



**FISCAL YEAR 2021 REPORTS  
FOR THE 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING  
THE UNITARIAN CHURCH IN WESTPORT**



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**70<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA**  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 13, 2021**

- **Call to Order (L Garvey, President)**
- **Opening Words**
- **Quorum Report (S. Emberling, Secretary)**
- **Approval of Member Meeting Minutes**
  - **June 14, 2020, Annual Member Meeting**
  - **September 20, 2020, Member Meeting**
- **The Very Fine Lifetime Volunteer Service Award (C Onyemelukwe)**
- **Board of Trustees Report (L Garvey)**
- **Financial Reports**
  - **2020-2021 Pledge Report (M Money/S Somashekar)**
  - **Endowment (S Poole)**
  - **Financial Results & Proposed Budget (S Grathwohl, Treasurer)**
- **Ratification of 2021-2022 Budget (S Grathwohl)**
- **Proposal to Approve the Anti-Racism Resolution (K Roberts)**
- **Vote on the Anti-Racism Resolution**
- **Elections (F Keeton, Co-Chair, Nominating Committee):**
  - **Board of Trustees**
  - **Endowment Committee**
  - **Committee on Ministries**
  - **Nominating Committee**
- **Installation of New Board & Elected Committee Members (C Onyemelukwe)**
- **Report on the #MeToo Resolution and the Gender Equity Team (C Dixon)**
- **Report from the Committee on Ministries (R Burnham)**
- **New Business**
- **Adjournment**

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

These times of great change and uncertainty have brought an unprecedented set of challenges and opportunities to our Congregation. Under Reverend Morehouse's leadership, we are adapting to the crisis to Inspire, Connect and Act in new ways. We are also responding appropriately to the economic decline in order to ensure that we emerge into the post-COVID world as financially secure as possible.

### **Board Goals**

As noted in last year's report, there have been a number of significant challenges the Congregation has been facing. We started this year (June 2020) in the depths of the COVID pandemic. We migrated Services and meetings to streaming, not without hiccups. On a positive note, the use of Zoom has allowed a number of congregants who have moved away to attend services, in addition to our regular attendees, and new people from the community have tuned in as well.

Due to the pandemic, the rehabilitation work on our physical plant has slowed down, but not stopped. The parking lot received a much-needed repaving, and some of the interior work has begun. Thanks once again to all who contributed generously via the Capital Campaign to this crucial effort. Work is expected to begin over the Summer on the skylights and other vital, long-overdue, renovation.

### **Congregational Ends**

In September 2020 the Board selected from the 11 ends – or strategic goals – that were in place to focus on two to be our priorities for the 2020-2021 year. The two most critical on which we focused this year. These are:

1. We become a sustainable, engaged, growing Congregation comprised of all generations **END # 1.2.4**
2. Live out our commitment to promoting social justice causes, especially racial justice and gender equity. **END # 1.3.3**

These priorities have helped shape our efforts for the year, and the Board, along with Reverend John, sees positive signs of increased Engagement. We believe that our strong stand on racial justice, women's rights and transgender issues is attracting new friends and members. We have also focused, with some success, on invigorating the children's and youth programs. This we anticipate this will be supported more heavily next year, in part by a generous contribution from the newly-established Scouller/Nelson Fund for Family Faith Formation.

Sustainability and Growth: This is an area of some concern. We have been at the intersection of two national trends: one was the general decrease in attendance at worship of all denominations; the other was the pandemic. The net effect was that we have experienced a decline in membership, and a significant decrease in giving to our annual pledge drive – both fewer pledging units, and at more modest amounts. Reverend John as the "Chief Executive" of the Congregation has done an excellent job keeping expenses down. However, over 70% of our total expenses are "people cost", i.e. salaries, benefits, etc. There is therefore a limit to the reductions that can be made. There is more about these challenges in our Committee Reports.

### **Social Justice**

The Board has focused on this priority, adding "gender equity" to our Congregational Ends. The Board of Trustees has supported the work of the Anti-Racism task force, and endorsed the Resolution which the Congregation will be asked to approve at the Annual Meeting. The break-out sessions with congregants made it very clear that these issues are very important to our members. The Board continues to work on how to best incorporate #MeToo, reproductive justice, and environmental justice into our efforts.

We are committed to pursuing our social justice causes that are at the core of our UU values and at the same time ensuring that all voices in our Congregation, including those with views, opinions, or values that do not align with the majority

viewpoints in TUCW, are acknowledged and heard. The Racial Justice Council, with a charter declaring its purpose being to “promote racial justice across the entire congregation” was established, and its work is fully supported by the Board. Some 18 members are working on teams for education, police accountability, hunger and homelessness, and they have crafted a Congregational resolution supporting racial justice. Many more are active in movie and book groups dedicated to learning more about systemic racism, with rich discussions in the virtual coffees after Sunday services.

Many of us have attended the anti-racism training given through Temple Israel, which is to be repeated later this year. All Board members have participated in the Intercultural Development Inventory assessment.

### **Other Board Work**

The Board, as stated in our Constitution, proposes goals, establishes priorities, and monitors their implementation. The Senior Minister is responsible for the implementation of these goals and policies. The Board also monitors the performance of the Senior Minister in his/her/their execution of these duties. On a monthly basis, we and Rev. John review and report on the operation and health of the TUCW organization. We have had “generative discussions”, looking at big picture issues. One of the key topics we have discussed was the definition of Membership.

The Board has also spent much time focusing on strategies and support for the Senior Minister in efforts to improve quality and access to online services and meetings. While much progress has been made, we as a Congregation will continue to try to improve this experience. Recently, we have moved from Services that were accessible exclusively through streaming, to a hybrid (in-person and streaming) model. We believe this to be vital to TUCW’s future health and the continued engagement of its congregants.

In March, the Board embarked on an exploration into the possibility of changing the name of our organization to “The Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Westport”, to acknowledge both parts of our spiritual heritage, and to be more inclusive towards current and potential congregants. It is of course the Congregation’s decision, and we will be holding numerous group discussions to receive feedback, culminating in two Congregational votes to ratify this change.

The Board also established a Governance Committee, comprised of the current and past Secretaries and Presidents. This has provided an invaluable advisory function supporting efficient and effective functioning of the Trustees under our Policy-Based Governance model.

### **COVID-19 Response**

The Board has continued to work closely with Rev. John to cope with the economic impact of COVID-19. As evident in the Treasurer’s Report and proposed Budget, income has been significantly reduced. The receipt of a Payroll Protection Program loan last year, which has since been forgiven, added about \$111,000 to our operating funds. This was a one-time influx of cash. The situation has led to some painful cost-cutting measures. Our financial health will continue to be a concern, and it will be watched closely as we go forward.

Joyfully, we have now moved towards in-person Services, and we look forward to being fully together in person in September.

### **Next Year**

The Board will select its goals at its annual retreat in August, and we believe that prioritization is extremely important in this new era we have entered. I expect the Board will continue to use the tools of policy-based governance to direct the ministry toward the ends that keep us financially healthy and achieving our mission.

Sincerely,

Luke Garvey, President

**BOARD & ELECTED COMMITTEES ROSTER**  
**As of October 20, 2020**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES** – 9 members, elected to 3-year terms, in a 3-3-3 rotation. Maximum of 2 consecutive terms.

Luke Garvey	2021	– 1st term *	President
Robert Trefry	2021	– 2nd term	Vice President
Steve Grathwohl	2021	– 1st term	Treasurer
Wendy Levy	2021	– Interim Appointment (term ends 2022)	
Stapley Emberling	2022	– 1st term	Secretary
Catherine Onyemelukwe	2022	– 2nd term	
Beth Cliff	2023	– 1st term	
Ravi Sankar	2021	– Interim Appointment (term ends 2023)	
Andy Gundell	2023	– 1st term	

\*Filling remaining term of office to June 2021

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**COM** – 7 members, elected to a single 5-year term; 1 or 2 vacant slots each year

Randy Burnham	2021	Chair
Charles Harrington	2022	
Jenna Jacobs	2023	
Linda Lubin	2024	
<b>Vacancy</b>	2025	
Shanonda Nelson	2021	– Interim Appointment (term will be either 4 or 5 years)
Shrutika Sankar	2021	– Interim Appointment (term will be either 4 or 5 years)

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**NOMINATING** – 5 members, single 2-year term, elected 2/3 in 2-year rotation

Felicia Keeton	2021	Co-Chair
Tom Hearne	2021	Co-Chair
Carol Seiple	2021	– Interim Appointment (term ends 2021)
Tom Croarkin	2022	
Lynne Laukhuf	2022	

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**ENDOWMENT** – 5 members, single 5-year term; 1 elected each year

Sharon Poole Bittenbender	2021	Chair
Ann Marie Beurle	2022	
Mark Corcoran	2023	
David Bauer	2024	
Jamie Forbes	2025	

## **PROFESSIONAL STAFF**

Rev. Dr. John Morehouse, Senior Minister  
Rev. Dr. Edward Thompson, Minister of Music  
Rev. Jim Francek, Community Minister – Pastoral Care  
Rev. Frank Hall, Minister Emeritus  
David Vita, Director of Social Justice  
Kim Warman, Intern Minister  
Beth Cliff, Communications Lead  
Diane Donahue, Office Administrator  
Desmond Hughes, Sexton & Tech Manager  
Sue O’Meara, Accountant  
Nate Pawelek, Family Faith Formation Coordinator

## **SENIOR MINISTER**

This completes my sixth year as your Senior Minister and one of the most transformational in my ministry. I want to report first on the Ends the Board asked me to work towards this past year. The reference numbers are from the Board Policy Manual. This year the Board focused on two priority ends:

### ***1.2.4 We become a sustainable, engaged, growing Congregation comprised of all generations.***

This continues to be a top priority for us for the last three years. Despite the pandemic we made good progress towards this end. We certified 371 members this year to the UUA. This is up from 363, which we certified as members in Jan 2020. We currently have 41 children and youth engaged in our Faith Formation program, which is up from 38 this time last year. What these numbers don’t show are the many friends and frequent guests who attend our services.

While we are smaller than we were ten years ago, I do believe we are more engaged now than ever. The pandemic has left us with a renewed sense of mission and a willingness to try new ideas. We have over 54 active groups, teams and standing committees. Almost every congregant is active in some program. Our Soul Matters Sharing Circles, which we instituted last spring, has been one driver for this engagement. I am now running an introductory course for members and newcomers (Starting Point) every other month. To date we formed six new groups over the last year.

One challenge remains how to engage families more fully. While Nate and his team are doing a good job at holding on to the families we have, we continue to be challenged as to how to effectively attract and engage new families. We are advertising for a new Lead for Children Faith Formation to mirror the work Nate is doing. Once this position is filled Nate will concentrate his energy on OWL, Coming of Age and our Youth Group which is seeing a renaissance at the moment. We have an exciting summer program for kids every Sunday this summer. We want to be ready to engage new families’ when they arrive. As of this report we intend to be fully physical with a virtual stream in Worship and Faith Formation this fall. I am hoping that many of our organizing and business meetings will continue on zoom, thus freeing up our physical space for more embodied forms of spiritual growth.

