every comment is read and categorized, and staff members follow up with congregants when appropriate. We appreciate the fuller picture of our ministries these comments give us and will be using them to guide how the board shapes next year's congregational conversation

about our future together, conversation that will ultimately help the board refresh our Ends statements.

We'd like to know your thoughts about the survey! Look for trustees identified by the red ribbon on their name tag or find contact information online (<http://www.unityunitarian.org/board-of-trustees.html>). If you have questions about the structure and content of the congregational survey, please email Bill Etter at [better61@gmail.com](mailto:better61@gmail.com).

Footnote: The Board of Trustees is charged with the responsibility of monitoring progress toward meeting the 2014-2018 Ends. These Ends were approved by the congregation and guide the work of the Executive Team and others as they focus on providing opportunities to explore in the life of a Unity Church congregant. One important tool available for monitoring the Ends is the congregational survey.

## **Worship Life**

The worship life of Unity Church is rich, moving, meaningful and creative. The ministers receive consistently positive feedback. Service are well-attended. Our ratio of attendance to membership is extremely high with over 60% of our membership attending on a regular basis. Service topics are reflected in extensive programming for adults and children. We continue to bind the services together thematically and are starting to explore how to bring the themes for adult worship into close alignment with the overarching themes of the religious education program for children and youth.

This past year we have been blest by a wide variety of excellent preachers. In addition to regular services led by our Senior Co-Ministers, additional members of the Unity ministerial team include Lisa Friedman, K.P. Hong, Karen Hutt, and Karen Hering. Hallman Intern, Shay McKay, was a strong presence in the pulpit as was our Partner-in-Ministry, the Rev. Danny Givens, Jr., of Above Every Name. We also heard from special guests Gail Geisenhainer, Senior Minister in Ann Arbor, Michigan; New Orleans leaders Michael Cowan and James Carter; Ruth Mackenzie of First Universalist Church in Minneapolis; and Balazs Scholar, Lazlo Major. This past year saw vigorous involvement by the worship associates who have often taken up the invitation to offer their own reflections as an integral part of the service. The associates continue to be a vital support team for the worship life of the church. Staff and ministers are deeply grateful for their commitment. They are our “living lectionary” helping to keep our worship services fresh and relevant.

Wellspring Wednesday worship continues to thrive. This year most services were led by either Shay McKay or the Rev. Danny Givens. The service is framed using the Children’s Chapel Sunday liturgy. Children in attendance take considerable pride in sharing their way of worshipping with the adults. Attendance at Wellspring Wednesday worship averaged approximately 60 children and adults over the course of the church year and held up well through the spring.

We continue to work to find the right balance between the comfort of consistent liturgy and established worship culture and the experimentation and cultural exploration which are required of us if we are to become a more inclusive multi-racial, multi-generational and multi-cultural congregation.

## **Pastoral Care**

The pastoral care program seeks to serve people in times of need, crisis, transition, grief, and loss. Overseen by Janne Eller-Isaacs, the interns and a team of remarkable pastoral care associates provide a caring ministry of presence for our members and friends.

The heart of the program is best expressed in the Embracing Meditation each Sunday. This essential part of our worship always contains the joys and sorrows of people who are willing to share their tender news with the larger congregation. The Embracing Meditation is read at the weekly staff meeting, the adult service, Children's Chapel and with the preschoolers in Spirit Play. It is also placed on the pastoral care table in the Parish Hall during coffee hour. There, the entire congregation is invited to send cards of care, concern, and congratulations to those listed each week.

The pastoral care team meets monthly throughout the year to receive training, support one another, share ideas, and to ensure that everyone in need is served adequately. The program continues to grow in scope and depth. The gender balance of the care givers has been achieved with men playing a vital role in the program. We always work to hone our listening skills because they are at the heart of the ministry of presence we seek to provide everyone with whom we come in contact. In addition, the monthly meetings often focus on a particular theme or pastoral issue. This past year the pastoral care team participated in informational meetings or trainings on these issues:

- Offering care and support to those dealing with addiction issues and recovery
- Traveling through grief and loss: nourishing a grieving heart
- Dynamics of Pastoral Care
- Self-Care for Caregivers
- Effective condolences

Janne Eller-Isaacs and Cynthia Orange continue to co-facilitate a monthly support group for caregivers that has provided a place of mutual support and encouragement for the caretakers who attend. This group continues to grow in numbers and commitment.

Unity's grief group continues as a monthly drop in resource. There is a core of regular attendees who seek to welcome all newcomers so that they feel welcomed and included. In addition, we hosted the Interfaith Grief Coalition in March, April and May, providing space, hospitality, and speakers for this weekly group.

Each year we expand the care provided by those who join our caring circle. The caring circle seeks to provide one time services which include things like rides, meal preparation and delivery, child care, respite care, shopping and errand running, and house projects.

The UU-knitarians continue to provide us with comfort shawls which are delivered to folks in the midst of transition, loss, and injury. They are much appreciated.

Given the cross pollination continuing this year between Above Every Name and Unity Church, some pastoral care was offered to members of these congregations through the ministers and participants. Hospital visits, sharing comfort shawls and caring relationships crossed generations and congregations. We hope this will continue into the future.

This past year a team was formed to create a structure for having facilitated conversations about end of life choices. The team developed trainings for facilitators and a structure in which to invite all members and friends of the congregation to participate. Over a 100 people volunteered to facilitate and most of them had an opportunity to facilitate a small group. In the trainings, each facilitator was given guidelines for the small groups; resources; readings and sample health care directives. The small groups were designed to encourage sharing in an intimate setting. In the small group settings participants were invited to reflect on losses they had experienced, their own end of life goals and who might be asked to act as an agent of their health care directive. More than 430 members or friends of the church participated in an End of Life Conversation. After the End of Life conversations were completed, Unity was then invited to share the outline and goals with other local congregations and other community based nonprofits working with the aging. Janne led a workshop at the UU Regional Assembly in April. We hope to offer the conversations each year. In response to the end of life conversations, some members asked the church to store their health care directives. We now have a number of them in a secure file box.

Future projects: restarting the divorce support group and creating an evening caregivers support group since many of our caregivers are busy working or caregiving during the day and can't make our meetings.



## **Congregational Life**

### ***Membership***

In February, Unity certified 870 voting members with the Unitarian Universalist Association. Since the summer of 2015, Unity has welcomed 56 new members and their families. With the help of many volunteers and staff Unity self-published a new all member photo directory, so that we can more easily find and connect with each other.

This year, Unity Church was selected as one of four pilot congregations for the Faith Forward curriculum developed by First Unitarian Church of Dallas, Texas, which seeks to provide a comprehensive adult religious education path from visitor to leader. Unity was able to recruit and train a fabulous group of facilitators to bring Finding Yourself at Unity to Sunday mornings, as a regular, drop in class for newcomers. Participation has been strong and visitors report that it is easier to attend than the previous Saturday or week-night schedules.

