

## Annual Report 2017-2018

### Unity Church-Unitarian

Sanctuary Address: 733 Portland Avenue

Business Address: 732 Holly Avenue

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104

651-228-1456 • 651-228-0927 (fax)

unity@unityunitarian.org • www.unityunitarian.org

#### Board of Trustees

Justin Cummins, Chair  
Ruth Kirkland  
Jennifer Tong

Nancy Evert  
Terry Linskey  
Jill van Koolwijk

Nila Gouldin  
John Steiner-Manning  
Bailey Webster, Secretary

#### Executive Team

Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs  
Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs  
Rev. Lisa Friedman  
Barbara Hubbard

Senior Co-Minister  
Senior Co-Minister  
Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement  
Executive Director

#### Church Staff

##### Program Staff

Drew Danielson  
Rev. Karen Hering  
Ray Hommeyer  
Rev. K.P. Hong  
Andrea Johnson  
Robin MacKenzie-Taris  
Arif Mamdani  
Michelle Mecey  
Ruth Palmer  
Laura Park  
Madeline Summers

Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministries  
Consulting Literary Minister  
Nursery Coordinator  
Director of Religious Education  
Ministerial Intern  
Sunday Childcare Assistant  
Hallman Ministerial Intern  
Coordinator of Children's Ministries / Accounting Specialist  
Director of Music Ministries  
Managing Director, Unity Consulting  
Volunteer Coordinator / Wedding & Memorial Coordinator

##### Administrative/Facilities Staff

Heidi Birkholz  
Olendta Bryant  
Teresa Connor  
Tim Franco  
DeWayne Givens  
Bill Lowell  
Emma Mathews-Lingen  
Keenan Rust  
Song Thao  
Martha Tilton  
Louis Wilson

Facilities  
Facilities  
Facilities  
Facilities  
Facilities  
Facilities Manager  
Facilities  
Facilities  
Financial Assistant  
Coordinator of Communications  
Facilities

## **In Memoriam**

**Beatrice Elizabeth Weschcke Asfeld**

April 30, 1923 – October 18, 2018

**Paul Arthur Siegler**

January 29, 1923 – October 10, 2018

**Betty (Thor) Hardacker**

May 24, 1925 – September 16, 2018

**Hazel Dicken**

March 4, 1939 – May 30, 2018

**Earl Bernard Gustafson**

September 27, 1927 – April 16, 2018

**David Eugene Fogelson**

September 13, 1926 – March 26, 2018

**Helener Kane Currier**

August 29, 1921 – February 1, 2018

**Jane Bose**

December 9, 1922 – January 27, 2018

**Richard McKinley Cooper**

November 15, 1935 – January 13, 2018

**Howard Milton Guthmann**

November 30, 1922 – December 6, 2017

## **2017-2018 Annual Report**

*Prepared by the Executive Team*

We are pleased to present the Annual Report to the Congregation of Unity Church-Unitarian for 2017-2018. It was a year in which we deepened the covenant among us as we worked to build strength and resilience in perilous times. We completed five years guided by Ends statements written in 2013, and submitted reports detailing progress in pursuit of those Ends. This past May, following a thorough, thoughtful, and inclusive process the Board approved new Ends that will guide our ministry over the next five years. The new Ends are challenging and brave. They call us to humility and transformation. They call us to revere the past even as we imagine a church community far more inclusive, culturally aware, and theologically articulate than we are now.

The new Ends are a powerful statement of your aspirations. We are inspired and encouraged by your charge. Your clarity grows out of many years of deep, contemplative work that touches on questions of identity as well as an equally compelling practice of partnering with organizations that live out our values in the world. We have provided hundreds of volunteers and over eighty thousand dollars in grants in support of what we call our “moral owners.” And who are they? All those who yearn for the Beloved Community and see Unity Church as one instrument for its realization.

The Ends of the congregation can be seen as a set of nesting bowls. In writing the new Ends, that will span the years 2018-2023, the Board reconsidered the largest bowl. Having listened closely to the congregation they came to a new understanding of the core values that underlie everything we do. The newly stated values are:

- Wonder
- Open-hearted engagement
- Courageous action

The stated values of the church had not changed since they were first articulated in 2004. The 2014-2018 Ends helped to move us toward greater vulnerability and courageous action, awakening a growing sense of the need for humility and wonder in our lives. Our deepening ability to be vulnerable and courageous, particularly in our sustained efforts to be credible partners in racial healing, inspired us to claim a longing for transforming relationships. These newly articulated values encourage us to embody the depth of that longing and set the stage for future growth. Without these values at the center of our common life we would not be Unity Church-Unitarian. We cannot overstate our gratitude and respect for the work of the Board in giving new voice to our shared aspirations and new direction to our work.

As we approach a time of significant staff transition the Board and the Executive Team are working faithfully to clarify roles and responsibilities and to improve systems of evaluation and accountability. Beginning with the retirement of our brilliant and beloved Director of Music Ministries in June of 2019, we will be saying farewell to five senior staff members over the next

few years. Over the past two years under the able leadership our Board Chair, Justin Cummins, the congregation has established a strong sense of vision and direction which will help to keep us brave and grounded as together we continue to foster transformation through a free and inclusive religious community that encourages lives of integrity, service, and joy.

The pages that follow offer a sketch of the rich tapestry of love and service that is the life of Unity Church-Unitarian. As always our lives are enriched and inspired by being part of a remarkably talented and dedicated staff team. Please know we hold you, one and all, in high regard and that the best interest of Unity Church is always at the center of our work.

Yours in faith,

Janne Eller-Isaacs, Senior Co-Minister

Rob Eller-Isaacs, Senior Co-Minister

Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement

Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director

The Executive Team of Unity Church-Unitarian

## **Announcing the Retirement of Unity's Senior Co-Ministers**

Beloved friends,

For the past year or more we have been considering retirement. Working closely with the Board of Trustees and in consultation with both the members of the Executive Team and other senior staff, we have begun to make a plan. Given that Unity's Director of Music Ministries, Ruth Palmer, will be retiring in June of 2019, and that Executive Director, Barbara Hubbard; Facilities Manager, Bill Lowell; and the Senior Co-Ministers are all approaching retirement it is important that we keep the best interests of the church at the center of our planning process. The Executive Team has been working with the Rev. Larry Peers, a consultant with significant experience in transition planning, and the Board of Trustees is already being advised by the Rev. Jen Crow, who is well-acquainted with the challenges and strengths of our congregation.

We have confidence in the Board Transition Team and in the future of Unity Church. We will be retiring at the end of the 2019-2020 church year. By then we will have served as your Senior Co-Ministers for twenty years. As we continue to live into the new Ends, we are excited to continue to serve you and are committed to the course the new Ends have set. We pray that our final eighteen months as part of your ministerial team will provide opportunities for growth and learning for us all.

With abiding gratitude,  
Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs  
Senior Co-Ministers

## Ministerial transition plans

*Board of Trustees update — November 2018*

*This is an update for the congregation on how the board of Unity Church-Unitarian is planning for ministerial transition. Transition plans were last summarized in the board's August community column.*

Senior co-ministers Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs have generously given our church significant notice of their plans for retirement on June 30, 2020. Thankfully that date is more than 18 months away. But the advanced notice they've given us has allowed the board to consider the topic with great care.

The board's work on this issue has advanced with consultation with all four members of the Executive Team — executive director Barbara Hubbard, minister of congregational and community engagement Lisa Friedman, Janne and Rob. (For those of you less familiar with Unity's governance, this team of four leads the church and reports to the board.) In 2018, the board's Transition Subteam dug into our options and consulted with Jen Crow, senior co-minister at First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, who knows our church well. **This summer, the full board reached the decision that Unity-Unitarian will have a one-year interim period before a new senior minister starts,** or when two new co-ministers start.

What this means is that an interim minister will be with us between July 2020 and June 2021, before a new senior minister's tenure. The interim minister will be a member of the Executive Team, along with Barbara and Lisa.

### BACKGROUND

There are several reasons why we chose to have a one-year interim period.