### ***1.3.3 Live out our commitment to promoting social justice causes, especially racial justice and gender equity.***

We have been leaning into this end consistently over the past year. In the summer of 2020, at the height of the pandemic, I established a Racial Justice Council comprised of leaders from across our congregation. The RJC was designed to lead us as an entire congregation towards the goal of racial justice. We have had a variety of activities to help bring awareness of systemic racism to our congregation and to partner with communities of color who are leading change. Our Anti-racism Resolution was arrived at through an iterative process which invited significant input from the congregation. Passage of this resolution will provide the foundation for further ministry towards this end. We are also in our second year of using

the Intercultural Developmental Inventory, now being administered to all our leaders. While the Anti-racism Resolution speaks to our conviction as a community, the IDI helps us understand the implicit bias which holds us back from personal and collective change.

Our Gender Equity Team (which is an expansion from #MeToo Task Force) seeks to fulfill our previous congregational resolution on #MeToo. The team is now national with individuals, including some young and Trans adults, as well as our own local members. We have made the restrooms “gender neutral” and we are planning on new learning opportunities next year. Look for their report herein.

### **Pastoral Care**

Under the care of our Community Minister for Pastoral Care, Rev. Jim Francek, and our fabulous chaplains we have been caring for those in our congregation in need. During the pandemic the chaplains called everyone in our congregation to check in on them. Because of this we were able to reach out further to those who were lonely and feeling the impact of the pandemic. Our Addictions and Recovery Team has done an outstanding job of keeping us educated on the prevalence of addiction and the resources available to deal with those addictions. Rev. Jim’s talking circle has been a touchstone for many in need of a spiritual connection.

### **Worship**

Worship in the pandemic was always a challenge. We managed to move from complete videotaped to live and taped to video live and now to a hybrid of live in person and live video. Needless to say, we had more than our share of adaptive challenges. We have invested in equipment; consultants and we have a Tech Team that is constantly striving to improve our experience. Our goal for the fall is a seamless live experience in person and streaming with our video equipment nicely integrated into our beautiful sanctuary.

All that said, we are so blessed with dedicated ministers, including my colleague Ed Thompson, and worship associates and musicians who provided us with the best worship possible in these trying times. We fully expect to be open in person by Homecoming.

### **Congregational Engagement**

We have made some important staff changes this year. David Vita is no longer serving as Director of Membership and is using that time to manage our technology. Beth Cliff has very generously agreed to serve in a new role as Lead for Congregational Engagement. In this she will help to anchor our membership, communication, hospitality, social media and stewardship efforts. She serves as volunteer staff. This, along with the Cliff family’s very generous donations towards our new Fund for Family Faith Formation, and we are in the best possible place to revitalize, reconnect and reach out to new families.

Elsewhere in this Annual Report we will update you on our work on those reports tied to congregational resolutions, specifically our Gender Equity Work (#MeToo) and our Safe Congregations. I thank all of our leaders for their skill and tenacity in seeing us through a very trying time. And I thank all of you for being part of our transformation.

This coming year promises to be very exciting.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. John Morehouse

## **GENDER EQUITY TEAM (GET)**

**Examine and support transformation of cultural systems of patriarchy at TUCW** by incorporating our "Brave Space Covenant" based on the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle into our monthly meetings.

We have expanded the scope and makeup of the Gender Equity Team to include diversity in age and gender identity.

### **In Support of Healing for victims/survivors of sexual harassment, abuse and/or assault:**

We reached out to Pastoral Care Chaplains to provide support for women, girls and LGBTQ+ members who have been injured. In June 2020, the Chaplains had training on sexual abuse and harassment. It consisted of three separate segments addressing these issues and categories.

Offered safe and caring space for #MeToo victims to promote healing by inviting survivors to TUCWomen's programs: a. Sacred Circles; b. Tapping Circles; c. Journaling workshop; d. Story telling workshop.

Created an e-brochure for TUCW's website about programs and services for the support of victims of sexual violence.

**Education for congregation addressing issues of sexual harassment, abuse and violence** specifically, on transgender issues:

Planned and conducted a Sunday service on Transgender Awareness.

Publicized a fall workshop offered by the Safer congregation committee on sexual abuse and gender identity and where to go with a complaint

**Advocacy on #MeToo and LGBTQ+ issues within the congregation** in order to provide clarity on TUCW's position on #MeToo and LGBTQ+ Issues

Sunday Service November 15, 2020 - "Brave Space" on LGBTQ+ issues

Sunday Service March 14, 2021 - "#MeToo"

Significant LGBTQ+ dates have been added to the TUCW calendar

**Advocacy beyond the congregation**, initiated first steps for partnership with Triangle Community Center

**Be a welcoming congregation** - optics matter, the visuals play an important role; we reviewed our visual presence on website and Soundings; maintained signage and flag on Lyons Plains Road, front door and foyer; Gender Neutral bathrooms.

Members of the Gender Equity Team: Sudha Sankar, Co-Chair, Cheryl Dixon Paul, Co-Chair, Ruth Fontilla, Jamie Forbes, Emmett Axthelm, Matty Henry, Anne Benson, Cheryl Menzies, Arnela Ten Meer, Mary-Megan Marshall, Kim Warman, David Vita, Rev John Morehouse.

Respectfully submitted, Cheryl Dixon Paul

## **A BETTER MAN**

This group continues to meet and thrive. We meet monthly on Zoom on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday. Our purpose remains personal growth, connection, and service. Topics are formulated monthly by the leadership team, and discussed in as deep a manner as participants wish. Membership has remained steady for this year at around 20 men. We open up to new participants annually, in the model of Small Groups. Members have expressed satisfaction with how the group is going, feeling that there is a dearth of authentic male connection in our current society.

The Zoom meetings did provide an opportunity for connections outside the local area. However, meeting in person is generally preferred and that has been expressed by our members. The group usually prefers meeting during the summer break as we did during the summer of 2020. A hybrid In-Person & Zoom was attempted in the parking lot and maintaining a safe distance, but this was not satisfactory for anyone. Our most recent meeting was in-person, on the church lawn, with appropriate precautions taken. Once the mask mandate is lifted and we can sit in one room, a Conference room style zoom meeting would be possible, but some equipment may be needed.

Respectfully submitted by Rob Laug

## **ADDICTION RECOVERY MINISTRY (ARM)**

The focus of our Addiction Recovery Ministry is to create supportive activities that assist our congregants and/or their families:

- ◆ in deepening their understanding of all forms of addiction & the potential impacts on their families;
- ◆ to enhance “spiritual aspects” of recovery for those with addiction issues;
- ◆ to assist in finding of treatment resources as requested and appropriate and
- ◆ to support community self-help group efforts as appropriate.

ARM supports the overall congregation’s direction to INSPIRE, CONNECT & ACT.

**WITHIN (Inspire):** Prior to the pandemic 50% of our effort entailed reaching out to our congregation through various group in person educational activities. During the pandemic the major part of our outreach effort has been to initiate & maintain a Recovery Talking Circle that meets every two weeks on Zoom. A description of this effort is the following.

The Addiction Recovery Ministry has created a Recovery Talking Circle to enhance a process of healing. The creation of a peer circle of trust has been found to enhance this process. Individuals and families may be impacted from the compulsive or addictive behaviors of others. These issues may include, but are not limited to, alcohol, drugs, sex, gaming/gambling, screen overuse, shopping, and overeating.

We are initiating a traditional form of wisdom sharing taken from indigenous people around the world. The assumption within those communities is that each person has gathered critical learnings and wisdom from their life-long journey. By creating a circle of trust formed around qualitative listening joined with shared vulnerability, real growth and support can take place. Open, honest and confidential conversations are the basis of a circle of trust. We invite you to gather and share as you are comfortable.

In addition, THE POWER OF NOW meetings continues to be offered on Zoom every Wednesday focused on the work of Eckart Tolle. It is expected these meetings will continue in person when TUCW is completely back to in-person meetings.

Also, the weekly, AA meetings held on Thursday have continued on zoom. It is expected that these meeting will return to in person meetings when TUCW opens up for such.

**AMONG (Connect):** 30% of our effort includes being available for consultation with congregants and responding to calls received on our congregation’s hot line. We have not Received many calls on this line.

**BEYOND (Act):** 20% actively supporting the various 12-step meetings taking place on our campus and research activities focused on bringing timely information to our people. This meeting has grown from an initial 6 attendees to an average of 15-20 per week.

**Size of ARM Committee:** eight members

Submitted by Rev. Jim Francek ACSW

Facilitator – TUCW – Addiction Recovery Ministry

## **UU BUDDHIST PRACTICE GROUP**

We meet and train the mind in order to alleviate the internal causes of suffering. In so doing, it has an impact on the external. We learn to recognize that the only mind we can slowly train is ours and unless we come from a place of equipoise and equanimity, our reactivity to what is is the impediment to freedom. We learn to let go of how we wish life to be, and learn to live with the way it is. This method changes our relationship to life, and freedom from suffering is found incrementally. This approach does not mean we become complacent but rather we come from alignment and wisdom.

We learn to gradually be in harmony with the three truths of existence: impermanence, suffering, and the unity that permeates through all.

We learn to walk the middle way through the training of the Noble Eightfold Path.

We meet on Mondays at 6 p.m. through zoom. A donation of up to \$25 is requested from members. There is a sliding fee. Part of these proceeds go to UU.

Respectfully Submitted by Nina Nagy

## **BUILDING & FACILITIES TEAM**

This has been an eventful year for our buildings and grounds. We started this past church year by replacing the service drive and all of the walkways around the church. The walkway in front was changed to concrete and all of the bluestone stairs were reset. At this same time, the stone steps at the meeting house were also replaced and the landings repaired. The large parking lot was rebuilt to divert the ponding water near the playground and the four open drywells were replaced with new concrete structures with steel grate covers to make them safer.

Last year, Goody Clancy identified the existing plate glass skylight as a safety hazard and recommended it be replaced as a first priority. At this time, we are planning to replace the skylight in its entirety and a portion of the glass wall. In September, Cherry Hill Glass are scheduled to replace the skylight and the glass wall that looks out onto the memorial garden hill with a new thermally broken, insulating glass skylight and exterior wall.

Respectfully submitted by John Turmelle

## **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TEAM**

The COVID 19 pandemic certainly altered the work plans of our 2019-2022 Capital Campaign, forcing the closure of the church building for a year. While we were able to complete the upgrading of the parking lot, the installation of a new sidewalk and new stairs to the main building, and the resolution of our flooding issues, further restoration and repair work was halted by the closing of factories and other issues affecting the construction industry. Even now, we cannot say with certainty when the highest priority of our campaign, replacing the skylight in the sanctuary, will begin.

We do know it will be undertaken one section at a time, beginning with the highest part of the skylight, the area over the chancel, the stage area in the sanctuary. Construction equipment and workers will fill the area for several months. We are determined, however, to hold services in the sanctuary wherever there is space. After this lonely year, connecting with one another in person is too important for us to consider anything else.