1. Roberta "Robin" Hoffman
2. Jean Ann Jordan
3. Melissa K. Early
4. James Early
5. Linda Mandeville
6. Krysti Schwab
7. Elizabeth "Poppy" Popper
8. Michelle Brasure
9. Nancy Reed
10. Teri Breton
11. Nora Potamkin
12. Deborah Ruth
13. Mary Dunn
14. Ruth Gramza
15. Stephen Gramza
16. Alissa Lyon
17. David P. Schladt
18. Ron Sundberg
19. Joan M. Duke
20. Jeannine Robinett
21. Claire Newhouse
22. Janet Kinney
23. Libby Arnosti
24. Susan Vaughan-Fier
25. Kerry McNeill
26. Burt Riskedahl
27. Christine Sarkes
28. Stephanie Hoepner
29. Jessie Wuollet
30. Elaine Campbell
31. Hannah Masuga
32. J. Anthony Huth
33. H. Alexis Lodner
34. Audrey Thomas
35. Malaby Webster
36. Baard Wester
37. Karen Doegnes
38. Brandi Reilly
39. Jacob Reilly
40. Bob Albrecht
41. Paige Tighe
42. Judith Mitchell
43. Erik Amundson
44. Kyra Shrake
45. James Donehower
46. Megan Olivia Hall
47. Lea Hall
48. Caswell Burr
49. Benjamin Pettee
50. Heidi Springborg
51. Jackie Gulbranson
52. Laura Slade
53. Andrea "Annie" Halland
54. Shandon Halland
55. Nelson Moroukian
56. Janet Oliver

Over 75 people provided a ministry of hospitality through our 12 welcome teams and three new members were added to our teams. The Welcome Team manual was revised for the first time in several years, and Welcome Team training was offered in the fall, with follow up opportunities in the winter and spring. Terri Burnor and Jane Lee retired as Welcome Team leaders and Ariel Dickerman, Diane Ross, Dan Kaler, Caryl Kaler, Lili Zoltai, Olga Zoltai and Caroline Foster retired as Welcome Team Members. We offer our deep gratitude for their service and the warm welcome they extend.

### **Adult Religious Education and Programming**

Unity's adult programming and mid-week congregational life continued to thrive. Adult Religious Education opportunities continued to increase and Wellspring Wednesday programs represented over 25% of overall offerings. Wellspring Wednesday provided programming for all ages and to bring an anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multi-cultural lens to its focus. Black Lives Matter, Gender Identity & Expression, the portrayal of Indigenous People in the art of the State Capitol, the Congregational Book Read "Between the World and Me" and much more were discussed. Yoga for Every Body, led by Elen Bahr, expanded to a weekly class. A Mother/Daughter Book Club, Go: the Chinese Game, Every Day Enjoyable Parenting, the Great College Search and the Tween Group continued as popular sessions. Unity's Addiction and Recovery Ministry team offered a new monthly meeting and a new bi-monthly Textile Arts group was formed. Much gratitude goes out to the many Unity teams, including Community Outreach, Library/Bookstall, and ARLT, and members who sponsor speakers and suggest topics for our rich and diverse programming.

A wide variety of adult classes and retreats were offered this year, encouraging growth and exploration in spiritual practice, meaningful community, and living out our values in the world. Two new spiritual practice groups met regularly at Unity in Tai Ji and Southern Style Animal Kung Fu. In response to the results of the Congregational Survey, Rev. Lisa Friedman offered a class on "Articulating Your UU Faith." Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and Sarah Cledwyn led two new sessions on "Spiritual Practice for Leaders." Sarah continued her leadership in offering individual and group spiritual direction opportunities, silent retreats, and contemplative nature walks. Rev. Karen Hering led regular open page writing sessions, but also facilitated a Thresholds series for the second year that was deeply meaningful to all participants. Over 100 women gathered for the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Women's Gathering, JOY!, which focused on the role of joy in our lives even in the midst of challenge and struggle. The Marital First Responders continued their important work and the UU Young Families Initiative met regularly and offered parent engagement on such topics as death and clumsy conversations on race. The Samuel Morgan Forum welcomed Dr. Michael Cowan and James Carter to reflect on racial healing and reconciliation on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. The Library/Bookstall team partnered with Good Books to host Senator Amy Klobuchar's reading of her book "The Senator Next Door." They also hosted author Karen Branen on her book "The Family Tree."

Each year, Unity seeks to offer opportunities for social connections outside of Sunday. Over 100 people gathered in monthly Dine with Nine dinner groups in each other's homes. The young adult group continued to meet monthly throughout the year and was a point of entry for many visitors. More summer community-building opportunities were offered, including family yoga in the greenspace, monthly pancake breakfasts, baseball outings, puppet shows, and more.

**Food Ministry**

Unity's food ministry thrived this year, under the skilled and enthusiastic leadership of Madeline Summers. Of the 133 people who helped prepare Soup Suppers and Wellspring Wednesday dinners, 80 were new, including seven children. We had three regular soup cooking teams and were well supported by our Coming of Age families, whose collective hospitality anchors our 4:30 pm. congregation. We had four Wellspring Wednesday teams, whose delicious and creative meals nourish our mid-week congregation. Our WW team leaders play a particularly vital role, volunteering on average 15 hours/month to this ministry.

**Staffing**

Therese Sexe stepped down as Kitchen Coordinator, having established us beautifully in the new, renovated Kitchen. Madeline Summers added the kitchen coordination to her food ministry and Volunteer Coordinator portfolio and has continued to expand our volunteer base in fun and engaging ways.

## **Literary Ministries**

The congregation continued to offer monthly Open Page guided writing sessions led by Consulting Literary Minister Karen Hering as invitations for members and friends of the congregation to reflect on the monthly worship themes. The congregation also offered a second annual Threshold Series for 18 participants crossing significant thresholds in their personal lives. Participants met for four sessions led by Karen Hering in January and February, engaging writing and other practices to reflect on their personal thresholds and to support one another crossing their own. At the end of the series, the participants were blessed by the congregation in worship with a litany for all those who are in the midst of great change.

Our dedicated *Cairns* committee, led by Shelley Butler, Editor, and Rev. Karen Hering, created Volume 7 of “The Unity Church Journal of the Arts” in 2015. This amazing journal includes artwork and writings from the archives, the pulpit, ministers, staff members, and members of Unity Church.

In addition to *Cairns*, our library and bookstall ministry teams led by Barb Foss, Janice Gestner, Louise Merriam, and Shelley Butler continued to enhance our collection and sponsored well received public readings, author events, and *Café Unity* during the year. Their commitment and creativity continue to enrich us all.

## Music Ministry

Unity Choir, Unity Singers, Women's Ensemble, Children's Choir, Unity music staff, and varied guests brought consistent musical offerings to all three of our services again this season. Choir rotation continues to include all three services, offering a choral presence in each service, on average, three Sundays a month.

Our choir programs continually involve from 160-170 people during the year. Music Ministry is a vibrant and rich community spanning all ages.

Efforts to make connections through music with our local community and wider UUA community were realized through the following:

- a. Representatives from all three adult choirs formed a Unity Ensemble which sang in two October performances at the Guthrie. The production, *The Event*, centered on how community pulls together for support and understanding after a tragedy.
- b. All choirs continue expansion of multi-cultural repertoire with works from varied sources.
- c. Women's Ensemble grew to 55 members by the end of the year, continuing with several mother-daughter teams and one three generation team.
- d. The Children's Choir brought a special program of music to the Episcopal Homes

Our 10:00 p.m. Candlelight Choir continues to expand as a new tradition added to our Christmas Eve service offerings of two Christmas Pageants (which include choral support), along with music for all other services.

Our 2016 Arthur Foote Music Sunday was a clear indication of the strength that exists in our choir communities. Due to Ruth Palmer's 3-month absence after a serious fall, each choir continued their commitment in working with wonderful guests and colleagues. Ruth acted as coordinator and planner but leadership and rapport with guests was well in place for Foote Sunday. All choirs participated: Children's Choir, Women's Ensemble, Unity Singers, Unity Choir.

Our largest group yet participated in the highly successful Children's Musical directed by Sandy Waterman and Mary Blouin Auffert. This opportunity for three years of involvement, 6th-8th grades, continues the arc of offerings for our children with Children's Choir (grades 1 through 5) and Children's Musical (grades 6 through 8).

Our Holiday Concert and Carol Sing continue to be attended with standing room only audience. All choirs participated.

Unity Church volunteer musicians continue to enrich our services throughout the year and, in particular, during our summer services under the direction of summer music coordinator, Kathleen Bartholomay. Their commitment and generosity is a huge gift to all.

Our choir program continues to be not just an opportunity for involvement but an entrance into this community. Many people establish their relationship with Unity Church through participation in one of our choirs before becoming members.