- The presence of an interim minister is widely expected within Unitarian-Universalism and the absence of this step could raise significant concerns among some ministerial candidates. As Jen Crow noted, a congregation that skipped interim work with a significant change of long-serving ministers could trigger some reservations from potential applicants.
- A period with an interim minister can help the congregation adapt to and accept change. It will create time for the congregation to reflect on what is next. Keith Kron, UUA director for transitions, suggested that an interim can prepare the congregation for the transition to a new called minister.
- In addition to helping a congregation accept change, an interim period will help the congregation grieve Janne and Rob's departure, allowing us to focus on sending them off with a "good good-bye."
- We will keep the interim period to one year, rather than the two-year period that the UUA recommends. A sizable piece of why a two-year interim is recommended is to discern where the church is heading, and Unity has already done this work with great care in our Ends process. This means that we can reap the benefits of an interim period

in one year, but avoid a longer gap between senior ministers. Other UUA churches have also taken this step and found it helpful.

A ministerial search committee will be formed to conduct the search for a new called minister. An April 2020 congregational meeting will be held to finalize the search committee. The board imagines we will be searching for one senior minister, but we express openness to having two co-ministers apply as well.

#### TIMELINE

Here are some key steps the board expects in the transition process. The congregation will be kept informed along the way.

##### *November 2018*

- Janne and Rob formally announce at the Annual Meeting that they are retiring as of June 30, 2020.

##### *January 2019-September 2019*

- Board finalizes plans for ministerial search committee process.

##### *October-December 2019*

- Board starts process for forming ministerial search committee.
- Board finalizes plans for arrangements in interim period and how ministerial needs will be met.
- Board drafts interim search materials.

##### *January-March 2020*

- Board-led search for interim begins, with request for posting to go up in April 2020.

##### *April-June 2020*

- Board holds April congregational meeting where ministerial search committee is formed. Search committee begins its work, independent of the board.
- Board concludes search for interim.
- Janne and Rob's service ends, effective July 1, 2020.

##### *July-September 2020*

- Interim minister begins; plans proceed for meeting all ministerial needs during the one-year period.
- Search committee work underway.

##### *January-March 2021*

- Search committee work underway.

##### *April-June 2021*

- Search committee brings in a minister/co-ministers for Candidate Week; congregational vote held.
- Interim minister's service ends June 30, 2021.

##### *July-September 2021*

- New called minister starts.
- If one senior minister is called — not two co-ministers — then it remains to be determined when a second minister will be selected; this process would be led by the senior minister.

## **Nested Bowls as of May 12, 2018**

### **Values**

Unity Church-Unitarian honors the ambiguity and uncertainty in the search for greater truth, meaning, and equity. In all we do, we strive to embody:

- Wonder
- Open-hearted engagement
- Courageous action

### **Mission**

Unity Church-Unitarian fosters transformation through a free and inclusive religious community that encourages lives of integrity, service, and joy.

### **Ends (2018-2023)**

Working within ourselves, among our church community, and beyond in the larger world, we the people of Unity Church-Unitarian:

- Create a multicultural spiritual home built on authentic relationships.
- Ground ourselves in personal practice and communal worship that grows our capacity for wonder and spiritual deepening.
- Articulate our Unitarian Universalist faith identity, teach it to our children, share it with others, and live it courageously in the world.
- Know each other in all our fullness and create an ever-widening circle of belonging for all people.
- Generously give and openly receive compassionate care in times of joy, sorrow, and transition.
- Discover and pursue our individual and collective work to advance justice, wholeness, and equity for people, our Earth, and all life on it.
- Create brave space for racial healing and dismantling dominant culture.
- Sustain and steward the church and our larger Unitarian Universalist movement for the future.

## 2018 Congregational Survey Results · Board of Trustees Summary

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

The Board and Executive Team are grateful to every person who responded to the congregational survey.\* The results of the survey are essential to the Board's understanding of whether we're making adequate progress toward fulfilling the vision of shared ministry represented by the Ends. The Executive Team reviews the results of the survey at their annual retreat as part of setting their yearly priorities.

### RESPONDENTS

Number: 349

Average age: 59 years

Gender: 65% Female / 4% Other & NA/31% Male

Income: 64% middle class

Family Size: 70% No children living at home

Family of Color: 25%

### OVERVIEW

This survey captures the final year of the 2014-2018 Ends Statements and gauges the extent to which we believe those statements as true. This year's ratings were very positive and show sustained progress toward the Ends. The average rating of all 15 Ends together was well over four. They are divided into three categories: within, among, and beyond.

**Highest Average:** *We are generous with our time, talents, resources, and creativity.*

**Lowest Average:** *We build authentic relationships with people across differences in the spirit of humility and reverence.*

### TRENDS

- For the first time, Families of Color showed parity in responses with white families
- Respondents continued to show very high loyalty to the church as measured by a question asking if they would recommend Unity Church to a friend or relative.
- Consistent with past years, respondents indicated that the many programs and activities of the church positively impact their spiritual well-being.
- Over the five year tracking period, highest and lowest average are as follows:
  - **Highest average:** *Serve as a trusted and visible leader, partner, and advocate for the creation of a just society and a sustainable environment.*
  - **Lowest average:** *Participate actively in the larger Unitarian Universalist community*

### COMMENTS

The survey also invites participants to provide comments. There were 174 comments in the 2018 survey. All comments were provided to the Board and Executive Team, categorized by theme, and where follow-up was requested, an attempt was made to contact the person who commented.

\*The 2018 Congregational Survey results are available online at [www.unityunitarian.org](http://www.unityunitarian.org).

## **Worship Life**

The worship life of Unity Church remains the center of community life. 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 use the monthly themes to deepen and inform the Chalice Circles. We have made some progress in the planning process by which we will work toward further integrating the adult worship themes with the church school curricula.

While most of the services in the formal church year were led by our Senior Co-Ministers, additional members of the ministerial team include Lisa Friedman, K.P. Hong, and Karen Hering. Hallman Intern Arif Mamdani was a strong presence in the pulpit as was our United Theological School intern Andrea Johnson. 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 Arif Mamdani or Andrea Johnson. Danny Givens, Jr., continues to lead Chapel once a month. 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.

On Saturday, December 2, 2017, the congregation of Unity Church-Unitarian joyfully ordained The Rev. Shay MacKay to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry. Shay was Unity’s Hallman Ministerial Intern during the 2015-2016 church year.

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 during Sunday worship, at the weekly staff meeting, in 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.

There is a large network of support and care available to members and friends in need or in times of transition. The formal structure of the program seeks to ensure quality support and care for all of Unity's community. It begins, of course, with the lay ministry provided by the pastoral care team itself, but their work is supported by a group of largely invisible people who add to their visible care by helping out when asked to provide rides and meals.

We begin first with the U-Knitarians who knit comfort shawls throughout the year. The shawls are then finished by shawl coordinator, Carol Miller. She delivers them to the pastoral care meeting where they are blessed by the team members. Our comfort shawls have been delivered to over 35 people this year. This year the practice of sharing our shawls with non-Unity friends and family continued, to much appreciation. We also continue to share comfort shawls with members of Above Every Name who are living through challenging times in their lives.

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. Monthly meetings often focus on a particular theme or pastoral issue. This past year the pastoral care team participated in informational meetings or trainings at most of our meetings. 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.

This year we invited the congregation once again to volunteer in 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 home projects. The Caring Circle is designed to allow for more practical kinds of support to be offered to members and friends who need things that are offered generously from their fellow congregants. Over 140 people signed up to be part of this pastoral care program that is often invisible and yet serves many of individuals and families who are in need of practical support. The services offered by the Caring Circle are an essential piece of the team approach serving the needs of a particular individual.

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.

Janne Eller-Isaacs and Cynthia Orange continue to co-facilitate a once a month 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. It continues to include people from other congregations who are in need of the support it offers, since this offering is not available in the congregations they attend.

The grief group continues as a monthly drop in resource. There is a core of regular attenders who seek to welcome all newcomers so that they feel welcomed and included. Co-facilitated by Janne Eller-Isaacs and Linda Kjerland, an environment of mutual support and understanding is available to anyone walking the journey of grief.

This year we also solidified the monthly support group for people who have family members living with mental health challenges. This group provides a vital sounding board, a place to ask for advice, a place to receive much needed support for the participants.

The Pastoral Care Program seeks to respond to the stated needs of the congregation. If you have a pastoral need or an interest in forming a support group, please contact Janne.