The Capital Campaign raised more than \$2 million in pledges, and we are happy to report 135 of those pledges have been completely fulfilled. We thank everyone for their continued pledge fulfillment. While the campaign officially ends on June 30, 2022, additional contributions are always welcome at <http://uuwestport.org/thecapitalcampaign/donate/>.

Your Capital Campaign Committee  
Kristen Leddy and Carol Seiple, Co-Chairs  
Mary-Jane Cross  
Catherine Onyemelukwe  
Anita Pfluger

## **INTERN MINISTER'S REPORT**

Our Ministerial Intern, Kim Warman, has completed her first year of a two-year Internship here at the Unitarian Church in Westport. The purpose of the Intern Committee is to support Kim throughout her two years here in any way possible. The committee meets on a monthly basis and reviews with Kim the work that she has done over the previous month and looks forward to a quick review of the month ahead. The committee works in a highly collaborative manner helping Kim evaluate her work and offering constructive criticism.

Kim has navigated her move here from Chicago in the middle of a pandemic in a highly positive fashion. Much of her interaction in this first year has been virtual using Zoom. Kim has been very successful developing new relationships with many of you over Zoom. Both Kim and the committee look forward to year two when Kim can spend much more time face-to-face with her colleagues and congregants in the church building. We hope you will reach out to Kim directly to get to know her.

The committee members are Bob Perry (chair), Jerusha Vogel, Arnela Ten Meer, Candace Clinger and Pat Francek. Please feel free to reach out to any of us on the committee to offer feedback, anonymously if requested, regarding Kim's work.

Respectfully submitted by Bob Perry

## **PASTORAL CARE**

**Services of Pastoral Care:** During the course of this church year our Pastoral Care Chaplains have directly touched the lives of 106 congregants.

- ◆ Chaplain care extended to 42 new or ongoing requests.
- ◆ Grief group support extended to 16 congregants
- ◆ Thursday Talking circle reached over 55 different congregants during the pandemic. A steady 15-20 people are still active for the regular weekly Zoom call on Thursday.

We receive on an average three calls per month on our pastoral care line of which perhaps 50% become active recipients of pastoral care. The range of their service has included responding to death situations, providing emotional and spiritual support during hospice or long-term care situations, support to those facing major health issues, surgery or accidental injury. Support for families facing dementia, or major changes in relationships.

Our training activities for our chaplains this past year has included the following activities:

- ◆ Appreciative Inquiry applied to our work as chaplains
- ◆ Training in Grief as a continuing life process
- ◆ We conducted two phone outreach efforts to all reachable congregants to do a wellness check during COVID-19
- ◆ Session on ‘THE STRENGTH OF OUR ATTENTION’
- ◆ Group process activity around “trauma generated by pandemic”.

In November we added two new chaplains to our ministry. David Smith & Beth Nigrón

**Development of Pastoral Care Chaplains:** Our chaplains continue to meet every second Saturday to continue their ongoing education on a number of topics. We participate in group-supervision/coaching around their real situations and in support of each other.

We currently have eighteen active chaplains.

Currently the lead team for this effort includes: Marie-Claire Bue, Tom Hearne, Ravi Sankar & Kathy Roberts and myself.

Rev. Jim Francek, ACSW – TUCW PCC Coach

## **SAFER CONGREGATIONS COMMITTEE**

The Safer Congregation Committee is a minister-appointed committee, currently with two mental health professionals, one attorney, a youth health and safety specialist, and the Senior and Faith Formation Ministers. The SCC advises regarding issues of safety within the LFD curriculum, staff, LFD volunteers, and Pastoral Care associates. With the upcoming renovation, and most recently COVID-19, the SCC is now also actively involved with the physical safety of the building, and appropriate sanitizing protocols and guidelines.

The SCC typically convenes when ethical questions or issues of impropriety and misconduct arose- none have arisen this past year. This past year we have instituted monthly meetings, and topics have included annual staff/volunteer trainings on disruptive member/active shooter, emergency procedures, internet safety, and COVID-19 safety planning. We had a congregation-wide Safety Training on disruptive intruders in June by the Logue Group, and *Stop the Bleed* by the Red

Cross, in June 2019. There have been SCC visits to neighboring Temple Israel in September 2019, meetings with Westport PD (November 2019), and other communication with building safety experts. Changes were made in order to better control access to the building, and recommendations made for the near future.

For the 2019/2020 year, the members have been: Wendy Levy, PsyD (chair) Rev. John Morehouse, Rev. Shelly Thompson, Luke Garvey, LCSW, Deborah Garskof, Esq, and Jay Lubin.

## **SHAWL MINISTRY**

Between June 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021 twenty handmade shawls and two afghans were given to members of our community to serve as a tangible source of concern, support, or celebration during times of significant personal transition.

This year we provided forty handmade scarves with matching hats to the students at Barnum School in Bridgeport in a first-time collaboration with April Barron who volunteers there. We also knit scarves, hats and gaiters to be available to participants of the John Street Bridge Outreach Project.

With the ongoing shutdown caused by the COVID 19 pandemic we have continued our bi-weekly meetings on Zoom. We have had steady attendance with the benefit of some members being able to attend even if they have retired out of the area or are unable to be with us in person for other reasons.

We continue making loans to women entrepreneurs in developing countries world-wide through Kiva.org. This year we made 9 new loans using repaid monies. We have \$282.58 in outstanding loans.

This spring the Shawl Ministry assembled and donated three different knitting-themed baskets to be auctioned at the A(UU)ction fundraiser in May.

Jan Braunle heads this group.

## **SOUL MATTERS & STARTING POINT**

The Soul Matters Sharing Circles Program began in the summer of 2020, with a group forming at the completion of our first offering of Starting Point – which introduces participants to the history and principles of the Unitarian Universalist “living tradition.” Also included is information about our congregation’s history, and current ministerial and lay leadership. Starting Point is a program created by the Soul Matters organization, as is the Small Group program that we call “Sharing Circles.” It is designed for people at all points of the membership spectrum from those who are recent arrivals to our congregation, all the way through to long- term members.

Starting Point comprises four weekly 90-minute sessions run consecutively and offered roughly every other month from September through May. From June 2020 through May 2021, it was offered seven times with approximately 55 participants. It is taught by Rev. John Morehouse with assistance from Linda Lubin.

During the Starting Point sessions, the participants also hear about the Sharing Circles program, and are given a taste of that program’s format each week in break-out groups. Those who are interested in continuing as a Sharing Circle then

meet monthly throughout the year, using the theme-based packets of material created by the Soul Matters team, headed by Rev. Scott Tayler. At least one - and more often two - participants in each Circle are trained as facilitators. The program is coordinated by Linda Lubin with oversight from Rev. John.

Facilitators receive the basic Soul Matters training and are encouraged to go further in-depth with the training the Soul Matters organization offers. Monthly facilitator meetings are held, and it is required that each group send at least one facilitator to the meeting if possible. A monthly, informal “Creative Conversation” meeting was also started in February. This optional gathering is for the purpose of sharing best practices, discussing issues that have arisen, looking ahead to the continuing development of the Soul Matters program. It is therefore like the monthly facilitator meeting though with less structure and more free-flowing dialogue.

By design, the Soul Matters Sharing Circles use a shared leadership approach, with its coordinator, Linda Lubin, encouraging all facilitators to share their ideas, engage in creative problem solving, and contribute in many concrete ways. This is the only way that the program can sustain itself as it continues to grow and evolve. Dayle Brownstein, who facilitates a Circle, has assisted Linda in many ways throughout the year. Kim Fuchs has been expanding her leadership beyond co-facilitating a group.

Current facilitators and co-facilitators include Dayle Brownstein (lead) and Ann Bova (co-); Randy Burham (lead); Martha Constable (lead) and Diane Cano (co-); Marjolijn de Jager and Sam Somashekar (co-leaders); Kim Fuchs and Ruth Fontilla (co-leaders); April Kleinman (lead).

Respectfully submitted by Linda Lubin, Soul Matters Program Coordinator

## **TECH TEAM**

With the onset of the pandemic, TUCW finally suspended in-person Sunday services in the Fall of 2020 and replaced them with online streaming services via Zoom. This established an ongoing discussion concerning the status and necessary upgrades to TUCW’s audio/video/online/streaming capabilities and productions. In March of 2021, at the direction of Reverend Morehouse, the tech resources of TUCW and Voices Café were combined into a single Tech Team, initially consisting of Staff Lead David Vita, Andy Gundell (Board of Trustees liaison), Tom Hearne (nominal Chair), Reverend Ed Thompson, Desmond Hughes, Bruce MacNair and Jonathan Gage. The Tech Team meets weekly on Thursdays to recap the previous Sunday’s services from the A/V/streaming perspectives, and to look ahead to the upcoming Sunday to prepare for the requirements of that service. There is a general understanding and appreciation of the fact that the future of TUCW is tied in part to how we create and re-create this hybrid service experience post-pandemic for our congregation and the wider, potentially global audience.

The Team identified three stages to our work: immediate; short; and mid-to-long term. Stage 1 addressed our technical requirements on Zoom with the equipment and team operators—with a generally successful effort to continuously improve our online experience given the realistic limitation of those assets. Stage 2 ushered in the transition to a true hybrid experience on May 16<sup>th</sup>. As we returned to limited in-person Sunday services, we incorporated modest upgrades to both our in-house and online equipment; and retained a paid professional engineer to assist. Stage 3 is in progress now as we vision and prepare for the future. Plans to upgrade building infrastructure via the Capital Campaign will be extended to include some of our A/V/Broadcast needs. There are many components to the anticipated renovations that involve

purchase and installation of modern digital audio/video/streaming equipment. Towards that end, the team is currently soliciting and evaluating bids from professional A/V consultants and contractors to design and implement the renovations. Our expected time frames for this to begin and conclude are from fall of 2021 and into the beginning of 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Gundell – Board of Trustees liaison  
Tom Hearne—Tech Team Chair

## **TUCWOMEN**

TUCWomen organize, create, sponsor and support programs, workshops, worship and gatherings relevant to the women and values of UU Westport. We rally women's participation in support of TUCW. Our goals are to provide a rich set of opportunities to support women's engagement in the TUCW community and, over all, to provide a variety of opportunities where women can build deeper relationships and nurture feminine spirituality. Additionally, TUCWomen acknowledge the call for racial justice and have created programs to educate the community and encourage activism.

In this pandemic, TUCWomen responded with clarity of focus and depth in a number of ways. For purposes of this report, those actions are organized into three categories: Community Building, Activism and Spirituality.

Building community requires communication. Through the leadership and efforts of Sari Bodi, Elizabeth Macdonald and Beth Cliff we had regular communications in Soundings and in the TUCWomen's newsletter. Kitchens are frequently where much sharing takes place and a sense of community is created. Thus, we began a virtual gathering called "In Grandma's Kitchen" to share not only recipes and cooking together, but also stories of the host's ancestors and culture. Furthermore, we continued our monthly virtual potlucks, chaired by Eileen Belmont, where women could gather to be nourished by the sharing of ideas and creativity that took place on zoom.