## Ministry with Children and Youth

A discernible emphasis and focus emerged from Religious Education (R.E.) over the past year, one that contrasts with the rapidly narrowing of the world into the urgent and the compression of time and shortening of our perception of the flow of life itself. Cultural memory can deteriorate and its efficacy decrease, leading to a “cooling of memories” that become transitory, consumable, and disposable like plastic. Cold memory, as distinguished from hot memory, has little power to shape history. Cold memories are no longer inhabited, without blood flow, no longer circulating in the realm of shared experience. And the cooling of memories means the cooling down of our life together and continued drift from our grounding as historical beings called to shape the greater narratives of our time and make far-reaching changes.

In contrast to narrowed attention, much of the Religious Education Ministry Team’s (REMT) focus this year was a sustained practice of tending to embers, stoking flames, and intensifying expanding initiatives (drawn from the Ends Statement 2014-18), to mature and integrate Religious Education evermore into the greater ministry of the church. Among ongoing initiatives in R.E.’s multiyear vision, sustained developments included:

- Advancing the work of racial justice through the curriculum review task force. With co-leadership from Mike Huber and Kelley Nelson, the task force finalized rubrics for curriculum review and will make recommendations toward critical multicultural education with emphasis on racial justice. The task force will coordinate with the Religious Education Ministry Team on teacher training with intercultural competence as a focal measure of its work.
- Supporting teachers in strengthening their commitments and exploring new possibilities to deepen relationships with children, including: a growing number of teachers who took on teaching for the *entire R.E. year* while normalizing the semester as the basic time commitment for most, and restructuring the Rotation program to give greater emphasis to building community.
- Teacher’s Café, with presenter Dr. Mark Hicks, brought RE teachers and professionals from the greater Twin Cities UU communities around “teaching as spiritual practice.” The attention given to R.E. teachers, and the significance of an emerging collaboration among greater Twin Cities R.E. professionals, prompted interest in continuing this gathering into the future.
- Tower Club youth continued to sustain the work of racial justice, from senior youth leadership at the Twin Cities Youth Con to direct action protests at the Minneapolis Police Department’s 4th Precinct headquarters with *Black Lives Matter*. For the 31 Coming of Age youth this year, Tower Club presents an engagement with beloved community and invitation to “live deliberately” at the intersection of faith and the greater world.
- The R.E. design team continued to imagine and transform the classroom space into the ideal “third teacher” that reflects and reinforces learning. Led by Megan Casselman-Condon and her talented team, the design elements completed in Spirit Play classrooms continued to

shape Rotation classrooms and has the OWL room and Junior High classrooms in the queue for the coming year.

Such work remains anchored in the resilience of faith and the patience of hope, and in the dedication and capable work of my colleagues Michelle, Robin, and Drew. We know all too well, though, that our work is nested in the remarkable collaboration with countless volunteers whose generosity and reverence for children make real our covenant. Particular gratitude goes to the REMT class of 2016 who are cycling off after beginning this process with me three years ago, of tending to embers and stoking the flames: Josh Capistrant, Debra deNoyelles, Betsy Hearn, John Porter, Erika Sanders, David Smith, and Janet Wacker. I have only gratitude for their wisdom in discerning the temperature of our work, and giving themselves to this work that risks setting fire to wonder and faith.

## **Community Outreach Ministries**

Approximately 200 people actively participate in monthly meetings of our Outreach Ministry Teams and they, in turn, lead the congregation in many avenues of activism, education, advocacy, and service. The teams embody a shared leadership model, which also makes time for spiritual reflection on their work together. What follows is a brief summary of highlights from each team's year. In addition to these partnerships, Unity Church became an official member of Interfaith Action of Great St. Paul (formerly St. Paul Council of Churches), rekindled its historic connection to Neighborhood House of St. Paul, and partnered with the St. Paul Almanac Project.

### **Affordable Housing Ministry Team**

*Community Partners: Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, St. Paul Interfaith Action Project Home, and Faith Builders Habitat for Humanity Collaboration.*

The team partnered with the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative in their legislative advocacy campaign: Building Support to End Homelessness. They collected statements from the congregation, attended lobby days at the capitol, and advocated for legislation called "Unlocking Opportunities" which addressed services and rent assistance for persons with felony convictions. Unity members were invited to serve on a Minnesota-wide advocacy advisory council as well as a programming committee for Prior Crossing, St. Paul youth housing that will be opening this fall. In the summer of 2015, Unity volunteers joined efforts with the two week Faith Builders Habitat for Humanity Build and raised money for the build selling parking spots at Grand Old Day. In May 2016, Unity once again hosted homeless families through Project Home, with the assistance of over 150 overnight and evening volunteers. Founding team member Phil Morton retired from the team and we express our deepest thanks for his dedication and leadership!

### **Evergreen Projects Ministry**

*Community Partners: Family Place, Sharing Korner Foodshelf, St. Paul Jeremiah Program.*

The Evergreen Project continued to create art and beauty in the service of women, children and families. In addition to their annual holiday and Mother's Day sales, the team sponsored the beautiful "Sew Many Colors" quilt show and raffle, which raised over \$4300 for their partners. Food collections continued throughout the year for the Sharing Korner Foodshelf at two locations in the church and monthly meals were cooked and served for the Jeremiah Program community.

### **Generosity Ministry Team**

From July 1, 2015 – June 30 2016, approximately \$95,000 was donated to worthy causes and organizations through our Generosity Ministry. The Generosity Ministry Team receives and vets nominations for the offering and then schedules the offering recipients for every service of the church year. This past year saw many nominations of new organizations. The team set a new budget guideline for nominated organizations in order to prioritize smaller organizations for whom a Unity offering would make significant impact.



### **Holdeen India Program (Emerging Team)**

The Unitarian Universalist Holdeen India Program (UUHIP) works with organizations of India's most vulnerable groups as they seek to advance empowerment and promote equity. Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs serves on the Holdeen Board of Directors.

### **Mano a Mano Ministry Team**

*Community Partner: Mano a Mano International Partners*

Mano a Mano continues to grow the many ways that it serves the citizens of rural Bolivia. Unity Church members participated in two pilgrimages this year: one in March focused on agriculture and one in early summer, which continued a partnership in teacher training. The winter crafts fair and January regifting sale continue to be important fundraisers. Mano a Mano hosts two "soup and sort" nights a month where volunteers come and sort medical supplies which are then sent to the new storage facility in Bolivia.

### **New Orleans Pilgrimage**

Unity marked its 10<sup>th</sup> annual pilgrimage to New Orleans in October 2015 with twelve Unity pilgrims traveling to continue rebuilding the city. On the pilgrimage, connections were made with a number of Unity's partners through the years. A special weekend was held at Unity Church in November, with opportunities for all past NOLA pilgrims to gather and reflect together. Special NOLA guests, Dr. Michael Cowan and James Carter came to Minnesota to offer a Samuel Morgan Forum and to speak during Sunday worship about what we have learned in the decade since Hurricane Katrina.

### **Obama Elementary School Partnership**

Unity Church once again hosted Obama staff and teachers for their August planning week and welcomed them with a pancake breakfast. Volunteers worked with students in grades 1-4 in reading and math through a new, in-house program. Unity members also assisted in the school library, helping to organize and reshelv books to keep them in ongoing circulation.

### **Partner Church Ministry Team**

The Partner Church Team organized a photo exhibit as the November art in the Parish Hall. Photographs illustrated our partner village of Homorodszentpeter and its people.

Rev. Laslo Major, the 2015-16 Balazs Scholar at Starr King School for the Ministry, participated in worship services on February 21.

Plans were made for a pilgrimage in the summer of 2016. Fifteen people from Unity are expected to participate which would bring to over 100 those who have been on pilgrimage to the village. Planning also began for another pilgrimage in the summer of 2018 when the Unitarians in Transylvania will celebrate 450 years since the Declaration of Religious Tolerance.