Lastly, I would like to close this annual report with great appreciation for the Memorial Service team. Coordinated by Barbara Ford, the team seeks to provide a calm and lovely reception after memorial services. Barbara recruits bakers who bake and deliver cookies and another group that sets up and manages the receptions. Though generally serving memorials for Unity Church members, the team has been especially generous in also getting cookies and bars for services for non-Unity members and friends.

## Congregational and Community Engagement

### Membership

In February, Unity Church certified 908 voting members with the Unitarian Universalist Association. Since July 1, 2017, Unity welcomed 57 new members and their families. Unity expanded the Faith Forward curriculum series from First Unitarian Church of Dallas, Texas, for visitors, new members, and emerging leaders, offering classes in Beyond Inquirers: How do UU's do Church?, Unitarian Universalist History, Unitarian Universalist Theology, and Developing a Spiritual Practice. Finding Yourself at Unity continued as a year-round, drop-in weekly Sunday class, led by a dedicated group of volunteer facilitators working with staff presenters. It was also offered twice as an all-inclusive Saturday morning format to make it more accessible to families with young children and those who can't attend the Sunday sessions.

The Mentor Program was improved and expanded, offering active visitors and new members an opportunity to be matched with a mentor for six months to help them connect more deeply with the congregation. The following people joined Unity Church-Unitarian this year:

- |                            |                            |  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Helena Mackenzie        | 18. Benjamin Werner        | 40. John P. Simmet                     |
| 2. Colin Hamilton          | 19. Matthew J. Barrett     | 41. Danny L. Givens, Jr.               |
| 3. Elizabeth S.<br>Klemann | 20. Tabatha Barrett        | 42. Rebecca Cameron<br>Gonzalez-Campoy |
| 4. Stacey D'Andrea         | 21. Miranda LW Bryan       | 43. Kara McGuire                       |
| 5. Michael Carls           | 22. Suzanne Temple         | 44. Sandra Burton                      |
| 6. Margaret (Peg)<br>Carls | 23. Abby Olson             | 45. Elizabeth Elcombe                  |
| 7. Marilyn<br>Rushenberg   | 24. Marie Rivers Rule      | 46. Debra Burger Quist                 |
| 8. Susan Farnham           | 25. Nancy Dilts            | 47. William Andrew<br>Quist            |
| 9. Jennifer<br>Kamarainen  | 26. Daniel J. Philippon    | 48. Angela Scott                       |
| 10. Aaron Nunberg          | 27. Barbara McKernan       | 49. Morgan France-<br>Ramirez          |
| 11. Roberta Hunt           | 28. Janice M. Allen        | 50. Sarah France<br>Ullmer             |
| 12. Barbara Jo Thoman      | 29. Donald R. Allen        | 51. Vanessa Assata<br>Taylor           |
| 13. Mary Kerres            | 30. Cheryl Young           | 52. Carol L. MacAllister               |
| 14. Seth Jackson           | 31. Mark Abner             | 53. Nathan W. Schultz                  |
| 15. Carol Humpage          | 32. Gabrielle Horner       | 54. Jennifer L. Schultz                |
| 16. Amanda Rae<br>Rueter   | 33. Jamie Bosc             | 55. Cheryl Bourgeois                   |
| 17. Jacob Gorman<br>Rueter | 34. Shelia Bosc            | 56. Maima Fant                         |
|                            | 35. Johanna Sulzer         | 57. Jo Ann Lucas                       |
|                            | 36. Dollene Lamberto       |  |
|                            | 37. Michelle O'Brien       |  |
|                            | 38. Anne Kirkman<br>Morgan |  |
|                            | 39. Marla Simmet           |  |

Unity's Welcome Teams create a vital ministry of hospitality at every worship service held throughout the year. Over 75 people served on one of the 12 welcome teams, coordinated by Madeline Summers, and an impressive 25 people joined our welcome team ministry this year! In addition to their Sunday support, Welcome Team members attended training in hospitality and emergency preparedness and many volunteered to serve at special worship and memorial services. A spring appreciation party was held for all welcome team members.

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

Unity's adult programming and mid-week congregational life grew, offering a range of opportunities for members and friends to grow their souls, deepen connection to one another and our faith, and bless the larger world. Adult Religious Education opportunities added classes on Unitarian Universalism through the Faith Forward series and included more offerings on the dynamics of culture and institutional White Supremacy. Over 150 congregational leaders attended a workshop on the Intercultural Developmental Inventory with Phyllis Braxton in September. Over 400 people attended "Seeing the Racial Water" with Robin DiAngelo this November at Unity and over 230 attend a two-day workshop "Experiencing the Racial Body and Mind" with Robin DiAngelo and Resmaa Menakem in June. The All-Congregational Book Read for 2017 was "My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies" by Resmaa Menakem.

Wellspring Wednesday programs represented 25% of the 268 adult program offerings in the 2017-18 program year. Attendance at Wellspring Wednesday thrived this year and sought to expand its programming to tweens, as well as to anchor Unity's anti-racism, anti-oppression education for the larger community. Pastor Danny Givens, Jr., and Above Every Name Ministries partnered in worship, classes, and community building on Wednesdays, deepening the covenant between the two congregations. Presentations such as an author reading of "The Blood of Emmet Till" by Tim Tyson, *Better Angels: Bridging the Red/Blue Divide*, the History of Japanese American Resettlement in St. Paul, Community Singing, Conscious Parenting, Stepping Stone Theatre, and presentations on gun violence, climate change, immigration and more, reflected a broad range of Unity's partnerships in the wider community. Deep appreciation goes out to the many Unity teams including Community Outreach, Library/Bookstall, ARLT, Art Team, and other members who suggest speakers and topics for this rich and diverse learning.

Annual classes such as the Unitarian Universalist Wellspring Series, the Committed Couples class with Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs, and the Threshold series with Karen Hering, remain anchors of Unity's program offerings. The 10th annual Women's Retreat, the 2nd annual Men's Retreat, and the first Queer Retreat were all held with enthusiastic participation. The young adult group grew under the leadership of KP Hong and the Elder's Circle met monthly with interns Arif Mamdani and Andrea Johnson. The Samuel Morgan Forum welcomed Dr. Michael Cowan, Professor at Loyola University in New Orleans, back to Unity in December. Over 120 people met monthly for a meal in each other's homes through the Dine with Nine program for conversation and community. Summer fellowship continued to be popular including pancake breakfasts, baseball at the St. Paul Saints, and more.

New programs this year included opportunities such as the My Story/Your Story/Our Story class developed and led by Karen Hering and Hallman intern Arif Mamdani, the monthly Racial Justice Film Series, Spiritual Practice for Young Adults, Gender 101, Spirit Map, and Chalice Circles. The Chalice Circle program, developed by intern Andrea Johnson, created a small group ministry around the monthly worship themes. 11 facilitators and 116 members participated September-June and the enthusiastic feedback from this pilot year found the experience nourishing, connecting, and meaningful. Based on the response, Chalice Circles will continue to be developed and offered as an annual program at Unity.

### **Food Ministry**

Unity's food ministry thrived this year under the skilled and creative leadership of Madeline Summers. Unity's volunteers served 7920 meals – 4950 Wellspring Wednesday Meals and 2970 Bowls of Soup! Team Leaders Henry Mott, Marty Prentice, Martha Tilton, Therese Sexe, Maria Caliandro, and Dick Buggs led and coordinated cooking teams (Many of them have served over 10-15 years as leaders in the kitchen!). Dedicated team volunteers of all ages volunteered for multiple shifts each month, including the Tuesday night prep teams and the Wednesday cooking and cleaning teams. Unity's Sunday soup teams were also well supported by our Coming of Age families, whose collective hospitality anchors our 4:30 pm. congregation. Thank you to all who participated in making Unity's food ministry a delicious success!

## **Community Outreach Ministry**

Over 225 people actively participate in monthly meetings of Unity's Community Outreach Teams – an increase of 30% over the past two years. The teams, in turn, lead the congregation in many avenues of active community engagement based upon the goals of education, advocacy, service, and spiritual reflection. Unity has 20 partners in direct relationship with its Community Outreach Ministry Teams. What follows is a brief summary of highlights from each team's year. In addition to these partnerships, Unity Church also took on a leading role in the Minnesota Poor People's Campaign in May and June.