In the area of Activism, Janet Luongo continued her leadership as chair of UUtheVote and enlisted many women to write, call or text what altogether amounted to thousands of messages to voters to ensure voter registration and voters getting out to vote. This "sacred activism" is ongoing. The Gender Equity team, with co-chairs Sudha Shankar and Cheryl Dixon Paul, provided the "Brave Space" service to make transparent our UU values of inclusivity and honoring diversity. The Gender Equity Team and TUCWomen's team collaborated to create a #MeToo service, "Chords of Pain to Mosaic of Hope" to support women and girls who have been traumatized by sexual violence. This service also reminded men of their responsibility to be supportive. Included in this year's activism is the work toward racial justice as seen through a group of women who created a Black Lives Matter Statement as a guiding principle and followed up with hundreds of hours of work to raise awareness of and address issues of racism and white privilege. This work is ongoing. Actions included a special service, "Four Mothers", describing the realities of parenting Black children in our country to this day. A group of women focusing on BLM meets monthly to address three specific topics by way of subcommittees: Police Accountability, chaired by Rainy Broomfield; Education, co-chaired by Sari Bodi and Jamie Forbes; and Revealing History, Why it Matters, chaired by Lisa Donahue-Olivieri. The Police Accountability team has helped educate us about legislation, created a meeting with 3 local police chiefs to discuss discrimination and practices within police enforcement and hosted a meeting with Ken Barone who trains police to decrease the violence in law enforcement and follow the new legislative guidelines for policing. The Revealing History team has focused on educating our UU community to the impact of racism by way of creating a series "Revealing History: How We Got Here, Why It Matters". The first event focused on justice and mass incarceration. This team collaborated with The Equal Justice Initiative to bring in a speaker and display art from EJI's website. Collaboration also included original poetry read by slam poet "Lyric". The second in this series emphasizes "Racial Health Inequities" with speaker Rev Robyn Anderson, Director of the Ministerial Health

Fellowship. Revealing History is ongoing and will present 4 programs a year. The Education team produced a Career Day with professionals who are POC for students, most also being POC, at Beardsley School in Bridgeport, Ct. The BLM committee also hosts a BLM book discussion monthly and a BLM movie discussion biweekly. We thank all who have given so generously of their time and energy. We acknowledge and thank several people here as our guides and our conscience: Althea Seaborne, Shanonda Nelson, Kristin Trost, Lisa Brown, Denise Page and Ellie Grasso.

In the area of Spirituality, under the auspices of Women, Spirit and Imagination Programs, we have had the following offerings by Carol Hamilton: Weekly Tapping Circles (using the Emotional Freedom Technique) which provide relief from stress and anxiety and invite participants to connect to their authentic selves; Journaling, a 4 session series to promote self-reflection, creativity and finding one's voice; and The Listening Path, a 6 week series on deep listening to oneself and to the outer world so as to clear the mind, gain focus and live intentionally. Janet Luongo offered a 4-part series on writing about the "other" from one's experiences and inner truth. Women's Sacred Circles, under the leadership of Grandmother Nancy Andry, continue to take place twice a month and provide access to deeper ways of knowing through nature and indigenous ways. Shared leadership brings other meaningful topics to this circle to provide education and prompt greater self-discovery and sharing.

All women are invited to all TUCWomen programs and gatherings. We encourage all women to join the TUCW mailing list for information on the current offerings and events. Questions and ideas are always welcome and can be directed to the co-leaders.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Francek and Sudha Sankar, co-leaders  
tucwomen@uuwestport.org

## UGNO

The watering holes where UGNO usually meets have been closed the entire church year. However, thanks to Dave Caplan, we held a number of virtual meetings via Zoom which were very successful and which allowed us to stay connected even with UGNO members in Florida, North Carolina, and Missouri. We were also able to hold a couple of in-person meetings during the summer on the lawn at church which were a little slice of heaven. We look forward to resuming our spiritual explorations when it is safe to do so.

We were devastated by the loss of UGNO's heart and soul when our brother Jim Keenan passed away. Jim was our social conscience and through him we collected dues that were used to help congregants in need or to provide donations to our beloved church. We will forever miss his camaraderie, imagination, and insistence that we broaden our vision to encompass the needy among us.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tom Croarkin

## **USHERS**

For the most part, the Ushers have been dormant this church year except for a brief period in which in-person services were held. We were also invited to provide feedback to our Reopening Committee which did a marvelous job of making sure that we reopened safely and that usher safety was top of mind. We are looking forward to being the friendly face at the door to welcome our congregants and keep our services running smoothly when the next reopening occurs.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tom Croarkin

## **UU MOVIE DISCUSSION GROUP**

### **Our Main Goals:**

Our goal is to gather our UU friends together in an enjoyable common leisure activity and our topic is: The Movies. Movies offer diversion, relaxation, amusement, and sometimes deep thinking. We aim to have fun and get to know each other.

### **How we achieved these goals.**

1. We continued our proven format and met once a month to vote on 3 titles of interest for viewing, on our own, anytime in the upcoming month.
2. When we reconvened, lively discussions evolved as we exchanged views on the plot, acting, directing, and music, and explored what the movie meant to each of us. This accomplished both our main goals. Everyone was engaged, and we often learned from one another.
3. During the 2020/2021 season, a new challenge was to keep the group connected and interested despite no longer being able to meet over decaf coffee and cookies. As with other groups, Zoom was the answer.

### **Measuring our effectiveness at the end of the year.**

First, it is a success if we gained just one new member in these conditions. In fact, we gained three new members. Although we also lost a few people, we maintained a good-size group and had great discussions every month.

Second, our meetings were a success if each of us, even once, was transported out of our ourselves and into the wonderful alternate reality of "The Movies". Because of the excellent movies we have seen this year, and our discussions about them, it is safe to say that this is true for our members.

Here are some of the movies we have discussed so far this year: The Father; Minari; Nomadland; A Promising Young Woman; Sound of Metal; Ma Rainey's Black Bottom; The Trial of the Chicago 7 and Herself.

Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Rich and Linda Aulenti

## **WORSHIP ASSOCIATES**

The purpose of the Worship Associates team is to collaborate with the ministers and staff to create a year-round program of Worship. Our approach to worship is to welcome all seekers, offer inspiration for spiritual growth, encourage connection within our congregation, lift up our Unitarian Universalist identity and challenge people to act upon the principles of our faith.

Throughout the duration of COVID-19 quarantine protocols, most of our Worship Associates signed up to appear at least once in person from the sanctuary. Those who signed up every month were Dayle Brownstein, Joanne Glasser Orenstein, Gian Andrea Morresi and Linda Hudson – thank you! At our monthly meetings we shared deeply and navigated this difficult year together with caring and openness.

Worship Associates serve as hosts of the on-line Coffee Hour and break-out room discussions. We will continue to do so while on-line services are part of our worship.

Summer worship planning is a major responsibility of our committee. Rev John instituted his “Preaching Workshop” in 2017 and continues to coach and prepare worship associates and congregants to lead Summer Worship. Summer 2020 Worship Services were provided by:

Rev John Morehouse, Linda Lubin, Dayle Brownstein, Shanonda Nelson, Rev Jim Francek, Mary-Megan Marshall, Linda Hudson, Connie Rockman and Carrie McEvoy. Due to COVID-19 quarantine these services were pre-recorded as was the music for each service and pulled together for Facebook & Zoom viewing by David Vita.

Worship Associates members for 2020-2021:

Dayle Brownstein, Doug Flam, Jamie Forbes, Linda Hudson, Linda Lubin, Mary-Megan Marshall, Gian Andrea Morresi, Shanonda Nelson, Joanne Glasser Orenstein, Connie Rockman, Kim Warman, Cheryl Dixon Paul.

The Worship Associate team is interested in adding new members at the invitation of our Senior Minister.

Respectfully submitted by Cheryl Dixon Paul

## **MINISTER OF MUSIC REPORT**

In my 43 years as your Minister of Music, this year has been the most unusual ever, due to the obvious encounter with the COVID-19 pandemic. As the song goes “in these hard times there will always be music”. And there was!

Due to the prohibitions and the extreme care that we needed to exercise, we have found ways to keep the music happening. Due to the good will of many soloists who were willing to dedicate their time and energy to come in and pre-record pieces, you were able to hear music. While the larger choirs were not able to meet, we formed smaller ensembles that were able to share their talents: the Women’s Septet; the mixed Quintet, the Bell Choir (6 ringers). What happened with the O&AS is that we had weekly sectionals. This in turn gave us the opportunity to focus on individual support, new repertoire, as there were only 4-5 people in each section. We did this with open doors, and air purifiers, masks and social distancing.

In spite of all the difficulties that the pandemic gave us, we were able to have a Holiday Concert, the Spring Concert, and the Annual Summer Solstice Concert, again, thanks to many soloists and small ensembles. Let me be sure to mention the names of some of the soloists who have been so helpful to us: Jenna McPartland, Hazel Foley, Aki and Miya Lasher, Paige Steel, Mike Costantino, Trina Wong and Cathy Paine, Anna Jones and Sierra Iacovella, Tom Hearne and Dave Caplan, Andy Gundell, Chloe Smith, Gian Morresi.

In September and October, the Children's Choir and the Teen Choir rehearsed outside in the courtyard. While far from ideal in terms of developing choral sound, it gave them the chance to be together and to keep their voices going. We eventually moved inside, opened (partially) the doors, did social distancing, wore masks and made it work. This year we had to pre-record the Christmas Pageant; we did and it was good since it kept the children in touch with one of our long-standing traditions. Bless those young souls, who, in spite of the clumsy masks, did their best to produce sound and be a part of something larger than themselves!! We are eager to begin work on another children's musical in the fall.

We have also relied on selections taken from our two CDs "Love Is the Spirit" (Children's Choir CD) and "Tune My Heart" (Various choirs of TUCW). Thank God we had/have those to rely on.

For many years our strong choral program has been the backbone of our music. It has been a spiritual practice for many people. I look forward to a new normal for continuing that important work. And I say: THANK YOU to all of the individuals who are so dedicated and committed to this inspired and inspirational effort.

Members of the Music Committee are: Debbie Handler, Diane Moller, Virginia Levin, Chris Place, Jenny Klein, Gian Morresi (chair), Bart Stuck, Connie Rockman, Liane Roseman, Peg Ulrich.

Rev. Dr. Edward Thompson, Minister of Music

## **FAITH FORMATION**

Like with most aspects of our lives, the pandemic has challenged us. We had to re-imagine how to nurture our congregation's families and young people. Our attention has been to simply maintain engagement and connection. How can we help people, especially children and youth, feel like they are not so disconnected from themselves?

When our worship services moved online for safety, the congregation's children and youth continued to participate. They often created short videos of themselves lighting the chalice, our cherished ritual at the start of worship services. We continued to include Stories for All for the young people watching at home with parents. They became videos with images and age-appropriate narration connected to the sermon topic of the morning. Sometimes, the children helped to narrate these Stories by recording scripted lines on smart phones.

Like many schools, we turned to ZOOM to provide virtually what is traditionally referred to as Religious Education. During the summer months, we found ways to engage children each Sunday with fun activities and video stories focusing on Unitarian Universalist values of kindness and justice. When George Floyd was killed, we dedicated time to carefully process what most were hearing and seeing on the news.