### **Rainbow Chalice Alliance Ministry Team**

*Community Partners: Minnesota School Outreach Coalition (MnSOC) and Out for Equity*

Team members supported the annual MnSOC Q-Quest gathering for over 300 LGBTQA high school students from across the state who come together for a day of workshops and community. This year Unity's participation also helped the first Q-Quest conference for Middle School students. Unity was one of several welcoming congregations that served on a faith panel at a MnSOC quarterly meeting. The RCA also raised significant funds for the 4th annual

community LGBTQ spring high school prom, through the much-in-demand Unity pi day pie sale. The team organized and facilitated a Wellspring Wednesday program on Gender Identity and Expression, which featured a panel presentation, media, and educational resources for the community. The RCA once again took a lead role in coordinating and organizing the UU presence at the annual Twin Cities Pride Parade.

### **Racial and Restorative Justice Ministry Team**

*Community Partners: Amicus (Second Chance Coalition), Rondo Circle of Peace, Children's Defense Fund Freedom School*

Last summer, many Unity Church members attended the Rondo Healing Ceremony in July, when Mayor Coleman officially apologized on behalf of the city for the harm caused by the building of interstate 94. The team continued their ongoing partnership with the Monday night Rondo Circle of Peace, but also stepped forward to actively support the new Asian Women's Circle and African Men's Circle, which meet at Unity Church on Thursday nights. As the events of the 4<sup>th</sup> precinct unfolded, the team provided the congregation with several opportunities to reflect on the events, to learn about Black Lives Matter, and to become familiar with the circle-keeping process of discussion. With Amicus, they ran a hugely successful Winter Warm Up Drive for clothing, sundries, and other basic necessities for men and women just getting out of prison. They supported the Second Chance Coalition Day on the Hill, which advocated for restoring the right to vote to people released from prison. Many Unity members were active in one on one mentoring and pen friends through Amicus programs. The team also coordinated Unity volunteers who served in a variety of roles in the 6 week 2015 Children's Defense Fund Freedom School, an enrichment school for over 350 children, predominantly children of color. The team also partnered with the Library/Bookstall and Anti-Racism Leadership teams in selecting Ta-Nehisi Coates' book "Between the World and Me" as the all congregation book read and facilitating discussion groups.

### **Sustainable Living Group**

*Community Partner: Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light*

The group continued to lead Unity's composting efforts, increasing the volunteer base and coordinating with Unity staff and food ministry volunteers. They sponsored awareness of the Save the Boundary Waters campaign and a Wellspring Wednesday conversation on Climate Change. They promoted and coordinated Unity's participation in the Community Solar Garden Project, a collaboration of several area UU congregations, and in doing so educated members about their footprint on the environment. New, just this June, the group completed its application to be an official Community Outreach team. They were approved and will be invested formally this fall.

## Policy J Report: Anti-Racism and Racial Healing Commitment

With respect to Unity’s commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist institution, the Executive Team may not fail to:

- 1. Maintain an active conversation with its vendors by engaging them in a process of evaluation and education, applying a matrix of values with all vendors above a threshold of \$2,500.00 annually.**

*In response to this policy, the Executive Team has, or intends to:*

- *Developed and implemented a matrix of criteria that expresses the church’s stated values and ends.*
- *Survey current contractors and vendors to evaluate their compliance with our criteria.*
- *Create required goals for our current vendors and contractors who are not in compliance, thus challenging and educating them;*
- *Apply the criteria to all future processes for the selection of contracted services and vendors.*
- *Report results to the Board of Trustees and the congregation annually in an effort to be accountable and transparent.*

*We apply these values and criteria with new contracts that are above \$2,500.00.*

<b>Matrix of Criteria for contracts and vendors (weighted):</b>
1. Minority hiring practices - resulting in a 31%* employment of people of color and women. <b>(25%)</b>
2. Sustainability practices – demonstration of a commitment to healing the earth. <b>(15%)</b>
3. Local engagement – demonstration of a commitment to the community’s overall health and well-being. <b>(15%)</b>
4. Worker’s Equity in fair compensation, inclusive benefits and healthy work environment. <b>(20%)</b>
5. Competitive fees for goods and services <b>(25%)</b>
*Keyed to Ramsey County requirements.

- 2. Report annually on diversity of staff on payroll, including the percentage of positions and salary paid to people of color.**

*As of September 2015 our staff was comprised of 32% people of color (7 of 22), and 25% of salaries are assigned to people of color (\$199,970 of \$790,346).*

- 3. Report annually on the percentage of Sunday Offerings that go to organizations with an anti-racist agenda and/or that serve communities of color.**

Church Year	Total	# Serve Communities of Color	%	# with Anti-Racist Missions	%
2014-2015	51	37	72.5%	23	45.1%
2015-2016	49	39	79.6%	35	71.4%

**4. Ensure that staff members receive training in anti-racism analysis.**

*We dedicated a segment of our all staff retreat to cultural awareness. We have also incorporated anti-racism awareness and work into our Staff Norms. Some staff members attended the all-day Cultural Competency training with Phyllis Braxton.*

**5. Consider Unity's anti-racism commitment in interpretation of the Ends Statements, and how that commitment is implemented in covenant with local communities of color.**

*As you can see from the ET's Interpretation of the Ends, Unity's anti-racism commitment is woven throughout the work.*

**6. Report at least annually to the congregation on the work being done to live out Unity's anti-racism values, and the measurable outcomes of that work.**

*Please see the ARLT's annual report.*

## **Hallman Ministerial Intern - Shay MacKay**

### **Worship**

Shay led five Sunday worship services during her time at Unity Church and served as a Worship Associate at the Santa Lucia service, the Tolling of the Bells service, one of the Foote Sunday services, the Easter service, and assisted with the services on Christmas Eve. She also led the Blessing of the Animals service in October, co-created the St. Paul Almanac Sunday service with Rob Eller-Isaacs, participated in the Winter Solstice service, and played piano for both the Maundy Thursday service and the Bridging Ceremony. Shay co-created and co-lead the Black Friday service with Danny Givens, Jr., and designed and led the Wednesday evening vigil in remembrance of the Mother Emanuel shootings. She also participated in the quarterly Worship Associate retreats.

### **Rites of Passage**

Shay officiated two memorial services, one for the mother of a long-time member of the church and another for the mother of a newer member. Helen Davis' memorial service was held at Unity Church on December 26, 2015, and the funeral for Ruth Snyder was held at a funeral home in Bloomington on June 8, 2016. Shay also officiated two weddings this year, both of which were for couples not involved at Unity Church – one of those weddings took place in the Ames Chapel and the other was held in a park in Woodbury, MN.

Shay co-officiated the Dedication of New Lives on May 8 with Rev. Lisa Friedman and, as mentioned above, played piano during the Bridging Ceremony for this year's seniors.

### **Wellspring Wednesday**

Along with Ministerial Resident Danny Givens, Shay co-led the weekly chapel services as part of Wellspring Wednesday. These intergenerational services included songs, sharing of joys and sorrows, storytelling, and active participation from those present, especially youth. Attendance fluctuated depending on schedules and weather, but the enthusiasm and intention of those attending never waned.

### **Anti-Racism, Racial Justice, and Intercultural Competence Work**

Shay did some work with the Anti-Racism Leadership Team, attending a few meetings in which she was part of their reflection and discussion on their role within the structure of Unity and their visions for the future of their team and the church. She was also an active participant in the Racial Justice Coordinating Council and helped in the planning and facilitating of those meetings throughout the year.

Shay was an active member of the newly formed Staff Racial Justice Team. In her work with them, she conducted interviews with most of the staff of Unity Church regarding anti-racism and racial justice work within the specifics of their individual jobs and how they see themselves fitting into the larger picture of Racial Justice work at Unity.

Shay coordinated the design, ordering, and hanging of the two Black Lives Matter banners on the Unity building, as well as the ordering and dispersal of Black Lives Matter buttons for the congregation and community.

Along with members of the Board of Trustees, ARLT, REMT, and other staff and lay leaders, Shay attended a day-long workshop on Intercultural Competence and reflected on that experience in her newsletter theme article in May.