### **Affordable Housing Ministry Team**

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

This year the team became officially recognized as a member of the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, a collective of over 80 congregations in four counties who are committed to achieving equitable, affordable housing. With Beacon, the team participated in strategic planning, training for and meeting with elected officials on housing policy, and congregational convenings to further our education and lobbying efforts. Through the team, Unity supported the residents of Prior Crossing in St. Paul, donating and organizing supplies to support new residents moving into the dedicated young adult housing. In May, Unity once again hosted homeless families through Project Home, with the assistance of over 150 overnight and evening volunteers. The expanded leadership team recruited for all shifts, provided volunteer training and support, and created warm, welcoming spaces for Project Home families. In the summer, Unity volunteers joined the two week Faith Builders Habitat for Humanity Build and raised money for the project selling parking spots at Grand Old Days.

### **Evergreen Projects Ministry**

*Community Partners: Family Place, Hallie Q Brown Foodshelf, St. Paul Jeremiah Program*

The Evergreen Project continued to create art and beauty in the service of women, children, and families. The team raised funds for their partners through their annual Holiday and Mother's Day sales, along with the spring "Once in a Blue Moon" raffle and quilt show. The team also coordinated monthly meals for the Jeremiah Program community and collected ongoing donations for the Hallie Q Brown Foodshelf.

### **Generosity Ministry Team**

Unity Church is in the 11th year of its Generosity Ministry, which continues to receive strong support from the congregation and wider community. From July 1, 2017 – June 30 2018, \$94,910 was donated to worthy causes and organizations. The average range of each Sunday's offering recently increased from \$1500-1800 to \$1800-2500, and the number of nominations of new recipients also rose. There is a greater presence of non-profit leaders coming on Sundays to share gratitude and information about their organization. The Generosity Ministry Team vets nominations for the offering and schedules the offering recipients for every service of the church year. The team sets a budget guideline of \$500,000 for nominated organizations to prioritize smaller organizations for whom a Unity offering would make a significant impact.

### **Gun Sense Ministry Team**

*Community Partners: Protect Minnesota*

The Gun Sense Ministry Team is the newest of Unity's Community Outreach Ministry Teams and this year marks the first year of their partnership with Protect Minnesota and the Interfaith Alliance for Gun Safety. The team worked toward two goals: to raise awareness of the issue of gun violence and of Minnesota gun policies and to support and facilitate Unity Church members in expressing their views to their state government. The team supported those goals through many efforts with the congregation, including: attending workshops in how to talk about issues of gun policy; sponsoring a Wellspring Wednesday presentation by Protect Minnesota's director, Nancy Nord-Bence; participating in an enormous rally at the Capitol in February; lobbying legislators in person: attending hearings when relevant bills were presented in committee; making calls to committee heads; mailing over 100 postcards to their state legislators; addressing the issue during Veterans' Day on the Hill; supporting Unity youth who participated in demonstrations this spring, including forty youth who marched in the March for Our Lives (and were greeted by many more Unity Church members at the Capitol); staying connected through monthly emails about upcoming actions and events; and making gunlocks available from the Ramsey County Sheriff's office (if you live in Ramsey County, you may have one of these locks for free). The team was formally invested by the congregation in this work during the June 3 worship service as a part of National Gun Violence Awareness Day (observed nationally on June 2).

### **Mano a Mano Ministry Team ("Hand to Hand" in Spanish)**

*Community Partner: Mano a Mano International Partners*

Mano a Mano serves the citizens of rural Bolivia in many ways, particularly in the areas of education, agriculture and medical needs. This year, they were able to raise the funds to purchase a new airplane for supply transportation. Mano a Mano hosts regular "soup and sort" nights each month where volunteers sift through donated medical supplies before they are shipped to Bolivia. Unity members traveled to Bolivia to assist in the storage of medical supplies, to continue a partnership in teacher training, and more. The December craft fair, an important fundraiser, expanded successfully to two Sundays. In November, Mano a Mano hosted Jeff La Frenierre as a Wellspring Wednesday presenter on "El cambio climático está aquí: The experience of climate change in the tropical Andes."

### **Obama School Ministry Team**

*Barack & Michelle Obama Elementary School*

The Obama School Ministry Team has deepened and expanded Unity's partnership with the scholars, families, and staff of Obama School this year. They found classroom tutors for the teachers who requested them. They provided delicious food for the teachers at their in-service meeting in September and again for their after-school meetings once a month. They worked to get new signage for the school, provided front entrance aesthetics, and reminder "Scoop the Poop" signs [with baggies] for the dog owners who use the adjacent park. They recruited a growing crew of library assistants who help in several ways: processing new books into the collection, setting up and staffing the school's Book Fair twice this year, and shelving books returned by the scholars. And, thanks to the generosity of many Unity members and friends

who signed up for a new initiative, Friends of Obama School, the team was able to provide Cub grocery cards each month for the 75 Obama families who responded to the administration's invitation.

### **Partner Church Ministry Team**

The Partner Church Team supports the ongoing relationship with Unity's partner village of Homorodszentpeter, Romania, since 2001. The team organized and supported the summer 2017 visit of Rev. Kinga Reka Szekely and her family to St. Paul and planned for the Unity pilgrimage to Romania in the summer of 2018 for the celebration of the 450th anniversary of the Edict of Torda.

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

*Community Partners: Amicus (Second Chance Coalition), Rondo Circle of Peace, Children's Defense Fund Freedom School, Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance*

The team continued to support the work and growth of the Circle of Peace Movement throughout the year, participating in the weekly circle and providing food for the meals. They joined the Circle in advocating for changes to the St. Paul Police Department's new Use of Force Policy. 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 and reentering the community. Many Unity Church members are active in one on one mentoring and pen friends through Amicus programs. The team also coordinated financial support and volunteers for the six-week 2017 Children's Defense Fund Freedom School, an enrichment school for over 350 children, predominantly children of color. The team partnered with the Library/Bookstall and Beloved Community Staff teams in facilitating the All-Congregational Book Read of "My Grandmother's Hands" by Resmaa Menakem.

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

*Community Partners: Minnesota School Outreach Coalition (MnSOC), Out for Equity, Trans Forming Families Minnesota*

The team continued to be one of the main supporters of the annual MnSOC Q-Quest conferences for over 500 LGBTQA high school and middle school students from across the state. The RCA also raised significant funds for the annual community LGBTQ spring school proms, through the much-in-demand Unity Pi Day Pie Sale. The team worked with the LGBTQ+ Support Group to organize and facilitate programs on Gender Identity and pronouns, and worked with the Membership Ministry to introduce pronoun buttons to the congregation. The team participated with other UU's and MUUSJA (Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance) at the annual Twin Cities Pride Parade. The team also partnered with Trans Forming Families Minnesota, whose monthly St. Paul gathering meets at Unity Church.

### **Sanctuary Team**

*Community Partner: ISAIAH*

The team is committed to educating the congregation about immigration issues in our community as part of the St. Paul network of Sanctuary congregations. The team advocates for

more just, inclusive policy on a local and national level and hosted a presentation on Understanding Detention and Deportation in August.

### **Sustainable Living Team**

*Community Partner: Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light*

The team led Unity's composting efforts, increasing the volunteer base and coordinating with Unity staff and food ministry volunteers. They promoted advocacy opportunities on climate change policies. They organized community clean up outings, supported Unity's children's garden summer ministry, educated on refillable water bottles, and sponsored the annual spring plant exchange. They continued to establish an Earth Day program tradition on Wellspring Wednesday for all ages. Several members attended the SPARK training offered by MINPL and shared their learnings with the team. The possibility of a Green Corps intern in partnership with Frogtown Green was explored.

## Literary Ministries

In 2017-2018, Consulting Literary Minister Rev. Karen Hering continued to offer monthly Open Page guided writing sessions in which members and friends could reflect on the monthly worship themes. Rev. Hering also offered a Thresholds Series for participants crossing significant thresholds in their personal lives. Participants engaged writing, art 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, created *Cairns: The Unity Church Journal of the Arts, Volume 9, 2017*. 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 Team led by Barb Foss, Janice Gestner, and Shelley Butler hosted monthly gatherings of the Unity Church UU History Book Club. They sponsored public readings and author events featuring Tim Tyson, Susan B. Foote, Meg Riley and an evening of words and music by Meg Wheatley and Barbara McAfee.