In September, we began the new virtual church year offering programming for three groups: Young Children (3-8-year-olds), Tweens (9-12-year-olds), and a Youth Group (8-12<sup>th</sup> graders).

The Young Children have been following a curriculum called Soul Matters, which focuses on the same monthly church themes as the adults. October's theme, for instance, was *Deep Listening*. One of our lessons was listening to stories of BIPOC voices (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color). We listened to an amazing Native American storyteller named Grandmother Nancy. For November's theme, *Healing*, we made gratitude trees. Children were sent on a scavenger hunt to collect fallen leaves and a branch. On each leaf we wrote (with caregiver assistance) things for which we are grateful. Then we attached the leaves to the branch and put the "tree" in a vase to display. February's church theme was *Beloved Community*, and we learned about white

privilege and racial injustice by noticing small changes in the way certain products are marketed in grocery stores, such as Aunt Jemima's Pancake Mix, which no longer features the face of a former slave on its boxes.

The Tweens class has been using a curriculum called *Harry Potter and Unitarian Universalism*. The popular Hogwarts stories often chronicle Harry and his friends making decisions of moral consequence. Examining these decisions is highly instructive for emerging, justice-oriented hearts and minds. The experiential activities we perform are Potter-esque: making potions that explode, casting spells with hand-crafted wands, attempting divination with tea leaves and tarot cards, and fighting Horcruxes as young witches and wizards of Dumbledore's Army. Horcruxes are social injustices like racism, poverty, hunger and food insecurity, and the environmental crisis.

For each Horcrux we thought of ways in which we could become involved as "activists-in-training." For our Hatred Horcrux, the young witches and wizards crafted a letter to the editor of the Westport Patch, which was published. For six weeks before the presidential election, we held up apolitical (and bilingual) signs along busy streets encouraging motorists throughout Fairfield County to vote. Prior to Thanksgiving, we made almost 100 lunches for the John Street Bridge people in Bridgeport to help combat hunger and food insecurity. In December, we gathered unwanted items from within our homes to donate to the poor: clothing, shoes, blankets, coats, hats and gloves, toys, and books. In February, we learned about the young environmental activist, Greta Thunberg, and committed to simple ways to be kinder to our home planet, such as how to compost and how to dry our hands using only a small amount of towel paper. In March, we prepared 122 Easter Baskets for impoverished children in Fairfield County.

Our Youth Group understandably preferred in-person activities to meeting on ZOOM, so we planned outdoor events. For three Sundays in September, when the weather was warm, we played a series of what we referred to as "Kick White Supremacy's Ass Kickball!" In November, we went on a group hike around Monhegan Lake in Fairfield. That same month, the Youth Group began meeting regularly for bonfires behind our Meetinghouse. During the winter months, it was cold, but we bundled up and persevered. We tell stories, play games, roast marshmallows, drink hot chocolate and cider, cook hotdogs & hamburgers, and try to feel, in the words of one teenager, "less lonely." In January, we went ice skating in Bridgeport! And as the weather warms and the sun shines longer each day, we are planning more hikes and possibly a camping excursion.

Looking ahead, we plan to resume at least some of the programming we offered before the pandemic. There will likely be a series of outdoor Sunday summer fun & games for children 5th grade and younger beginning in late June. We hope to offer OWL (Our Whole Lives) once again, the comprehensive human sexuality program for 7-9<sup>th</sup> graders, beginning in the fall. A modified version of Coming of Age, the Unitarian Universalist equivalent to Catholic Confirmation and Jewish bar and bat mitzvahs, will resume as well at some point during the 2021-22 church year.

Once we gather again, church life will forever be changed. Yet Unitarian Universalism is and always has been a dynamic faith. We constantly re-commit to curiosity and learning; we know that we must remain always open to change. Indeed, we are taught from a young age to forever be askers of questions and seekers of knowledge. This helps us to adapt when routines, entire ways of existing, transform unexpectedly. We are also keenly aware that we must evolve as those things that set our hearts on fire when we are young no longer set our hearts on fire when we are older.

Sometimes, unexpected change, like a pandemic, reveals unseen and profound truths: a biased system of white privilege constructed carefully over centuries with racial inequity as its foundation. Technology has allowed all of us to “see” in new and sometimes uncomfortable ways. Our new societal conscience is video.

Technology also has allowed us to adapt safely to a pandemic. Livestreaming and ZOOM have enabled us to yet minister to our sense of justice and our human need for spiritual fulfillment and meaning. As we learn to embrace the digital world of the younger generation, which has taken a pandemic to get used to, the resources available for teaching our young and old people to be healthy, productive, and empathetic citizens of the planet are immeasurable.

Respectfully Submitted by Nate Pawelek, Family Faith Formation Coordinator

## **CARING NETWORK**

Our Caring Network continues to fulfill its purpose: to support our congregants when they need it, answering physical needs of rides, meals, shopping trips or just a card or plant to let them know we’re thinking of them. The use of the Lotsa Helping Hands app has allowed us to stay organized and allow people to help when they can.

We currently have over 40 people in our network who have signed up as helpers. Mary Jane Cross and Beth Cliff have been the coordinators who input data and share information with the network. They “source” needs through the ministers, pastoral care associates, or simply members of the congregation who hear about a friend in need. This year, the hard copy of the ZOOM chat on Sunday has helped in the identification process as people share their joys or sorrows.

During COVID, our helper network was restricted by those who were comfortable and able to leave their homes, but we were able to answer every need that came our way. On average, we have 2-3 needs per month that we address; the most common need are meals for people recovering from surgery. The thanks we get from those we were able to help has been rewarding and fulfilling for all involved. In a congregation our size, it’s wonderful to know that we can support one another across geographies and smaller neighborhoods and friend groups, strengthening our commitment to care for each other as a community of faith in the spirit of Love.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Cliff

## **COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (COM)**

This pandemic year has been a challenging one for our world, our nation, our community, our ministries and our committee. The Committee on Ministries (COM) is charged with reflecting upon and assessing how well our various ministries are aligned with our mission to inspire, connect and act. We are also charged with being the first line of conflict resolution. In short, the COM is to be the eyes and ears of the ministries and report back to the senior minister how we are doing and where attention needs to be paid.

With the shut down our ability to keep our fingers on the pulse of the congregation and our ministries was severely limited. As in other years, we were in periodic contact with the various committee chairs and staff anchors; yet, the full sense of how the ministries are aligning with the mission was not fully grounded in observed, lived experience.

When full data is not available it is a challenge to make clear assessment and recommendation.

In the circumstances our ministries have survived, preserved and in some cases flourished. We have learned that the Zoom platform is not ideal for certain kinds of functions, but it allows for much easier access to business meetings. This platform portends greater inclusion and connections within our ministries, allowing both our youth and our house-bound to participate more fully.

Net-net we have survived and are poised for new configurations and growth.

Respectfully Submitted by your Committee on Ministries:

Randy Burnham, Chair

Charles Harrington, Jenna McPartland, Linda Lubin, Shrutika Sankar

## COMMUNICATIONS

Our small but busy Communications team has had as its mission to keep our congregation informed and connected on both the formal activities of our congregation -- Sunday service information, committee activities of note, stewardship and pledging – and informal ones, including the sharing of interesting and thought-provoking posts on social media. Our audiences are both internal and external. Our means are articles, videos, photos and emails, delivered virtually via digital means. Our website is mission-critical.

**The website.** Our website is the backbone of our communications strategy. Even as we finalize our new site – which has, admittedly, taken longer than we wished to launch – the existing site has rejuvenated its look and feel: we have current information that is changed out daily, and a carousel of pictures and accompanying stories that give outsiders a quick window into all that we do. Our ZOOM link and the current Order of Service are prominently displayed, as well as the regular videos put out by our ministers. Our webmaster, Charles Klein, makes sure articles and updates are posted and updated in a timely manner: without him, we would be lost! Our website continues to be a gateway for those outside our walls to get to know us.

**Soundings.** A mainstay of our communications work is delivering our weekly SOUNDINGS newsletter – the weekend edition, which focuses mostly on Sunday activities, and the weekday edition, which addresses all other events and announcements. We recognize SOUNDINGS is being read not only by current members but also by visitors who want to understand what our faith community is all about. It is now a featured item on the front of our website and archived for easy reference. SOUNDINGS contains a two-week calendar that is downloadable and printable for those who prefer hard copies. Sent out to over 1100 people on our mailing list, we know that about 250+ open it weekly, but not always the same people every week. Over the course of a month, however, a critical mass of 300+ opens it. For this reason, articles often repeat at least once: if folks don't see an article with the first posting, they'll see it the second time around. We do aim to keep the editions fresh, however, so our rule is "2x the rule, 3x by exception."

**Weekly minister communications.** Last year we introduced written Minister's Messages on Tuesday late afternoons – an opportunity for our ministers to share thoughts or observations that are timely, without being connected to a Sunday service or sermon, or the monthly theme. These have been well received and congregants reply to the ministers as they are moved to do so. In addition, since the pandemic, we have been pushing out short video messages – at first daily, and now we have settled on 2 per week: Wednesdays (Revs. Thompson and Francek, alternating) and Fridays (Rev. Morehouse). These are to help people feel nourished and connected, even as they can't be together physically.

**Eblasts.** We use focused email blasts to the congregation sparingly, for important news that needs special attention, usually in the area of death announcements, required Trustee updates, stewardship efforts, or ZOOM or other COVID-related technical instructions.

**Social Media.** We have an active public Facebook page of 1000+ followers, and a private group of about 350 members. For some, these sites are regular places to connect, share and build community. This year we have added an Instagram and Twitter account; Instagram, with its liberal use of hashtags, allows us to reach different markets easily. We currently have about 300 followers. Twitter is just starting ...

**PR.** We reach out to major news outlets in the area when there is something we believe the greater community can enjoy. This year that has included the RBG Vigil, the virtual Women's March in October, our special music services, our UU the Vote Seminar series, the TUCWomen's presentations on #BLM matters, our Grief group offering, and more. Of special note was the letter our children wrote wondering how Unitarian Universalists can reconcile our UU values with the behaviors and actions of then-President Trump.

We have continued to build rapport with local media. Dan Woog has been wonderfully attentive with his [06880](#) blog, and we now are Community members at the [Patch](#) so we can publish across multiple towns even though our home base is Westport. We regularly send articles to Connecticut 12, WSHU, [Nancy on Norwalk](#), [Weston Today](#), [Fairfield Hamlet Hub](#), and other similar local news outlets.

Notably, we now post information about our Sunday Services every week in multiple towns' Patches which are pushed out to thousands of readers each week. It also is a recurring calendar event on the digital [Connecticut Post](#). If there is a service or program of distinctive note, we will pay \$10-20 for a special promotion to be a featured item so that it appears prominently on local websites. This is mostly to get our name and brand out in front of the people: it has not influenced the attendance of any one event in a material way, but it does get our name and presence recognized to build awareness and interest over time.

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All in, we feel we have responded well to the crisis of COVID and the disconnectedness that we anticipated people would feel without being able to see each other physically, and regularly. The Kleins – Charles and Jenny – have, as always, been indispensable and dependable, week after week – in making sure our regular communications get out. Their work is truly one of the “unsung hero” activities here at the church– invisible to many, but absolutely a lifeblood to our health and strength as a faith community.