### **Pastoral Care**

Shay was a regular part of the Pastoral Care Team during her time at Unity Church. She made pastoral calls, facilitated several of the monthly meetings, and presented a couple workshops/trainings for the team. Shay also helped the team design and implement the Compassionate Listeners program in the Ames Chapel. During this season of Advent, Unity's Pastoral Care Team offered a quiet space for reflection and renewal and provided "compassionate listeners," who were present to listen to any thoughts that may have come up during worship or meditation.

In addition to her work with the Pastoral Care Team, Shay facilitated the Grief Group for one of their meetings and did a presentation for the Grief Coalition. She also played a large role in coordinating and implementing the End of Life conversations project.

### **Elders' Circle**

The monthly gatherings for the Elders' Circle ran from October through May, with variable attendance. The group shared reflections on Autumn, explored the Spirit Play experience with our RE staff, did some Lectio Divina and sang Christmas Carols, did yoga, tried some comedy improv, and learned all about the Social Justice and Community Outreach teams here at Unity. They also had a deep and meaningful discussion around the End of Life conversations.

### **Denominational Activities**

Shay attended several retreats and conferences throughout the year, deepening her relationships with colleagues and broadening her understanding of Unitarian Universalism as a denomination. These included: Regional Fall ministers' retreat, Continental Gathering of UU Seminarians conference, Prairie Group, Trustee Day (sponsored by Unity, gathering the Boards from several local UU congregations), Teachers' Retreat (sponsored by Unity, gathering RE staff and lay leaders from area congregations), Regional Ministers' Days and the Regional Assembly, and monthly gatherings with local colleagues and peers. Shay also helped coordinate the Unity members attending General Assembly in June, 2016.

### **Religious Education**

Shay took part in religious education for both children and adults. She stepped in for some of the workshop rotation and junior high classes, participated in Coming of Age and Tower Club overnights, led a discussion on grief and letting go, and helped out in Spirit Play a few times. She also had the chance to meet with KP Hong, Drew Danielson, and Michelle Hill to talk about the philosophical and theological underpinnings of Unity's RE program.

Shay designed and presented two Wellspring Wednesday workshops on deep and compassionate listening, offering meaningful, interactive experiences for those attending. She also designed and led a half-day retreat on the Mysticism of Music and the Spirituality of Sound which was well attended. Shay also co-facilitated one of the Wellspring Curriculum groups this year with Laura Park.

## **Ministerial Resident – Pastor Danny Givens, Jr.**

As the Ministerial Residency of Pastor Danny Givens Jr. came to a close a team from the Unity Board met with the leadership team of Above Every Name Ministries to consider the future relationship between the two congregations. With able facilitation from the Rev. Jen Crow, Executive Minister of First Universalist Church (and a former Hallman Intern) the two teams developed a covenant of intentions asking the basic covenantal question; What shall we promise one another and in what interest.

### **A Covenant Between the Trustees of Unity Church Unitarian and the Leadership Team of Above Every Name Ministries.**

- We promise to honor and respect each other's religious beliefs and practices and how things are done in each community.
- We promise to be, and to allow each other to be, who we are, unapologetically.
- We promise not to use each other.
- We promise to be open to experiencing each other's religious practices with respect.
- We promise to honor one another and each others' worship space and style. We will learn the proper etiquette for one another's worship services and follow it.
- We will not objectify one another as a token of diversity or fall into the trap of believing a single story about each other. Our relationship is about mutual transformation, growth and learning.
- We commit to deep learning and promise not to become complacent in our relationship.
- We commit to doing things together – from spiritual practice to service, community building and simply being together.
- We commit to participating in the life cycle moments of each others' congregations (Foote Sunday, celebration of the founding date of AEN, pledge drives, etc.).
- We promise to work together for the growth of both congregations – spiritually and numerically.
- We promise to share our gifts and talents with one another, including our financial resources, each to the extent that they are able, trusting that all are giving what they can to our partnership.
- We promise to be transparent and accountable to one another in our relationship.
- We commit to participating in the life cycle moments of each others' congregations (Foote Sunday, celebration of the founding date of AEN, pledge drives, etc.).
- We promise to work together for the growth of both congregations -- spiritually and numerically.
- We promise to share our gifts and talents with one another, including our financial resources, each to the extent that they are able, trusting that all are giving what they can to our partnership.
- We promise to be transparent and accountable to one another in our relationship.

This remarkable document is informed by many years of anti-racist self-reflection and activism and will serve to undergird future efforts. Pastor Danny Givens, Jr., continues to be an active Partner-in-Ministry at Unity Church attending Executive Team meetings once a month, teaching and leading worship at Wellspring Wednesday and helping advise and guide our anti-racist work. He continues to pursue Fellowship as a Unitarian Universalist minister.

## **Resource Development**

This annual report to the congregation includes highlights and accomplishments of the 2015-2016 church year. A report in the area of resource development defies this timeline because the church's fiscal year is a calendar year. We are including highlights of Fiscal Year 2015, statements of financial condition as of December 31, 2015, as prepared by Schechter, Dokken, Kanter CPA (see pages 39-43), and an update of 2016 resource development through June.

### ***Fiscal Year 2015***

#### **Sunday Offerings**

We received a total of \$123,821 in Sunday Offerings in 2015. \$77,636 was given to community organizations that were nominated by our members and friends. \$19,596 was earmarked for dedicated Unity Church funds like the Justice Learning Scholarship Fund, the Arthur Foote Music Fund, the Hallman Endowment, the Partner Church Team, and Project Home. The remaining \$26,589 went to the operating budget to support our Community Outreach programming.

#### **Operating Pledges**

Our 2015 **Operating budget pledge goal** was \$1,242,311. Early in the year we recognized that we were not on track to reach the goal by the end of 2015 and the Executive Team projected a year-end pledge shortfall of \$28,000. In discussions with the Board of Trustees, it was agreed that the Executive Team would continue to make every effort to close the gap and that any year-end shortfall would come from reserves. We ran an additional "Spring Canvass." By year end, our combined pledges from 678 households totaled \$1,216,712, \$25,599 short of our goal. Collections on the pledges were 97.4%.

**Unrestricted Year-End Gifts** totaled \$31,775 in 2015.

#### ***Unity Tomorrow Capital Campaign***

In 2015, members and friends made additional *Unity Tomorrow* Capital Campaign commitments in the amount of \$13,350, increasing total *Unity Tomorrow* commitments to \$6,841,937. We received \$291,857 in payment of those commitments in 2015, and made principal payments ahead of schedule on our construction loan with Western Bank, thus reducing our interest expense on the remaining balance.

A family in the church offered to address their *Unity Tomorrow* commitment through a gift of real estate. Our Gifts Acceptance Committee (GAC) assembled and followed the process in our Gifts Acceptance policy for considering the acceptance of a real estate gift. After carefully considering the information it gathered and the other factors in the Gifts Acceptance Policy, the GAC unanimously recommended to the Board of Trustees that they approve the gift of the property. The Board agreed, and we closed on the property in December of 2015. We are grateful to Scott Rehovsky, a realtor from the church who facilitated the sale of the property in 2016.

Our short term construction loan was scheduled to convert to long term at the end of 2015. Because we are still collecting commitments into 2016, we asked Western Bank to extend our current terms for an additional 12 months, allowing us to make additional principal payments from *Unity Tomorrow* Capital Campaign commitments before locking into a long term note. That modification agreement was signed in December of 2015.



### **Fiscal Agent Agreements**

In 2015, we agreed to act as fiscal agent for two community partner groups that had secured funding from The Saint Paul Foundation. The Circle of Peace Movement, a well-established partner, focuses on the continuing need for violence reduction and racial healing in St. Paul. They received support from the SPF in 2015 and 2016 and we have been acting as their fiscal agent.

Michael Johnson of New Star Aviation was awarded a grant by The Saint Paul Foundation in 2015 and approached us to serve in the role of fiscal agent until December 2016. New Star Aviation helps share new aerospace opportunities and first flight experiences with the diverse student populations that are often beyond the reach of typical inclusion efforts.