Café Unity celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> year in the spring of 2018! The commitment and creativity of those dedicated to literary ministry at Unity Church continue to enrich us all.

## **Art Team**

The Art Team's leadership transitioned from Marty Rossmann to Paul Rogne, both of whom have been fearless leaders of our amazing (and growing) Art Team. This team receives applications for and selects Parish Hall monthly art shows, as well as curating our own Unity Church permanent art collection.

This year the Art Team commissioned a new framed art piece by Diane von Arx. This beautiful piece hangs in our Center Room and reflects the core tenants of our mission: integrity, service, and joy.

The Art Team featured two talented youth artists from Unity Church in an exhibit of their photography. Sophie Fried and Maddy Breton are photographers whose works were shown in the west hallway of the Eliot Wing in March and April.

Finally! A beautiful creation by the glass artist John Sandy of Glass Endeavors of Minneapolis was installed in the Parish Hall north window space. This window was blocked by the building remodeling done in 2012. Now a chalice, one of the iconic symbols of Unity Church is featured in the window, framed by attractive opaque glass that enhances the Parish Hall and the ever-changing art that hangs there each month.

In 2018, the Art Team introduced a new program called Art Share which spotlights member's art. This innovative program invites members to choose a favorite piece of art, write a statement of why it's a favorite and display the art for two Sundays in the Parish Hall. The response (and the art!) has been wonderful!

## 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 170-180 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. Unity Church hosted a community-wide event of the Justice Choir led by Tesfa Wondemagegnehu. All singers/friends welcomed from across the Twin Cities
- b. All choirs continue expansion of multi-cultural repertoire with works from varied sources.
- c. Women's Ensemble maintained membership of 60 members, continuing with several mother-daughter teams.
- d. The Children's Choir brought a special program of music to the Episcopal Homes in their annual concert there.

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

Our 2018 Arthur Foote Music Sunday continued this great tradition of music in our church community. This year we presented works of several living composers which spoke directly to immediate social concerns, some in response to tragic events in our Twin Cities community. All choirs participated.

Participation continues to grow in the highly successful Children's Musical (29th year) directed by Sandy Waterman and Mary Blouin Auffert. The musical has now been firmly claimed by our 6th-8th grade community. This opportunity for three years of involvement continues the arc of offerings for our children with Children's Choir (grades 1-5) and Children's Musical (grades 6-8).

Our Holiday Concert and Carol Sing continue to be attended with standing room only audience. Family and friends new to Unity Church are a large part of our 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 an opportunity for involvement and an entrance into this community. Many people establish their relationship within Unity Church through participation in one of our choirs before becoming members.

## Ministry with Children and Youth

Perhaps the greatest among pedagogical fallacies, noted John Dewey, is that children learn the thing they are studying at the time they are studying it. In truth, learning proceeds according to its own inner requirements, emerging on its own time and not on schedules constricted by semester or term or examination. Learning emerges in *illo tempore*, that sacred time and not in ours, reminding teachers of the changing rhythms and movements and the long periods of accompanying our children before the final moment in the teaching process occurs. This is about sustained relationships for relational learning, and especially so given teaching understood as the work of religious imagination.

The underlying focus this year continued the project of reimagining and restructuring Religious Education with relational learning and religious imagination as guiding objectives:

Relational learning: Teachers in R.E. understand our collective work not as limited commitment to task completion but a covenantal commitment to lifelong faith journey. Relational learning creates situations in which our children are handed over to themselves and each other as subjects in the re-creation of themselves, their community, and the world in which they live. (Paulo Freire) For that purpose...

- The Religious Education Ministry Team (REMT) finalized reconceptualizing the current teaching structures across all programs into teaching teams who journey with their same group of children/youth for the whole R.E. year, irrespective of changing curriculum or program. Beginning in fall 2018, each teaching team will assume responsibility for teaching all curricula, scheduling themselves for all R.E. Sundays, and keeping various roles/responsibilities within the team as they come to better know what works for their group of children (relational pedagogy). Furthermore, teachers will deepen relationship among themselves, taking time to reflect after Sunday classes and longer scheduled conversations during the year on their shared relational ministry.
- Relational learning will become especially important in advancing racial justice work in the Junior High course Building the Beloved Community, available fall 2018. This critical multicultural education and racial justice course began with updating the UU Identity and History course during 2016-17, and developed by co-leaders Kelley Nelson and Mike Huber, will be piloted for 2018-19.

Religious imagination: Beyond the usual emphasis on teaching as a matter of method and content, teaching-as-faith-formation is the work of religious imagination. Such teaching provides form and perspective from which our children can see, dimensions by which they can grasp, frames that can stabilize, and language that can define and sort their experience of the Sacred. Such forms are, therefore, not another set of ideas and concepts but the very ground that gives rise to those ideas: rituals and practices of relational truth, integrity, love, courage, reverence, joy, and hope. Teaching as the practice of religious imagination finally points to the

nonsubstitutable function of worship, for “worship is a way of seeing the world in the light of God.” (Abraham Joshua Heschel) For that purpose...

- Reimagining R.E. extended to restructuring Junior High classes to conclude with regular worship on Sundays. Worship and liturgy, already in place for Spirit Play and Rotations programs, will extend into the Junior High program for 2018-19, with co-leaders Drew Danielson and Sarah Cledwyn shaping worship as the basso continuo and ground for all classroom and curricular work. Invitations for senior youth – especially youth who attended Summer Seminary – to help serve as liturgists/musicians will serve to deepen worship across older youth programs.

As our church community anticipates a new set of Ends Statements for 2018-2023, a guiding question asks “What does a transformative relationship ask of us?” Religious imagination must remain a vital mainstay response and imperative for remaking our world. But religious imagination remains a far too loaded and substantial reality to be pinned down. Religious imagination keeps revealing the Sacred emerging from the ground of life, and often from the reversed and unnoticed side, spilling over boundaries we have set, always more comprehensive and comprehending than we know. I have only gratitude for this generous community which alone can hope to be comprehensive enough in nurturing children for faith in our disquieting world.

## **Ministerial Interns: Andrea Johnson and Arif Mamdani**

Unity Church values its role as a teaching congregation to future ministers. In the 2017-18 year, Unity was enriched by the ministries of two skilled, dedicated and collaborative interns. Arif Mamdani served as the Hallman Ministerial Intern, coming from United Theological School in New Brighton, and was supervised by Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs. Andrea Johnson, a recent UTS graduate, served as Unity's second Ministerial Intern and was supervised by Janne Eller-Isaacs and Lisa Friedman. Both interns were supported in their growth by two Ministerial Internship Support Teams. Arif's team members were Eric Hendrickson (chair), Mary Pickard, Jack Rossmann, Alex Askew, and Maima Fant. Andrea's team members were Helen Pohlig (chair), Hal Freshley, Jess Landgraf, Bob Albrecht, Janet Wacker, and Sarah Cledwyn.

The interns contributed to Unity's ministry in many ways: participating in Executive Team and staff meetings, leading Sunday and Wellspring Wednesday worship, facilitating monthly theme meetings, officiating at rites of passage, providing pastoral care, volunteering the religious education program, leading the Elders' Circle, supporting the work of the Beloved Community Staff Team, and much more.

Each intern also brought their unique gifts to their ministry at Unity. Arif served on the core planning team of the Minnesota Poor People's Campaign, which met throughout the year. He and Karen Hering developed and co-led the curriculum My Story/Your Story/Our Story to help participants understand and share their own cultural heritage and identity. Arif partnered with the Men's Retreat Planning Team on the Men's Retreat and the worship series on the #MeToo Movement. He, Andrea, and a team of lay facilitators taught a 12-week series on Unitarian Universalist spiritual practice. Arif and Janne Eller-Isaacs worked to shape the congregational reflection on Resmaa Menakem's book, "My Grandmother's Hands" and the June workshop with Resmaa and Robin DiAngelo. Arif is now back at United Theological Seminary, completing his degree, and serving on the interim ministry team at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka.