We are almost ready to launch our new website: same content, updated look and feel. Sadly, this effort has needed to take a back-burner as COVID hit and we had a lot of other needs to fill. As the country opens up, so we, too, can refocus on this effort. We expect great things this summer and fall in this regard! Stay tuned.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Cliff

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

This past year has been a challenging one for our Membership Committee.

There have been several significant changes to our committee. Beth Cliff is now the church leader of our committee with Rob Zuckerman remaining as the Chair. We have recruited several new members to our group and will continue that effort. We have begun to run a series of Instagram and Facebook ads featuring families and other church groups to introduce our congregation to the larger public. Our primary goal is to attract young families for the growth of our church and the health of our youth programs. We are continuing to develop additional promotion ideas to fulfill this goal.

It's been an unusual time since mid-March last year, when we were forced to close our doors and move to everything virtual. But happily, our growth as a congregation continues! You've already met some of our newest friends in our

ZOOM services, and we have featured a few in SOUNDINGS, and we will continue to tell more of their stories in the near future.

We say hello to our newest members here:

Fairfield:	Brian Connelly, Beth Negron
Monroe:	Nancy Andry
Norwalk:	Charlie Brennan, Emily Carveth
Prospect:	Kevin Hanley
Stamford:	Karen Anderson
Stratford:	Carol Hamilton
Trumbull:	Anne Benson, Ruth Fontilla
Weston:	Tina & Jay Gaines, Lauren Parzych
Westport:	Dayle Brownstein, Tanya Clemons, Sofia Dumery, Kim Fuchs, Aaron Seymour
Wilton:	Danielle Masse

Respectfully,

Rob Zuckerman, Membership Committee Chair

## **MEMORIAL GARDEN COMMITTEE**

The Committee oversees our Memorial Garden as a place of serenity. It sees to its upkeep, policies and records and assists members, and their immediate families, in selecting sites.

The Garden now serves 376 past and present members. 80 are reservations for future use, an increase in two years from 65. During 2020 we improved the Woodlands area with additional planting and the number of sites in it, both those in use and reserved, now total 21. The area may offer an advantage to some in that it is adjacent to the parking lot and thus does not require any stair climbing and seating is available. Ground cover is moss, gradual, but coming.

The Memorial Wall, built almost twenty years ago, was constructed with the thought that some might prefer to scatter or retain cremains, but usage has been light. The Committee revised costs of a site on the Wall to \$250 or \$350 if two are purchased. The company that provides plaques similarly reduced its price so that a site with memorial plaque and installation has a total cost of some \$632.

We welcomed Elena Rockman-Blake as a new member. Committee members stand ready to help TUCW members in guiding and selecting sites at any time.

Respectfully submitted, David Thompson, Chairman  
Members: Diana Bell, Cheryl Dixon, Elena Rockman-Blake, Melanie Wyler.

## **TUCW HIKING GROUP**

In our 3rd year of the TUCW Hiking Group we continue to hike 2 times a month: the 1st Saturday and the 3rd Tuesday. We had a core of regular hikers as well as occasional guest hikers joining us. We all found it especially nourishing to be together in nature during the pandemic. As they opened up, we went back to trails in the surrounding towns, and we continue to be grateful to the Aspetuck Land Trust for keeping their trails open when others were off limits. As we move into the hotter weather we will decrease the frequency of hikes and meet up at Sherwood Island for Sunday walks. We invite people to join our email group for announcements on hikes and for communication among hikers.

Gratefully, Jamie Forbes and Gian Morresi

## **TUCW SOCIAL EMAIL NETWORK**

Our social email group, [TUCWSocial@groups.io](mailto:TUCWSocial@groups.io), continues to be available to all members and close friends of our TUCW community. Designed to allow lay people to be in touch with each other without having to go through staff or ministers, it serves as an alternative and supplement to our Facebook group: there are many who are not on social media for personal or even moral reasons (in the case of Facebook.) Carol Seiple and Beth Cliff have overseen the group this year.

The groups.io platform allows people to share across a group by simply putting our group address into the addressee line in an email. Members can decide to get each email as it arrives or can specify different preferences for abstracts. The platform also has other functions – file storage, calendaring, polling – which we do not use currently but could in the future. Users are finding the group is a great way to get the word out on things without the inherent restrictions of SOUNDINGS deadlines, protocols and approvals which are necessary given its role as the “formal” church communications vehicle. This social email network does not have such restrictions.

This year our goal has been to grow quietly and organically to test the concept out. Now a year in, we have 60+ people on the network, who share different types of communications: interesting or humorous articles; “for sale” or “in need” reach outs; notifications of activities that might be of interest. The test has worked. Our goal for the coming year is to continue to build the group; we would like to increase both membership and traffic. It is another way to build community amongst us beyond the Sunday services and our church’s many separate committees and staff activities. We’re excited about its abilities to keep us all connected with one another, virtually, over time.

Submitted by Beth Cliff

## **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

The Leadership Development Team (LDT) sponsored a number of programs and events this year to further the team’s goals of creating, promoting and supporting opportunities for Leadership Development at TUCW. To inspire involvement for this most unusual year LDT organized a virtual Homecoming EXPO. The videos committees provided showcasing their work now reside on the TUCW website and are an always-available valuable resource for anyone interested in learning about a particular group. To further promote awareness of all TUCW has to offer, LDT maintained and updated TUCW’s Leadership Committee list and organization chart depicting all committees at TUCW. LDT has continued to host its quarterly committee chair meeting with the goal of promoting collaboration between committees and awareness of

each other's work, particularly during this year of remote interaction. Members of LDT also undertook the You Belong census project which brought in useful, updated and interesting information on members' contacts, history of engagement and interests.

To promote training, LDT planned, scheduled and promoted the Leading with Grace Workshop led by Reverend John in which 22 people participated. The program focused on spiritual connection through church engagement. To highlight a culture of service, LDT continued its monthly Leading Light award honoring those in our congregation who exhibit a commitment to service and who enrich our community with their leadership. The Leading Light's biography is included in Soundings and announced in the sanctuary each month so as to inspire other members. It has been a pleasure serving our faith community and we look forward to continuing that work in the future.

Respectfully submitted by Beth Cliff, Deb Garskof (chair), Kathy Roberts, Sudha Sankar and Carol Seiple

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The Nominating Committee team was very committed and worked together seamlessly to deliver a solid slate of Elected Committee nominees. Key accomplishments include:

- Filling nine vacancies (four interim and five end of term) between September 2020 and March 2021. In addition, the committee confirmed five other elected committee members that were eligible to continue in their current posts.
- Setting up a Drop Box digital folder, to replace the current binder, that includes the following information:
  - A new Nom Comm Handbook which can be used to onboard new elected committee members.
  - Bylaws, Charters, Policies and Procedures which guide decisions and operations.
  - Member, Prospect and Committee Data and Tools used to identify, prioritize and organize nominee search activities.
  - Other Tools and Resources the current and future committees can leverage instead of building a requirement from scratch.
- Gaining clarification on the process to fill behind interim vacancies (now documented in our Drop Box folders).

Respectfully Submitted by Felicia Keeton

### **Slate of Nominees for Election on June 13, 2021**

#### **For the Board of Trustees:**

Deb Garskof (1<sup>st</sup> term to 2024)  
Luke Garvey (2<sup>nd</sup> term to 2024)  
Steve Grathwohl (2<sup>nd</sup> term to 2024)  
Wendy Levy (completing 1<sup>st</sup> term to 2022)  
Ravi Sankar (completing 1<sup>st</sup> term to 2023)

#### **For the Endowment Committee:**

Tom Comer (completing term to 2022)  
Cindy Potter (term to 2026)

#### **For the COM:**

Chuck Colletti (term to 2025)  
Monica Garrison (term to 2025)  
Shahan Islam (term to 2026)  
Shrutika Sankar (term to 2026)

#### **For the Nominating Committee:**

Jim Cooper (term to 2023)  
Joann Coviello (term to 2023)  
Kristine Oulman (term to 2023)

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

### **Social Justice at TUCW**

*David Vita, Director of Social Justice*

The Unitarian Church in Westport continues to expand as a spiritual center with a civic circumference with increasing community outreach and developing partner relationships. Building relationships, following the lead of communities most impacted, and working cooperatively with other organizations are key to our growing program.

#### **Advocacy:**

Our primary advocacy effort this year centered on passing the Clean Slate bill. The bill would automatically erase certain criminal convictions from a person's record if they go seven or 10 years (depending upon their previous conviction) without committing another crime. It means that a criminal record does not become a life-sentence limiting educational, training, housing, and job opportunities.

We worked with CONECT (Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut) which was the lead organization to pass Clean Slate, the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, and CT ACLU.

We provided information to the congregation through Soundings and two zoom programs and we organized congregants in key districts to contact their representatives when needed.

This was the third time that Clean Slate came before the CT General Assembly and it passed. It's the strongest Clean Slate bill in the nation and now awaits the Governor's signature.

David Vita continues to represent TUCW on the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport Advocacy Team and is on the CONECT Clean Slate Team.

*~ David Vita*

#### **Beardsley School Committee:**

The negative effects of the COVID pandemic were significant this school year, yet the Beardsley Committee was able to provide support to Beardsley students, teachers, and families in a number of new ways. A few of our regular readers utilized MS Teams, the district's communication platform for virtual learning, to connect with their favorite teachers and their classes and even increased the frequency of their online visits.

Generous donations from the congregation funded the art teacher's request in September for individual sets of water colors for all in-person students. In November we organized a virtual author visit for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes with Lauren Tarshis, acclaimed Westport author of the "I Survived..." series of books.

Our traditional Secret Santa event in Dec. provided grocery and department store gift cards rather than actual presents for specific families. We also wrapped and distributed a hard-cover picture book, a holiday gift, for each and every first-grade student. TUCW's wonderful Westbridge Coalition, concerned about students without a place to do schoolwork at home, built and distributed 12 sets of desks and chairs for a dozen virtual learners.

In March, we hosted a Career Day event with individual presentations to grades 3-6 from a variety of men and women representing different career choices. We are hoping Career Day will become an annual event. In May, we delivered a \$15 Dunkin' Donuts gift card to all teachers, aides, and support staff in recognition of Teacher Appreciation Day.

The 2021-22 school year will be quite demanding, with a great increase in the need for math and reading tutors in all grades and at all levels. We also look forward to the return of our regular readers and hope to explore many new and exciting ways to connect with Beardsley students and teachers.

*~Your Beardsley Committee: Sari Bodi, Linda Brewster, Beth Cliff, Jamie Forbes, Lynne Laukhuf, Anita Pfluger, and Kathy Roberts*

### **Eliminating Racism Group:**

The Eliminating Racism Small Group Ministry continued to meet for the first part of the church year via zoom providing a welcoming space for people to openly and safely share feelings and thoughts around race and racism.

It then evolved into bringing its tools for listening and perspectives on racism to the monthly Racial Justice Council Meetings. Open sharing, deep listening, and empathy remain hallmarks of this practice.