### ***Fiscal Year 2016***

#### **Operating Pledges**

Our 2016 Operating budget pledge goal is \$1,279,000. As of June 30, 2016, our operating pledge base was at \$1,256,982 from 707 households including 85 new pledges.

#### ***Unity Tomorrow Capital Campaign***

In 2016, members and friends made additional *Unity Tomorrow* Capital Campaign commitments in the amount of \$1,200, increasing total *Unity Tomorrow* commitments to \$6,843,137. We received \$79,736 in payment of those commitments by June 30, 2016, and continue to make principal and interest payments from our receipts.

Our modified short term construction loan is scheduled to convert to long term at the end of 2016. We began in early 2016 to talk with banks in the community about terms for the long term note.

### **Fiscal Agent Agreements**

In addition to the fiscal agent agreements with The Circle of Peace Movement in 2015, we agreed to provide fiscal agent services for Black Lives UU and Revive Love Tour in 2016.

### **Fundraiser**

Our 2016 operating budget includes \$20,000 of net income from fundraisers. Our spring “Arts & Treasures” fundraiser was great fun, and raised \$13,000. Thank you to the dynamic team that made the fundraiser happen!

**The Heritage Society** is made up of members and friends who have remembered Unity Church in their estate plans. These legacy gifts ensure the future of the church. Susan Foote was our keynote speaker at the annual Heritage Society dinner in May of 2016.

### **Capital Pledges**

In the fall of 2014 we introduced the idea of ongoing Capital Giving and asked for capital pledges for 2015, 2016, and 2017. As of June 30, 2016, we had received pledges totaling just over \$621,000 from nearly 250 households. This capital giving enables us to shield the operating budget from debt service, strengthen our long-term note negotiations with banks, and pay for a capital repairs and improvements.

The City required that the current Sanctuary meet code requirements with a sprinkler system in place by January 1, 2018. The Executive Team requested a proposal from Paul May and Miller Dunwiddie Architecture to conduct Sanctuary Sprinkler studies. MDA provided two options that gave Unity Church sufficient information to budget costs for this construction. The study was completed in early 2016. We contracted with McGough Construction in preparation for installing the sprinkler system in the summer of 2016. We chose the system with (mostly) exposed pipes in a decision to keep costs down.

## **Administration**

The administrative staff is a hard-working, talented team of people who support every aspect of church life. Martha Tilton, Coordinator of Communications; Song Thao, Financial Assistant; and Marcy Mann-Anderson, Office Manager and Wedding/Memorial Coordinator comprised our administrative team for the first half of the church year. Due to budget constraints, the Office Manager position was eliminated as of December 31, 2015, and the responsibilities were distributed amongst remaining staff members. In the spring of 2016, Michelle Hill joined the administrative staff, assisting on a very part time basis with the accounting work.

Our paid staff is supported by dedicated and hard-working front desk volunteers who play an important role in greeting people, answering phone calls, and helping with various projects.

The Memorial Service Reception team, led by Barbara Ford, serves a critical role in providing food and support for memorial service receptions, and we are very grateful for their work.

In 2015-2016, our Art Team's numbers and charge were expanded. Under the leadership of Marty Rossmann, policies were written and approved. New artists were chosen for the monthly Parish Hall art shows. A smaller group of dedicated volunteers took on the task of creating a digitalized catalogue of Unity's permanent art collection which includes photos, location, and history of the various pieces of art. Some pieces of art were repaired, others were purchased and the collection was re-hung throughout the building. Thank you to Marty Rossmann, Sally Foster, Richard Birger, Carol Humpage, Paul Rogne, Joe Schur and all of the other art team members for a remarkable year!

## **Facilities**

Our hard-working, dedicated facilities staff was kept very busy in the 2015-2016 church year supporting the program and worship life of the church and the growing number of events that are held in the building by community groups. Additionally, they accomplished maintenance projects, including cleaning, repair, painting, snow removal, and grounds maintenance at both the church and the church-owned duplex. The staff also welcomed Alice Howard, who began working security at the Holly Avenue reception desk in May.

Our garden group worked diligently to provide beautiful landscaping, particularly in the courtyard at Grotto and Portland. Other individuals continued to move us toward sustainable recycling and composting systems, and we continue to provide a level one fast charging station for electric vehicles.

One Voice Mixed Chorus rents office, rehearsal, and meeting space at Unity. Above Every Name continues to worship at Unity on Sunday afternoons. Unity also hosts the Minnesota Hungarians who hold occasional dinners, dances, and fundraisers at Unity and have added Hungarian language classes for children. The New Century Club holds meetings at Unity, as well as the Osher Life Long Learning Institute, and various 12-step groups.

Our Archive Team continued to sort through and file archival material in the lower level storage area. The Minnesota Historical Society has agreed to store some of our materials there and our team facilitated the transfer.

We assembled an Emergency Preparedness Team in 2015 to evaluate the safety and security of our building and to write and implement an Emergency Action Plan. Leah Doherty, Rob Fulton, Richard Birger, and staff members Bill Lowell and Barbara Hubbard met regularly to create a position of readiness in the event of medical emergencies, fire, weather, loss of power, persons showing inappropriate behavior, suspicious packages, bomb threats, and active shooters. Defibrillators were purchased. The team hosted a Church Safety and Security training for other metro churches and is planning training for our staff and key volunteers, as well as evacuation and weather drills for the congregation.

## Unity Consulting

Unity Consulting is a program of Unity Church whose mission is to liberate and empower the leadership of progressive religious congregations and institutions to awaken compassion, transform lives, and bless the world. We help congregations articulate the difference they seek to make in the world and then align their work and ministries to enable them to make that difference. Our primary tool is Policy Governance® as we've learned to adapt it for congregations.

Five percent of Unity Consulting's fees go to support Unity Church's operating budget. Unity Consulting also provides pro-bono services to the denomination through governance consulting with denominational and congregational leaders.

Highlights from this past year's work include:

- Launched Spirit Map, a proprietary product of Unity Consulting. Spirit Map is a tool that helps:
    - Individuals find their inherent spiritual strengths and discover opportunities to deepen their sense of peace, compassion, and joy.
    - Congregations celebrate their spiritual strengths and identify ways to grow their congregation's overall spiritual maturity.
- Our congregation's participation in Spirit Map pilots, through the 2014 and 2015 congregational surveys, made the development of this product possible.
- Provided consulting services, including on-site retreats and hourly virtual coaching, to 24 congregations over the course of the year (June 2015-May 2016), six of which were new clients.
  - \$4,100 went to the Unity Church operating budget from Unity Consulting fees June 2015 through May 2016. This was more than most years because we had the privilege of having Rev. Roger Bertschausen work as a consultant for much of the year as he transitioned out of parish ministry and into his new role as Executive Director of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council.

## **Denominational Relations Ministry Team**

The DRMT's purpose is to increase the congregation's awareness and connection to the work of the MidAmerica Region and the national Unitarian Universalist Association. The MidAmerica Region is made up of 186 UU congregations (affiliated with the UUA) spread across 13 states. The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) is the central organization for the UU religious movement in the United States and Canada. The primary purpose of the Association is to serve the needs of its member congregations, organize new congregations, extend and strengthen UU institutions and implement its principles.

Unity Church has long been a contributor to the national UUA leadership. Most recently some examples include Rev. Janne Eller-Isaac's work as a Ministerial Settlement Representative, working with churches in transition, supporting the work of their search committees and offering guidelines for the process. We are also very proud that Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs serves as Secretary of the UUA Board of Trustees, which conducts the affairs of the Association and carries out policies and directives, acting for the Association between General Assembly gatherings.

Unity Church also plays an important role as a teaching congregation through the Hallman Ministerial Intern program. Each year a seminary student/graduate is selected to receive training by hands-on work with our church. In addition, Unity Consulting, directed by Unity member Laura Park, works to give congregations and institutions the tools they need to be specific, strategic and accountable in pursuit of their stated ends.