Andrea Johnson brought her background in the Soul Matters small group ministry program to Unity and developed and led a successful pilot Chalice Circle program, which had 11 groups meeting together monthly to explore Unity's worship themes. She created and led programs on current UU theologies, including Religious Naturalism. She assisted with an in-depth staffing structure analysis as part of Unity's transition planning. She answered the call to clergy to participate in the Superbowl Action organized by the Black Visions Collective. She served as the Arts and Music Coordinator of the Poor People's Campaign weekly events in May and June. Andrea is now serving as the Director of Faith Formation at the Minnesota Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship and recently passed the MFC.

This past December, Unity had the honor and the privilege of ordaining former Hallman Ministerial Intern Shay MacKay to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry.

## 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 understand their purpose, the difference they make in people's lives, and then we help them organize to deliver on that promise. 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:

- Continued growing Spirit Map, a proprietary product of Unity Church and Unity Consulting 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 well-being.

Three new congregations and 41 individuals completed the Spirit Map inventory in the past year, and we had a Spirit Map booth at General Assembly to raise awareness of and interest in the product.

- Provided consulting services, including on-site retreats and hourly virtual coaching, to 23 congregations over the course of the year (July 2017-June 2018), fewer than last year, since one partner consultant returned to a full-time job. Three of the congregations were new clients.
- \$2,300 went to the Unity Church operating budget from Unity Consulting and Spirit Map fees July 2017 through June 2018.

## **Denominational Affairs**

Unity Church continued to support its relationship with the larger Unitarian Universalist Association. Unity increased its financial support on the path to becoming a Fair Share congregation. Unity provides meeting space and hospitality for the Church of the Larger Fellowship, the mid-year gathering of the MidAmerica UUA staff, minister's cluster meetings, and other UU organizations. Unity sent a team of staff and lay leaders to the national Mosaic Makers Conference in San Diego, a gathering of UU congregations who are committed to anti-racism, anti-oppression and multi-cultural work. Unity sent a delegation of members to participate in the June 2018 General Assembly in Kansas City. There is increased collaboration among metro area UU congregations in shared programming, training for boards and teacher cafes, Coming of Age gatherings, and more.

The staff and members of Unity Church volunteer for the larger movement and association in a variety of ways. Don Brunnuell serves on the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Sherri Knuth and Lia Rivamonte serve on the Board of MUUSJA (the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance). Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs continued her years of service as a UUA Transitions Consultant to congregations in ministerial search and as a Board member of the Unitarian Universalist Holdeen India Program. Rev. Lisa Friedman completed a two year term as UU History and Theology faculty at the Midwest UU Leadership School. Rev. KP Hong has consulted with the Fahs Center Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School. All of Unity's ministers serve as mentors to colleagues in preliminary fellowship and support the profession of ministry in a variety of ways.

## **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; Michelle Mecey, Accounting Specialist and Madeline Summers, Wedding/Memorial Coordinator comprise our administrative team, supervised by Barbara Hubbard. In 2017-2018, we were preparing for a software conversion which will ultimately provide members with much more ease and access to their own information and giving. Martha Tilton has adeptly guided us toward this conversion.

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. This beloved team of volunteers is coordinated by Joan Carver.

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.

## Facilities

Our dedicated facilities staff was kept very busy in the 2017-2018 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. We welcomed Teresa Connor, Olentda Bryant, Louis Wilson, Keenan Rust, Heidi Birkholz and Dewayne Givens to our staff this year, and said goodbye to long-time employee, Derrick Sanders.

Led by Ethel Griggs, 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 Church. 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 the church and have added Hungarian language classes for children. The New Century Club holds meetings at Unity, as well as various 12-step groups. In the 2017-2018 year, Medley Village Preschool, Twin Cities Guitarists, and Music Together also made Unity Church their home!

Our Archive Team continued to sort through and file archival material in the lower level storage area. The Minnesota Historical Society is now storing some of our materials.

Our Emergency Preparedness Team, assembled in 2015, continued its important work in evaluating and improving the safety and security of our building. We have written and implemented an Emergency Action Plan that creates procedures and 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. We conducted practice evacuation drills and trained staff, tenants, front desk volunteers and Welcome Team members in "Situational Awareness." Leah Doherty, Rob Fulton, Richard Birger, and staff members Bill Lowell and Barbara Hubbard are on the "EPT."

## **Beloved Community Staff Team**

In 2016, the Beloved Community staff team was formed at Unity Church to strengthen and coordinate Unity's anti-racism and multi-cultural work, and to share the stories of this journey with the wider community. We commit to sharing the struggles, the questions, and the collaborations here at Unity and in the wider world of our faith and city. The current members of the team include Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs, Rev. KP Hong, Drew Danielson, Rev. Lisa Friedman, Kathryn Jay, Pauline Eichten, and Erika Sanders.

The team was involved with several new initiatives this past year. Last summer the team sponsored a Racial Justice monthly film series as an entry point into conversations and reflections about race and culture, which was popular enough that it has become a regular part of Unity's program. In September, the team organized an Intercultural Developmental Inventory workshop with Phyllis Braxton for over 150 lay leaders and staff from all areas of Unity's ministry. In addition to getting personal feedback on individual IDI scores, the congregation received a profile of itself on the development continuum, which informs the team's range and depth of programming. The team followed up with specific trainings to groups within the church who were interested in exploring the IDI more, including the Racial and Restorative Justice team and other Community Outreach team members. The team also had the chance to connect with nationally known NVC (Non-Violent Communication) trainer Roxy Manning about how she brings NVC principles and IDI developmental understandings together in her work.

Based upon her work at the UUA's General Assembly, Unity invited Robin DiAngelo to offer her "Seeing the Racial Water" presentation at Unity in November, to which all area Unitarian Universalist congregations were invited. Over 400 people attended and the experience of the event led to a collaborative opportunity between Robin and Resmaa Menakem, author of "My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies." Robin and Resmaa worked with Janne Eller-Isaacs and Arif Mamdani in planning a two day retreat at Unity in June and Resmaa's book was selected for the All-Congregational Book Read. The series of events offered a year of exploration and reflection on their work and insights.

The team also spent the year engaging the desire for multiculturalism that emerged from the congregation's Ends renewal process. What would it mean for us as a congregation? Do we have a shared understanding of what multiculturalism is and could look like? In the course of that exploration, Unity sent a team of staff and lay leaders to the Unitarian Universalist Association's Mosaic Makers Conference in San Diego this fall to connect with and learn from other UU congregations engaged in this work. In June, Rob Eller-Isaacs and KP Hong convened the Multicultural Conversation Partners, a group of lay people from different identities who pledged to meet regularly in one-on-one conversations to develop authentic relationship and then to bring their learning back to the whole group and eventually the congregation.

In fulfilling the team's role to communicate this journey to the congregation on a regular basis, Erika Sanders and Pauline Eichten published a series of articles and photo collages on the

Beloved Community page of Unity's website. Articles shared this past year included such topics as: The Minnesota Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, Recommended Reading from Ta-Nehsi Coates, Unity Library Resources, the All-Congregational Book Read, Racial Segregation and Its Enduring Impact, and the Intercultural Developmental Inventory.

## Anti-Racist Leadership Team (ARLT) Annual Report to the Board of Trustees

### ARLT Report - Liaison Meetings 2018

ARLT members have had conversations with two of the four leadership teams this year:

- KP Hong: Director of Religious Education, February 2018
- Barbara Hubbard: Executive Director, October 2018

Both teams are deeply committed the embedding of antiracist and multicultural (AT/MC) in the fabric of their work at Unity Church. R.E. is in the process of a curriculum review (Spirit Play through Tower Club) with a goal to embed all curricula with a multicultural focus; this includes a critical look and challenge to whiteness as the norm, and considerable thought given to the development of religious and spiritual development of adults.

The work of the Executive Director reflects an ongoing, deeply introspective and thoughtful approach to embedding role equity, racial justice, and multiculturalism into the work of the church.

Both departments described a deep and abiding commitment to the work of AR/MC and a strong and firm desire to do more work to support the ongoing development of an AR/MC church.

### Year End Report for the ARLT

If there is a clear mission /mandate for the church to institutionalize or embed a multicultural / antiracist stance, then how the church does this should be clear, and **as possible** measurable, and systematic. The role of the ARLT, established by the Board of Trustees, has been to gather data about this mission from four key leadership positions and to provide a synthesized report at the annual meeting on how that embedded mission has been demonstrated by the leadership teams during the year.