*~ Arnela Ten Meer and Dan Iacovella*

### **Gun Violence Prevention:**

Our congregation's commitment to gun violence prevention has been unwavering for over two decades. We continue to work with CAGV (CT Against Gun Violence) and the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, and this year have begun building relationships with StreetSafe Bridgeport, and a statewide coalition on ending community violence.

Our work with CAGV is primarily around legislative advocacy, with the Council of Churches on a Gun Buy Back program in Bridgeport, and with StreetSafe on supporting boots on the ground efforts to mitigate community violence.

*~ David Vita*

### **Immigration & Refugee Outreach:**

The COVID pandemic greatly curtailed our work this year as we were limited to meetings on Zoom and could have no in person contact with refugees and immigrants so all programs that involved mentoring, tutoring, providing transportation, events, Family Dinners, ground to a halt.

COVID impacted our ability to physically set up apartments for arriving refugees but the Trump administration's reduction from Obama's 110,000 refugees to 11,800- a nearly 90% reduction had even greater repercussions.

With the change in administration we are seeing the number of refugees coming to Bridgeport increase. In the past month three families have arrived. So far, we have been limited to donating supplies but our "A" Team- is preparing to get back to work setting up apartments in the next few weeks.

The health care campaign organizer for CT Students for a Dream joined our March meeting to inform us about the Husky 4 Immigrants campaign to extend healthcare coverage to undocumented residents. We supported this effort by forwarding information to the I&R distribution list and asking people to contact members of the legislature.

Make the Road Connecticut, another organization that we partner with, held refresher training for members of the accompaniment group trained in January 2020 so they will be ready when courts reopen. During the pandemic, ICE check-ins are done by phone.

We are looking forward to hosting a curbside Family Dinner at B1C (Building One Community) in Stamford, in August after the past three dates were cancelled due to the pandemic.

We also provided assistance for immigrants applying through a Connecticut program for rent relief during COVID.

The committee made a video highlighting our work for the September 2020 virtual Expo. This is available as a link on the TUCW website for those seeking more information about the I & R Committee.

*~ Kathy Roberts & Marjolijn de Jager*

### **Immigration Community Support Network:**

The Immigration Community Support Network is a group of volunteers that provides support for non-status immigrants in Fairfield County, CT who are fighting deportation and who have pro bono/subsidized legal representation.

At the direction of the attorney, a team of volunteers provides support to the attorney and wrap-around assistance to the client and family. The team can be comprised of one or more members, depending on the specific needs of the case.

Due to COVID this team has not taken on any new cases, only maintaining existing pre-COVID ones.

In the past several weeks the ICSN team has begun meeting and discussing new cases with B1C (Building One Community) and CIRI (the Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants). We expect the upcoming year to be a busy one.

~ *David Vita*

### **Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)**

The IDI is a tool to assess our ability to connect across difference. It's a first step in understanding where we're starting from so that we can then work to effectively develop our intercultural competency skills as individuals and as a congregation.

Cheryl Dixon, Kim Warman, and David Vita have been trained in the IDI and began in October to develop an IDI program for our congregation. In January, 22 members of the congregation participated in the IDI and in April another group of 20 took the 50 multiple-choice questionnaire on line and had a follow up conversation with a member of our team.

We will begin again in the fall. Our goal, over time, is to provide every member of the congregation the opportunity to participate in the IDI.

~ *David Vita*

### **John Street Bridge Outreach**

For over a decade, April Barron of Helping Hands Outreach has coordinated a Sunday food outreach for homeless and food insecure individuals on John Street in Bridgeport. In 2020, with COVID-19, the City of Bridgeport allowed only take-away food. We coordinated a bagged lunch program with April to feed the community on John Street. We follow April's lead.

Thanks to over 115 members of our community who have prepared lunches and the drivers who have delivered and handed them out, to date, our Brown Bag Lunch Outreach has served over 15,000 lunches.

The community on John Street depends on us. April said, "If it was not for your church we would not have the food to give out on John Street every Sunday." She said that people were not giving anymore due to the pandemic, especially in the beginning. April also stated, "The people on John Street are grateful. The Unitarian Church does not only supply the food, but they also come down and interact with the people."

Our outreach has expanded to include Prospect House; several halfway houses; individuals housed in tents and cars in Bridgeport; and PT Barnum Housing, a public housing complex in Bridgeport.

Within PT Barnum Housing, we serve about 30 families every Sunday. The average number of lunch bags is four to five per family. We meet other needs also, such as diapers, children's shoes, coats, clothing, and books. In December of 2020, we coordinated with April to hand out grapefruit and gift cards.

Our outreach coordinated with Nate Pawelek to involve the youth in an Easter Basket outreach in April of 2021. The youth assisted in collection of the candy and filled 150 baskets. They delivered baskets to families at PT Barnum with April. This project was the first step toward our goal of involving the youth.

Our outreach also benefited from the generosity of the Shawl Ministry, whose members contributed hand-knitted hats, scarves, and cowls.

~ *Teryl Eisenberg*

**Microfinance/KIVA:**

In 2020, the KIVA Committee continued to make loans to women around the world who are starting new businesses or are purchasing supplies for existing businesses. In the 10 years since it was established, the KIVA committee has loaned more than \$140,000 to over 5000 women.

This year, the KIVA Committee did not hold our annual Christmas card sale due to COVID restrictions, however, we continued to receive loan repayments from our current loanees, and we used that income to make new loans so more women can benefit from microfinance.

~ *Julie Kennedy*

**Share the Plate:**

With the advent of COVID and the pressing needs it presented we continued our weekly Share the Plate focusing primarily on our community partners with an emphasis on providing food. The list of recipient organizations includes: multiple programs of CIRI (CT Institute for Refugees and Immigrants) and the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, and the following organizations: Ct Bail Fund, Domestic Violence Crisis Center, Helping Hands, South End Community Food Pantry, Planned Parenthood, StreetSafe, Open Doors, Florida Voting Rights Project, Back Country Jazz, Abilis, Bridgeport Gun Buy Back, Mercy Learning Center, Visioning Bear, and Triangle Community Center. Share the Plate contributed over \$26,000 to the above organizations.

~ *David Vita*

**United with Kenya:**

UwK continues its work in health and education including the operation of a community library, assistance with an apprenticeship program and the undertaking 23 water projects in the villages of Chepsaita and Kamafai.

In response to COVID, UwK has also supported the village to purchase soap, materials to make their own cotton masks, and the purchase of jerricans for families who cannot afford the purchase.

~ *Dan Iacovella*

**Voices Café Committee:**

Voices Café's last live performance was March 7, 2020, just before the COVID outbreak.

While we haven't been preparing for monthly performances we have been busy building our committee infrastructure, volunteer base, and developing the tech ability for hybrid performances going forward.

Voices Café resumed activity in February with a well-attended zoom kickoff. We had special guests Reverend John and Board Chair Luke Garvey plus a good number of past volunteers and new participants. Representatives from NERFA (Northeast Regional Folk Alliance) also joined.

In April we participated in "Joan & Joni", a tribute show of Joan Baez and Joni Mitchell songs, raising a tidy sum for the Domestic Violence Crisis Center. Then in May Rev John facilitated a Voices Café visioning workshop with 20 participants.

On June 19<sup>th</sup> we will have our inaugural live-streamed concert featuring Goodnight Moonshine. The Juneteenth event will raise funds to help restore The Freeman Houses in Bridgeport. These 200-year-old houses were part of the robust "Little

Liberia” settlement of free blacks. And on October 24<sup>th</sup> Voices Café will be part of 25 city tour for an exciting show, a co-bill of two youthful bands.

Voices Café has some great new volunteers this year, and we’d welcome more! Together we look forward to launching Voice Café’s 2<sup>nd</sup> decade. And as with our first, we continue to count on the support of this great community.

~ *Dave Caplan*

### **WestBridge, Inc.:**

WB is a 501c3 that does carpentry and other jobs that help underserved homeowners bring their homes up to a more accessible condition.

As we had a very slow year, in December one of our volunteers suggested we make some desks and chairs for Beardsley School students who were doing remote learning. Beardsley loved the idea so off we went. Anita Pfluger was our trusted point person.

Since we couldn’t work inside people’s homes, we focused on outside projects when it was safe. We completed three accessible ramps and a deck plus we did some outside repairs and winterizing. Just this past Saturday we gathered at a local diner for breakfast then returned to our inside/outside jobs.

Since 2008, WB volunteers have repaired and renovated over 100 homes in and around Bridgeport for low-income families and community organizations. If you like to work with your hands, consider joining us.

~ *Sherry Jagerson*

## **HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) COMMITTEE**

The Committee did not meet this year. We are available for issues that arise spontaneously. Several new laws are effective and TUCW is working on its compliance systems. This work includes additional training on Sexual Harassment. This coming year we expect to follow the same course. We monitor for new laws, regulations and orders that may affect TUCW.

Respectfully submitted by Jeff Lundberg, Chair

## **YEAR-ROUND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

To create a sense of ownership, drive mutual responsibility, foster a culture of caring and generosity, and facilitate communication within the Unitarian Church of Westport (TUCW) community.

### **Executive Summary**

Our journey highlights:

Although executing Stewardship during the unprecedented 2020-2021 Pandemic was very challenging, we nonetheless persevered with a modest level of success!

- We executed an October ‘Connect Appeal’ to raise funds for much-needed upgrades to our technology. This drive yielded \$9,100.
- Our 2020 Holiday Appeal: \$15,000. This was an increase over previous year.

- In March, we hosted a Lead Donor Event via Zoom which initiated the 2021 Annual Operating Budget Drive.
- Reverend John hosted five Zoom “Town-Hall” style meetings, where people who informed about the wide scope of activities happening in our congregation and they were asked to pledge.
- In this year’s campaign this is how we continued to work together to help TUCW become digital.
  - - Targeted emails based on data to help connect
  - - Facebook and Zoom usage
  - - Several articles in Soundings
- Our team of Stewards were fully engaged and dedicated to outreach.
- Not able to hold the traditional slate of fundraisers: Tag sale, Jewelry Boutique, Voices Café, soup sales, we look forward to a high income from the upcoming A(UU)ction.
 

Thank you to all those hard-working people on the Auction team – a core team of 10 volunteers who have invested countless hours so far. Items came from 65 congregation donors.

We especially want to acknowledge the Stewardship Committee. We are proud to say that we held together as a team, ideating, persevering and staying strong and optimistic.

### **Our Annual Budget Drive Results**

- **Total: \$460,000 (77% of our \$520K goal)**
- **179 pledge units (only 87% of last year’s pledgers)**

We feel pleased with the pledging amount to date, but we have more work to do. We all acknowledge that this is a time of uncertainty, and many congregants are having financial challenges which make it difficult for them to commit monetarily. Also, our committee acknowledges that many previous generous donors have passed away or moved away.

We expect our financial numbers to increase somewhat in the Fall of 2021, post-Pandemic. We plan to revive the Operating Budget campaign, at Homecoming, when we are again live and back in our beloved sanctuary.