*Financial statements of:*  
**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**  
Years ended  
December 31, 2015 and 2014



**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

(See Independent Accountant's Review Report)

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
<b>Assets:</b>		
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 62,767	\$ 314,695
Receivables:		
Current portion:		
Operating pledges, net	1,026,524	903,722
Unity Tomorrow capital campaign commitments, net	82,435	500,394
Capital pledges, net	211,661	144,673
Other receivables	49,421	61,833
Investments	22,741	16,279
Prepaid expenses	10,782	14,311
Property held-for-sale	<u>195,000</u>	
Total current assets	<u>1,661,331</u>	<u>1,955,907</u>
Property and equipment:		
Land and land improvements	167,320	167,320
Buildings and building improvements	11,536,207	11,527,855
Equipment	805,648	753,262
Artwork	<u>81,300</u>	<u>81,300</u>
	12,590,475	12,529,737
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>3,683,946</u>	<u>3,472,378</u>
	<u>8,906,529</u>	<u>9,057,359</u>
Other assets:		
Cash restricted for long-term purposes	248,951	237,652
Operating pledges, net of current portion	922,846	1,259,861
Unity Tomorrow capital campaign commitments, net of current portion		52,190
Capital pledges, net of current portion	196,900	328,274
Deferred finance costs, net of accumulated amortization of \$28,395 and \$19,873 at December 31, 2015 and 2014, respectively	17,029	25,551
Investments	657,718	680,158
St. Paul Foundation holdings	122,805	129,435
Beneficial interest in Diether perpetual trust	<u>439,960</u>	<u>478,958</u>
	<u>2,606,209</u>	<u>3,192,079</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 13,174,069</u>	<u>\$ 14,205,345</u>



STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
DECEMBER 31

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
<b><i>Liabilities and net assets:</i></b>		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 27,134	\$ 35,661
Accrued expenses	84,568	96,781
Current portion:		
Long-term debt	300,000	300,000
Capital lease obligation	6,003	8,091
	<u>417,705</u>	<u>440,533</u>
Capital lease obligation, net of current portion	23,877	
Long-term debt, net of current portion	1,958,464	2,358,464
Loan from donor advised fund	<u>214,288</u>	<u>232,275</u>
	<u>2,614,334</u>	<u>3,031,272</u>
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	825,011	813,544
Temporarily restricted	8,516,992	9,124,862
Permanently restricted	<u>1,217,732</u>	<u>1,235,667</u>
	<u>10,559,735</u>	<u>11,174,073</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 13,174,069</u>	<u>\$ 14,205,345</u>

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

(See Independent Accountant's Review Report)

	2015			Total
	Unrestricted	Temporarily restricted	Permanently restricted	
Support and revenue:				
Pledges and gifts	\$ 185,473	\$ 1,175,501	\$ 29,286	\$ 1,390,260
Sunday collections	26,589	123,188		149,777
Grants				
Program fees	70,170			70,170
Investment income (loss)	22,693	(7,398)	(1,593)	13,702
Change in value of:				
St. Paul Foundation holdings			(6,630)	(6,630)
Diether perpetual trust			(38,998)	(38,998)
Rental income	36,607			36,607
Unity consulting income	87,521			87,521
Miscellaneous income	11,750			11,750
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>1,899,161</u>	<u>(1,899,161)</u>		
Total support and revenue	<u>2,339,964</u>	<u>(607,870)</u>	<u>(17,935)</u>	<u>1,714,159</u>
Expenses:				
Program	1,855,753			1,855,753
Management and general	403,211			403,211
Fundraising	<u>69,533</u>			<u>69,533</u>
Total expenses	<u>2,328,497</u>			<u>2,328,497</u>
Change in net assets	11,467	(607,870)	(17,935)	(614,338)
Net assets, beginning	<u>813,544</u>	<u>9,124,862</u>	<u>1,235,667</u>	<u>11,174,073</u>
Net assets, ending	<u>\$ 825,011</u>	<u>\$ 8,516,992</u>	<u>\$ 1,217,732</u>	<u>\$ 10,559,735</u>

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND  
CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31

2014			
<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily restricted</u>	<u>Permanently restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
\$ 174,892	\$ 3,023,254	\$ 269,339	\$ 3,467,485
24,002	98,703		122,705
	75,000		75,000
102,931			102,931
25,121	25,067	3,895	54,083
		2,018	2,018
		(13,465)	(13,465)
31,324			31,324
41,161			41,161
51,579			51,579
<u>1,602,818</u>	<u>(1,602,818)</u>		
<u>2,053,828</u>	<u>1,619,206</u>	<u>261,787</u>	<u>3,934,821</u>
1,598,200			1,598,200
429,402			429,402
<u>98,477</u>			<u>98,477</u>
<u>2,126,079</u>			<u>2,126,079</u>
(72,251)	1,619,206	261,787	1,808,742
<u>885,795</u>	<u>7,505,656</u>	<u>973,880</u>	<u>9,365,331</u>
<u>\$ 813,544</u>	<u>\$ 9,124,862</u>	<u>\$ 1,235,667</u>	<u>\$ 11,174,073</u>



**Annual Report for the 2015-2016 Church Year  
from the  
Anti-Racism Leadership Team  
to the Board of Trustees and the Executive Team  
of Unity Church-Unitarian**

**ARLT Members**

Drew Danielson (staff)

Rob Eller-Isaacs (staff),

Danny Givens (staff)

Shay MacKay (staff),

Peter Heege

Gabrielle Mead

Russ Peterson

Vicki Stewart

Mary-Margaret Zindren

Unity Church-Unitarian

732 Holly Avenue

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104

651-228-1456 • [www.unityunitarian.org](http://www.unityunitarian.org)

## **ARLT Congregational Activities**

### **Rev. Danny Givens Ministerial Residency**

2016 marked the second year of Danny's two-year ministerial residency. This was a time of spiritual discernment and remarkable growth in Danny's public presence. He preached twice from Unity's pulpit, in July and for the Black Friday at Church service in November with guest speaker Nekima Levy-Pounds. His public involvement in Black Lives Matter and other social justice efforts has been a moral and spiritual compass for the Twin Cities.

### **Making common cause with Black Lives Matter**

Unity served as fiscal sponsor for Black Lives UU; our clergy and congregants consistently showed up for BLM events; we proudly displayed a Black Lives Matter on the Holly Avenue face of the building; the Church of the Larger Fellowship BLM Ministry has office space at Unity.

### **Other congregational activities**

#### **Wellspring Wednesday**

There were ten WSW programs during the church year that dealt directly or primarily with racial justice topics: *Voting Rights Act* (September 23); *How Open Are Our Borders?* (October 7); *Black Lives Matter: An Invitation to Conversation* (October 21); *Indians in Public Art: Myths and Misconceptions* (October 28); *After Freedom: The Challenge of Attaining Equality and Dignity in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (November 4); Screening of the documentary film *Hands up Don't Shoot: Our Youth Movement* (January 6); *Why Black Lives Matter* (January 20); Book discussion groups on *Between the World and Me* (February 17; also held Sunday February 21); *Why Black Lives Matter: Stories from the Fourth Precinct and Beyond* (February 24); and *Islamophobia in America Today* (March 16).

#### **Book Reads**

This year's congregational book read, held in February and co-sponsored by the Racial and Restorative Justice Team, Anti-Racism Leadership Team and Library Team, was *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. The Library Team also presented an author talk by Karen Branam on her book, *The Family Tree: A Lynching in Georgia, a Legacy of Secrets, and My Search for the Truth*.

#### **From the Pulpit**

Dane Smith preached a Labor Day sermon on *How Radical Should We Be for Racial Equity?* Janne, Rob, Shay, and Lisa regularly incorporated the spiritual dimensions of racial justice and equity into their Sunday talks.

#### **Freedom School**

Unity Church once again this year had the largest contingent of volunteers for the Freedom School summer program for local youth in July and August.