This year the ARLT has entered into conversation with the Board to determine if the ARLT tasks should be returned to the Board. It is anticipated that a decision about this will be made **early next year**.

Respectfully submitted by the ARLT:

Jim Davnie

Christine Fenske

Joe Mueller

Signe Nestingen

Jane Thompson

Ex Officio: Drew Danielson

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

The Executive Team shall not take actions or otherwise conduct the affairs of Unity Church-Unitarian in any manner that does not comport with its commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist institution. The Executive Team shall not:

1. Engage vendors in an amount greater than \$2,500 annually without assessing and educating any such vendor using a matrix of values which includes, but is not limited to anti-racism, anti-oppression, multiculturalism and class inclusion.

In response to this policy, it is the ET’s intention to:

- Develop and implement 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 have developed criteria (see below) but we have not surveyed current contractors as proposed. We do, however, apply these values and criteria with new contracts that are above \$2,500.00.

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

2. Allow the Board to be uninformed about diversity of staff on payroll, including the percentage of positions and salary paid to people of color.

As of October 2018 our staff is comprised of 23% people of color (5 of 22), and 18% of salaries are assigned to people of color (\$\$156,708 of \$863,510).

3. Allow staff members to be uninformed about how to conduct their duties in alignment with the anti-racism, anti-oppression, multiculturalism and class inclusion values of Unity Church-Unitarian.

We dedicated a segment of our all staff retreat in September to cultural awareness and often discuss issues at our weekly staff meetings. We have also incorporated anti-racism awareness and work into our Staff Norms.

4. Interpret the Ends statements without consideration of the anti-racism commitment of Unity Church-Unitarian and how that commitment is implemented in covenant with local communities of color.

As you can see in the ET’s Interpretation of the Ends, our commitment to anti-racism is woven throughout the ministries and programs of the church.

5. Allow the congregation to be uninformed about the work being done to live out the anti-racism, anti-oppression, multicultural and class inclusive values of Unity Church-Unitarian, and the measurable outcomes of that work, including the percentage of Sunday Offerings that go to organizations with an anti-racist agenda and/or that serve communities of color.

We will incorporate this report into our Annual Report to the congregation. In addition, the ARLT’s annual report presents a comprehensive look on the work being done to live out our values.

From July of 2017 through June of 2018, 72.7 of the organizations that received a Sunday offering serve communities of color and 47.7% of the organizations include an anti-racist agenda in their mission.

Church Year	Total	# Serving Communities of Color	%	# With Anti-Racist Mission	%
2014-2015	51	37	72.5%	23	45.1%
2015-2016	49	39	79.6%	35	71.4%
2016-2017	47	39	83.0%	24	51.1%
2017-2018	44	32	72.7%	21	47.7%

## **Finances / Resource Development**

This annual report to the congregation includes highlights and accomplishments of the 2017-2018 church year. A report in the area of finances/resource development defies this timeline because the church's fiscal year is a calendar year. We are including highlights of Fiscal Year 2017, statements of financial condition as of December 31, 2017, as prepared by Schechter, Dokken, Kanter CPA, and an update of 2018 resource development through June.

### **Sunday Offerings**

We received a total of \$136,262 in Sunday Offerings in 2017. \$92,138 was given to community organizations that were nominated by our members and friends. \$12,730 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 Chalice Camp. The remaining \$31,394 went to the operating budget to support our Community Outreach programming.

### **Operating Pledges**

Our 2017 Operating budget pledge goal was \$1,310,309. 745 households made \$1,310,639 in 2017 pledges (!) and paid 96.9% of those pledges.

Our 2018 pledge drive, "The World We Want to Live In" had a goal was \$1,352,073 from 754 households. We recognized that we were falling short of that goal in early 2018, and in June asked members and friends to provide 2018 Special Mid-Year gifts which supplemented the 2018 pledges by almost \$70,000, bringing us to our goal.

**Unrestricted Year-End Gifts** totaled \$27,153 in 2017.

### **Fundraiser**

In November of 2017 we hosted the "Share the Bounty" annual fundraiser which raised \$24,053. This was the first time using ClickBid, online auction software, which worked well. The food was awesome and the event was great fun for all!

### **Capital Pledges and Projects**

In the fall of 2014 we introduced capital pledging, which enables us to shield the operating budget from debt service, strengthen our long-term note negotiations with banks, and pay for capital repairs and improvements. In 2016, 2017 and 2018, members and friends made \$224,980, \$243,955 and \$222,853 in capital pledges respectively. We expended capital pledge receipts for the Sanctuary sprinkler project in 2016, wood renewal at the main entry in 2017, new furniture for the Robbins Parlor, additional choir room cabinets, and \$142,512 in debt service payments in 2017. Our 2018 Capital budget included "Teal Hymnals" which were purchased at the beginning of the year, funds for a database conversion and Year II of debt service payments (see below).

In 2017, we identified the need to restore our historic Noack organ and engaged Grandall and Engen, LLC to do this work. The organ was built in 1965 by Fritz Noack after the fire in the sanctuary. The project, which includes cleaning, repair, adding extra stops and a rear walk-board with safety improvements, was estimated in excess of \$100,000. In March, we invited a small group of donors to pledge to this project, and were promised \$117,644 in support. The work began in May, 2018 and is expected to be completed in October, 2018 at which time we will know the final cost.

### **Unity Tomorrow Capital Campaign / Long Term Debt**

We have been enjoying our newly renovated building since the Unity Tomorrow capital project was completed in 2012. Through the generous contributions of Unity Church members and friends, we were able to modernize our infrastructure, upgrade the kitchen, add restrooms and create a beautiful and welcoming main entrance.

In November of 2011, the congregation voted to move forward with the Unity Tomorrow capital project with the goal of attaining \$8 million in pledges, and constructing the three key elements of the project. At a special meeting of the congregation in April, 2012 a resolution was passed that the “debt in the project be limited to the cost of short-term construction financing and long term financing such that scheduled repayments shall not exceed more than 10% of the annual operating budget of the church, and authorize such encumbrances as are necessary to secure such financing and such liens as are customary industry practice.” The Unity Tomorrow project cost \$8 million. Total Unity Tomorrow commitments from 2011 – 2016 were \$6,874,342 and by the end of December, 2016 we had collected \$6,653,734 or 96.8% of the amount promised.

After paying principal and interest on the short term construction loan for 4.5 years, we converted the remaining \$1,950,000 to a long term note on January 1, 2017. This is a five year note with Western Bank based on a 20 year amortization schedule. Interest is fixed at 4.0% and debt service payments are \$142,512 per year from 2017-2021. Our capital pledges are adequate to cover this debt service without impact to programming, and we are allowed to make additional principal payments of up to 20% of the remaining balance annually.

We will need to refinance the note at the end of five years with either the current or another bank, without prepayment penalty. Making additional principal-only payments (in addition to the regularly scheduled debt service) before refinancing will create more favorable options. At that time, the factors in play will be the remaining principal balance, interest rates, and our tolerance for debt, which will determine the number of years over which to amortize the loan. In 2017, we received \$37,770 in additional principal only gifts and another \$20,000 in 2018.

### **Legacy Giving**

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. Two additional people made legacy gifts to Unity Church in 2018, joining over 200 others who have committed to supporting the church into the future. Our annual Heritage Society Dinner in May was the

church's way of thanking those individuals who have made legacy gifts. Our guest speaker was The Rev. Meg Riley, Senior Minister of Church of the Larger Fellowship. We were notified that we are receiving estate gifts from three Unity Church members who passed away in 2018, Helener Currier, Hazel Dicken and Jane Bose.