#### **New Orleans Pilgrimage and Morgan Forum**

For the tenth year following the destruction of Hurricane Katrina, a dozen Unity volunteers traveled to New Orleans for a week in October to continue working on the recovery and reconstruction of the Ninth Ward. In November, James Carter and Dr. Michael Cowen from New Orleans visited Unity and keynoted the Morgan Forum *Racial Healing and Reconstruction: Lessons Learned* with their presentation, *New Orleans Under Reconstruction: Looking Ahead*.

### **Saint Paul Almanac**

In April 2016, Unity made a grant of \$20,000 to the Saint Paul Almanac to help fund its project to publish the memoirs of elders from the Saint Paul African-American community, beginning with the writings of Kofi Bobby Hickman. An unsuccessful Faithify drive to replace this unbudgeted expense was run in Spring 2016.

### **Board and Volunteer Intercultural Competence Training**

The full Board of Trustees and several members of the Anti-Racism Leadership Team and the Religious Education Ministry Team attended a day-long seminar on Intercultural Competence in April.

### **Public Events**

Public events attended by Unity congregants included the Rondo Healing Ceremony last July, the Selby Jazz Fest for the Summit University Planning Council Board of Directors election (Unity has held a seat for several years), *Overcoming Racism* Conference at Metro State in November, the annual MLK Holiday Breakfast at Mount Zion Temple in January, and a Mass Incarceration Seminar at Metro State in April.

### **Community Outreach Teams**

Several of Unity's community outreach teams and their community partners were strongly involved in anti-racism and racial justice work and programming.

The Racial and Restorative Justice Team partnered with Amicus, Rondo Circle of Peace and Children's Defense Fund Freedom School for activities including presence at the Rondo Healing Ceremony, weekly Circle of Peace meetings on Monday evenings, Winter Warm Up clothing drive for people recently released from prison, Second Chance Day on the Hill at the state capitol, and Freedom School for over 350 children.

The Affordable Housing Ministry Team partnered with Beacon Interfaith Housing, Saint Paul Interfaith Action Project Home, and Faith Builders Habitat for Humanity in a legislative advocacy campaign, "Building Support to End Homelessness." Under their aegis, Unity also hosted Project Home this spring, using the talents and love of over 150 volunteers.

The New Orleans Pilgrimage celebrated its tenth anniversary. Many Unity members were involved and invested in the Obama Elementary School Partnership. The Generosity Ministry Team coordinated plate offering gifts to numerous non-profits engaged in Justice work.

Outreach Ministry Teams engaged the volunteer efforts of around 200 congregants.

### **Unity Anti-Racism Coordinating Council (UARCC)**

Initiated this year with the aim of facilitating conversations between, and exchanging information among, various groups in the church working on aspects of racial justice and racial equity, UARCC met three times this year with participation from numerous groups and outreach teams. Additionally, the Executive Team created a staff anti-racism team to help monitor, evaluate and coordinate the anti-racism activities and policies of the church.

### **REMT Work on Curriculum Review**

A Task Force led by members of the Religious Education Ministry Team (REMT) met regularly during the past year to review the RE curriculum and make recommendations toward multicultural education with an emphasis on racial justice. As part of the work, meetings included self-reflection by team members, consideration of personal and institutional culture, and grounding in UU principles. Task Force members are focusing first on review of the junior high UU History and Identity unit.

### **Tower Club**

Youth from the Tower Club participated in a conference focusing on racial justice and in the protests at the 4th Precinct with Black Lives Matter.

### **Clumsy Conversations: Talking to children about race**

Unity's UU Families Group led an intensive workshop to explore how to talk to kids about racial justice. Eight Unity parents met for several hours over the course of a few months to share resources, experiences, reflections, and support for talking to our children about racial justice. Group members are considering how to continue conversations among families about this important topic.

## **Summary of ARLT Work During 2015-2016**

### **Team Transitions**

This year saw the departure of team members Brooke Darst Rice, Jill Henricksen, Amy Kujawski, and Avi Viswanathan. We would like to thank them for their dedication and hard work toward the mission and vision of the ARLT.

As a result of Executive Team and Board Chair conversations, the ARLT recruiting committee was asked to suspend the recruiting process while the nature of the ARLT's continuing role was explored. After several conversations with the Board, the ARLT, and the Executive Team, it was agreed by all parties that the ARLT would continue in its current form and role (or "as chartered"). As such, the team has restarted the recruitment process to replace departing members.

### **ARLT Sub-Teams**

#### *Board Liaison*

The ARLT Board Liaison sub-team had a productive relationship with the Board Policy Team this year. We met three times with Board representatives and discussed how we might impact congregational life by imbedding anti-racist language into new or existing Board policies. At our initial meetings, ARLT presented some draft policy statements to the Board members and to Laura Park, who was in attendance at these meetings, and the Board members took these suggestions under advisement and returned to our next meeting with fairly fully-developed general language appended into existing policy statements. The two groups agreed that these draft statements would be presented to the full Board at some point this year, and that the Policy Committee would tailor any needed language changes. We think these proposed changes will have a marked effect on the next iteration of the Ends Statements in the 2017-2018 church



year, as well as fulfilling our role of ensuring that the work of anti-racism and racial justice is embedded in the life of the congregation as long as that work is necessary.

#### *Religious Education*

The RE sub-team has not had regular communications with RE leadership, but is aware of significant work being done by Director of Religious Education KP Hong and the Religious Education Ministry Team (REMT) in support of anti-racism. They continue to consider short and long term curriculum review, accountability and measurement of the effects of curriculum work, teacher orientation and training, and social justice/racial justice community engagement. Members of the REMT participated in the April 2016 intercultural competence training with church staff, Board of Trustees, and other volunteer leaders.

#### *Adult Congregants & Outreach Teams; Front Line Staff & Volunteers*

These two sub-teams were limited in their work this past year given the ARLT's focus on building relationships with the Board of Trustees and given the limited membership of the ARLT.

### **Report on 2015-2016 Recommendations**

One year ago, the ARLT made three recommendations. This section summarizes progress made on these recommendations.

1. *Determine more effective ways of developing and pursuing ARLT recommendations.*

Given inaction on previous years' recommendations, the ARLT sought to develop more direct and stronger connections with members of the Board of Trustees. The Board welcomed these efforts. This relationship has allowed the ARLT and Board to better understand each other's roles and responsibilities, and the Board has taken ownership of anti-racism work as part of its responsibilities.

2. *Allocate the resources needed to support anti-racism training for Unity board members, adult education programming related to anti-racism, and continuation of the Beloved Conversations.*

The Board dedicated significant resources demonstrating commitment to anti-racism work, including supporting intercultural competence training for board members, staff, and other volunteer leaders; a new Beloved Conversations series in Fall 2016; and other congregational activities. Importantly, it is ARLT's understanding that the ET will include a line item for racial justice work in the 2016-2017 budget.

3. *Develop an ongoing relationship between the ARLT and the policy sub-team of the Unity board.*

The ARLT and the policy sub-team of the Board of Trustees have met several times to discuss how to incorporate anti-racism values in church policies. The Board's policy sub-team has taken the lead on incorporating anti-racism into their policy review responsibilities.

## **Report on 2014-2015 Recommendations**

Additional progress also has been made during 2015-2016 related to recommendations ARLT made the previous year. Specifically, the Board has shown commitment to continuing the church's efforts in support of Beloved Conversations and anti-racism training for the Board.

## **Recommendations for 2016-2017**

1. Incorporate anti-racism in every aspect of succession planning, including recruitment and selection of new leadership, in consultation and relationship with ARLT.
2. Continue to develop policy revisions in support of and allocate budget for anti-racism (including, for example, anti-racism training), in consultation and in relationship with ARLT.
3. Confirm the role and function of the ARLT as it was chartered: as an autonomous evaluative and advisory entity. As such, no modifications to or restrictions on its functions and operations may be made without consultation with the ARLT and due Board process.