---

*Financial statements of:*

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

Years ended  
December 31, 2017 and 2016

**SDK**  
Schechter Dokken Kanter  
CPAs ■ Business Advisors

---

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

(See Independent Accountant's Review Report)

<b>Assets:</b>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 279,336	\$ 57,798
Pledges receivable:		
Current portion:		
Operating pledges, net	975,940	1,056,555
Capital pledges, net	168,591	181,720
Other receivables	36,124	42,450
Prepaid expenses	9,417	22,681
	<u>1,469,408</u>	<u>1,361,204</u>
 Property and equipment:		
Land and land improvements	180,070	180,070
Buildings and building improvements	11,740,784	11,728,024
Equipment	856,563	820,921
Artwork	81,300	81,300
	<u>12,858,717</u>	<u>12,810,315</u>
Less accumulated depreciation	4,173,359	3,922,385
	<u>8,685,358</u>	<u>8,887,930</u>
 Other assets:		
Cash restricted for long-term purposes	143,445	235,864
Operating pledges, long -term	559,792	540,965
Capital pledges, long-term	101,375	95,794
Investments	1,004,583	775,266
St. Paul foundation holdings	138,317	125,001
Beneficial interest in perpetual trust	480,668	445,990
	<u>2,428,180</u>	<u>2,218,880</u>
 Total assets	<u>\$ 12,582,946</u>	<u>\$ 12,468,014</u>

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
DECEMBER 31

	2017	2016
<b>Liabilities and net assets:</b>		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 25,757	\$ 19,178
Accrued expenses	100,839	84,357
Current portion:		
Long-term debt	70,240	64,624
Copier lease payable	6,876	6,425
Total current liabilities	203,712	174,584
Copier lease payable, net of current portion	10,576	17,453
Long-term debt, net of current portion	1,763,779	1,878,138
Loan from donor advised fund	174,917	195,423
Total liabilities	2,152,984	2,265,598
 Net assets:		
Unrestricted	1,139,619	998,089
Temporarily restricted	7,950,292	7,944,833
Permanently restricted	1,340,051	1,259,494
Total net assets	10,429,962	10,202,416
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 12,582,946	\$ 12,468,014

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

(See Independent Accountant's Review Report)

	2017			Total
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	
Support and revenue:				
Pledges and gifts	\$ 134,597	\$ 1,740,407	\$ 22,979	\$ 1,897,983
Sunday collections	30,739	141,837		172,576
Grants				
Program fees	86,635			86,635
Investment income	25,832	122,954	9,584	158,370
Change in value of:				
St. Paul Foundation holdings			13,316	13,316
Diether perpetual trust			34,678	34,678
Rental income	41,204			41,204
Unity consulting income	64,807			64,807
Miscellaneous income	41,465			41,465
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>1,999,739</u>	<u>(1,999,739)</u>		
Total revenues and support	<u>2,425,018</u>	<u>5,459</u>	<u>80,557</u>	<u>2,511,034</u>
Expenses:				
Program	1,764,398			1,764,398
Management and general	404,998			404,998
Fundraising	<u>114,092</u>			<u>114,092</u>
Total expenses	<u>2,283,488</u>			<u>2,283,488</u>
Change in net assets	141,530	5,459	80,557	227,546
Net assets, beginning	<u>998,089</u>	<u>7,944,833</u>	<u>1,259,494</u>	<u>10,202,416</u>
Net assets, ending	<u>\$ 1,139,619</u>	<u>\$ 7,950,292</u>	<u>\$ 1,340,051</u>	<u>\$ 10,429,962</u>

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

2016			
Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
\$ 187,473	\$ 1,360,700	\$ 25,805	\$ 1,573,978
33,720	120,952		154,672
	100,000		100,000
83,553			83,553
22,691	27,756	7,731	58,178
		2,196	2,196
		6,030	6,030
45,809			45,809
81,185			81,185
57,699			57,699
<u>2,181,567</u>	<u>(2,181,567)</u>		
<u>2,693,697</u>	<u>(572,159)</u>	<u>41,762</u>	<u>2,163,300</u>
2,004,225			2,004,225
435,476			435,476
<u>80,918</u>			<u>80,918</u>
<u>2,520,619</u>			<u>2,520,619</u>
173,078	(572,159)	41,762	(357,319)
<u>825,011</u>	<u>8,516,992</u>	<u>1,217,732</u>	<u>10,559,735</u>
<u>\$ 998,089</u>	<u>\$ 7,944,833</u>	<u>\$ 1,259,494</u>	<u>\$ 10,202,416</u>

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**  
(See Independent Accountant's Review Report)

**STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**  
**YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31**

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Cash flows from Operating Activities:		
Change in net assets	\$ 227,546	\$ (357,319)
Adjustments to reconcile changes in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	250,974	238,437
Accretion of financing costs	1,448	17,029
Donated investments	(65,198)	(9,606)
Loss on sale of property	-	36,253
Permanently restricted contributions	92,419	(6,939)
Unrealized gain on investments	(164,119)	(35,487)
Change in value of:		
St. Paul Foundation holdings	(13,316)	(2,196)
Beneficial interest in perpetual trust	(34,678)	(6,030)
Decrease (increase) in assets:		
Pledges receivable	69,336	565,332
Other receivables	6,326	6,971
Prepaid expenses	13,264	(11,899)
Increase (decrease) in liabilities:		
Accounts payable	6,579	(7,956)
Accrued expenses	16,482	(211)
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>407,063</u>	<u>426,379</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of:		
Property and equipment	(48,402)	(219,839)
Investments	(102,297)	(49,714)
Proceeds from:		
Investments	102,297	
Contributed property		158,748
Restriction of cash for long-term purposes	<u>92,419</u>	<u>(6,939)</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	<u>44,017</u>	<u>(117,744)</u>

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**  
(See Independent Accountant's Review Report)

**STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**  
**YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31**

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Cash flows from financing activities:		
Loan origination fees	\$ -	\$ (7,238)
Payments on:		
Loan from donor advised fund	(20,506)	(18,865)
Long term debt	(110,191)	(308,464)
Capital lease obligation	(6,426)	(6,002)
Permanently restricted contributions	(92,419)	6,939
	<u>(229,542)</u>	<u>(333,630)</u>
Net cash used in financing activities		
	<u>221,538</u>	<u>(24,995)</u>
Net increase (decrease) in cash		
Cash, Beginning	<u>57,798</u>	<u>82,793</u>
Cash, Ending	<u>\$ 279,336</u>	<u>\$ 57,798</u>
Supplemental disclosure of cash flow information:		
Cash paid for interest	<u>\$ 79,227</u>	<u>\$ 101,679</u>

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

(See Independent Accountant's Review Report)

	2017			
	<u>Program</u>	<u>Management and general</u>	<u>Fundraising</u>	<u>Total</u>
Salaries	\$ 604,755	\$ 162,758	\$ 55,605	\$ 823,118
Payroll taxes and benefits	177,724	42,096	15,392	235,212
Total salaries and related expenses	782,479	204,854	70,997	1,058,330
Program expenses	488,095	2,074	7,670	497,839
Interest		80,675		80,675
Other professional fees	53,766	16,749	8	70,523
Utilities	51,576	7,107	4,738	63,421
Unity consulting fees	45,902			45,902
Dues and subscriptions	43,799	121	81	44,001
Professional development	25,359	8,300	1,716	35,375
Repairs and maintenance	28,906	4,625	4,146	37,677
Supplies	16,675	9,000	374	26,049
Insurance	14,468	3,101	3,100	20,669
Bank fees		16,507		16,507
Telephone and communication	1,530	10,935	2,187	14,652
Bad debt expense		9,150		9,150
Office equipment		3,191		3,191
Property tax assessments	8,192	217	145	8,554
Total expenses before depreciation	1,560,747	376,606	95,162	2,032,515
Depreciation	203,651	28,392	18,930	250,973
Total expenses	<u>\$ 1,764,398</u>	<u>\$ 404,998</u>	<u>\$ 114,092</u>	<u>\$ 2,283,488</u>
Percentage of total expenses	77%	18%	5%	100%

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES  
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31

2016			
Program	Management and general	Fundraising	Total
\$ 570,523	\$ 150,480	\$ 43,442	\$ 764,445
195,061	61,504	13,676	270,241
765,584	211,984	57,118	1,034,686
683,029	971	12,046	696,046
	118,708		118,708
50,313	16,837	75	67,225
57,238	2,018	867	60,123
71,421			71,421
32,676	115	29	32,820
23,386	4,624	2,049	30,059
34,834	1,137	3,878	39,849
17,598	9,603	670	27,871
18,558	718	116	19,392
	17,051	17	17,068
10,454	1,927	642	13,023
	36,372		36,372
	4,197		4,197
11,302	191	1,828	13,321
1,776,393	426,453	79,335	2,282,181
227,832	9,023	1,583	238,438
\$ 2,004,225	\$ 435,476	\$ 80,918	\$ 2,520,619
80%	17%	3%	100%