Our theme for this year’s Annual Budget Drive (pledge) campaign of “UU Belong”, was designed to emphasize how we as Stewards need to foster conversations and help congregants to understand that they have a home in our church and in turn a responsibility to support it financially. We have faith that when this time of difficulty is over, our community will think and behave with optimism and generosity. While we fell short in our monetary and pledge unit goals by the time of this report.

- 63 families, 35% of our members, increased their commitments or pledges from the prior year.
- We received 21 new pledges from families and individuals who have never pledged before.

Members of the congregation were aware of the annual budget drive and their responsibilities through several channels:

- Over 20 Visiting Stewards were trained and then reached out to congregants to hear how they were doing and to help them with the commitment process and giving. This Visiting Steward network was the back-bone of our Pledge Drive.
- We know that the new normal will connect the physical world with the virtual one, and we can use this new world to connect with the congregation wherever they are. This will help us in the future if we stick with it. For example, at some point we will be able to mine the data generated from digital to help create better connections.

The spirit of the drive and of our committee was very positive and participatory, with broad support of Rev. John’s ministry and faith in the future of TUCW. The drive was fully supported by TUCW staff members. Key in next year’s efforts will be to focus on healing from this crisis and coming together to financially support our congregation as we all recover. We

have truly become a “year-round” committee while continuing to drive connections with multi-generational congregants. This includes cross-committee communication activities and a commitment by our Visiting Stewards to follow-up throughout the year with their assigned Congregants.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Money, Elena Rockman-Blake and Sam Somashekar, Chairs YRSC

Committee:

- Randy Burnham
- Charles Colletti
- Mary Jane Cross
- Charles Harrington
- Matt Leonard
- Rev. Dr. John Morehouse
- David Vita

## **LEGACY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The **Legacy Planning Committee (LPC)** continued as a sub-committee of **Year Round Stewardship Committee (YRSC)**. Since 2020 the **LPC** has been silent in response to John Morehouse's initial request not to distract from the efforts of the capital campaign, as well as more recent efforts supporting annual pledge appeal challenges during the pandemic.

Plans for the future: We plan to begin to individually contact prospective members, nominated by members of the **YRSC**, on a one to one basis for the remainder of the summer. We plan to resume a public campaign for new members beginning in September, with an updated brochure.

The membership of the Committee did not change this year, Charles Harrington, Matt Leonard, Catherine Onyemelukwe, David Thompson (charter members) and Cathy Roberts (replacing Denny Davidoff) constitute the committee.

The 2021-2022 public campaign for new members of the Legacy Society will hopefully succeed not only in recruiting additional bequests to the church, but also new members for the Planning Committee to continue this important work in the years to come.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Charles Harrington, Chair

## **ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE**

The Endowment Committee manages all capital funds of the Congregation with the objective of preserving assets and enhancing the long-term financial security and well-being of the Congregation. These include The Endowment (established by the Constitution), The Bernhard Music Fund (established by Board Resolution), and The Scouller/Nelson Fund for Family Faith Formation (a new fund, established by Board Resolution).

Over the past year, the Endowment Committee has focused on supporting the Congregation through the challenges presented by the pandemic and planning support needed in the upcoming year as the Congregation recovers and works toward a bright future. A grant of \$30,000 was made from the Endowment to the Operating Fund as has been the practice in recent years. The Committee anticipated needing to provide an additional \$40,000 but due to the excellent work of the Finance Committee and the Stewardship Committee, and the addition of new members through our congregation's larger reach, these funds were not required. The Endowment Committee has committed the usual \$30,000 to the Operating Fund next year. In addition, the Committee has approved making additional grants up to \$40,000 if needed. It is possible that even more than this \$40,000 will be needed and the Committee will work with the Finance Committee and the Board to ensure that the Operating Fund requirements are met in this upcoming transition year.

The building improvement work was largely put on hold so the requirements for cash for these projects was minimal. Most of the \$500,000 in matching funds for the Capital Campaign are still being held in the Endowment, keeping the funds invested until they are needed.

Through the contribution of the Beth and Gordon Cliff family, a new fund was created for the enhancement of Family Faith Formation. This new fund is named for Beth's parents and is the Scouller/Nelson Fund for Family Faith Formation. It is a fund that is intended to exist in perpetuity providing income each year for program enhancement. The family has made an initial contribution and has pledged an additional amount in the next calendar year. Additional gifts to the Fund from members of our congregation are welcome. We are grateful to Beth and her family for this generous and important gift.

The Bernhard Music Fund, established in 1993 through a generous gift honoring Arnold Bernhard, continues to provide funds to enhance the Music Program. The balance in the account has been adjusted by moving funds from the Endowment that were meant to be in the Bernhard Fund. Each year an amount is available to enhance the Music Program although in this past fiscal year no grant was made because it was not needed.

The balances in the funds managed by the Endowment Committee are:

- The Endowment - \$3,040,000 which includes approximately \$350,000 committed to the Capital Campaign projects
- The Bernhard Music Fund - \$350,000
- The Scouller/Nelson Fund for Family Faith Formation - \$55,000

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Poole Bittenbender (chair)

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

### **Auditor's Opinion:**

The firm of Hope & Hernandez, P.C. was retained this year to biennial audit the financial statements of TUCW for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. As is the TUCW policy, the church finances are reviewed one year and then audited the next year. TUCW's financial statements are prepared on a Modified Cash Basis.

The auditor (Robert Bailey, CPA) indicated that in their opinion, that except for the possible effects of the matter described below as the Reason for the Qualified Opinion, the financial statements fairly in all material aspects, represent the financial position of TUCW, as of June 30, 2021.

### **Reason for the Qualified Opinion:**

Due to the lack of historical cost data, TUCW estimated a \$3,000,000 beginning balance of the value of land, buildings, furniture, fixtures, and equipment as of July 1, 2014. The Church then began depreciating its fixed assets in the year ended June 30, 2015.

### **Other:**

Hope and Hernandez also prepared the Form 990 which is the annual IRS tax return for nonprofit organizations. The Audit report was presented by Mr. Baily to the Board of Trustees in January 2021. A copy of the Audit is available for review in the TUCW office.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Grathwohl and Bob Trefry

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE AND TREASURER'S REPORT**

As we discussed last year at this time, the COVID pandemic has impacted the finances of our church, just as it has affected all of us. Many of our sources of revenue are down. However, on a positive note, recognizing that this would be a difficult year, many members of our congregation contributed more than was expected. Because of their generosity, our fiscal results were not as bad as had been anticipated.

When preparing the 2020-2021 Budget Reforecast and the 2021-2022 Proposed Budget, The Finance Committee considered both the effects caused by the pandemic, as well as lower pledge dollars because of our reduced membership numbers.

### **Highlights of the 2020-2021 Budget Reforecast:**

- Higher than expected pledge payments and contributions
- Reduction in rental income from Coop Nursery School and other renters
- Expenses basically the same as initially projected (thanks to the hard work of our ministers and staff)
- To help close the Budget Gap (expenses exceed revenue), we will use our Cash and/or Reserves\*
- To help close the Budget Gap, we will probably need use of Endowment funds.\*\*

(Endowment has approved the use of \$30,000 to help meet the projected year-end need)

## **Highlights of the 2021-2022 Proposed Budget:**

We will again be faced with a shortfall of Revenue vs Expenses (i.e., a Budget Gap)  
To help close the Budget Gap, we will again use Cash and/or Reserves\*  
To help close the Budget Gap, we will again need to use some Endowment funds\*\*

(Endowment has approved the use of up to \$74,500, depending on actual year-end need)

The Year Round Stewardship Committee has done a great job in encouraging pledges from congregants. But we are again projecting pledge payments that are lower than in previous years, and lower than our annual expenses. Other impacts on the Income include an uncertain amount of rental payments from the Coop Nursery School, a drop off in rentals for weddings and other events, and the rent we receive from the use of our parking lot could drop dramatically at any time.

On the Expense side, we will again reduce our funding to the UUA by \$10,000. There will be no allocations to Reserves. Expenses will be slightly higher this year due to an increase in UUA health insurance payments, and because we increased our contributions to the staff pensions to the level recommended by UUA (10% of salaries instead of last year's 5%).

**As we had in the previous two fiscal years, there is a projected shortfall of \$175,000 for the 2021-2022 Budget year.**

Because we anticipate there will be another shortfall during the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year, we are again proposing to use Cash that previously was designated as Reserves\* to help close the Budget Gap. In addition, we will probably also need another, larger contribution from the Endowment.\*\*

### **This is not a stable fiscal position.**

In past years, we have endeavored to build up Reserves, but we are now forced to use both the Reserves and Endowment funds to make up for the cash shortfalls. If we cannot find a way to increase our Revenues, we will have to consider other, serious Expense adjustments. And these Expense adjustments would most probably come from people costs.

People costs (our staff) make up 2/3's of our entire annual expense budget. Our staff are the heart of TUCW, and they make it possible for us to deliver on the goals, programs, and services that make our congregation a loving community. We are committed to keeping our financial position as strong as possible, to ensure the continued life of our congregation. But if expenses are cut too much, it will have a very negative affect on TUCW...on who we are and what we can hope to accomplish.

### **Explanation of the 2020-2021 Profit/Loss Budget, the 2020-2021 Reforecast and 2021-2022 Proposed Budget**

1st column: **2020-2021 Approved Budget**

2nd column: **Reforecast of the 2020-2021 Approved Budget**, showing estimated year-end actuals

3rd column: **2021-2022 Proposed Budget**

4th column: Difference between the **2021-22 Proposed Budget** and the **Reforecast of the 2020-21 Budget**.

### **Contingencies**

Every year the Finance Committee prepares a list of upside and downside Contingencies to go with our Budget projections. For the upcoming **2021-2022 Budget** year, we recommend:

## 2021-22 Budget Contingency Priorities

### UPSIDE (\$25,000)

1. Increase People Cost \$15,000
2. Increase General Reserves \$8,000
3. Increase UUA Contribution \$2,000

### DOWNSIDE (\$25,000)

1. Decrease UUA Contribution \$10,000
2. Decrease People Cost \$15,000

If the Net Income rises so that it is positive by \$25,000 or more (i.e., there is no Budget Gap), we will increase People Cost, Reserves, and the UUA Contribution. If the Net Income decreases by \$25,000 or more (i.e., the Budget Gap grows larger than anticipated), there will have to be a decrease in our UUA Contribution and People Cost.

NB: One very positive note - our prior PPP loan (\$112,900) has been forgiven by the SBA and will not need to be repaid.

**\*Reserve Accounts:** TUCW has established a number of Reserve accounts, to hold cash to be used in furtherance of efforts that have been approved by the Congregation (e.g., Music, Social Justice, Building & Grounds, etc.). However, these Reserve accounts are not separate cash accounts. The Reserve funds are comingled with our normal bank cash accounts (checking + savings). If Reserve funds are spent, it reduces our available Cash. If Cash is spent, it reduces the funds available to be used as a Reserve. For this reason, when we say we will use Cash or Reserves to help close the Budget Gap, we are in effect referring to the same pool of money.

**\*\*Endowment Accounts:** For the past few years, the Endowment Committee has been asked to help close our annual Budget Gap (annual expenses exceeding annual revenue). In normal years, Endowment gives the following dollars to help support our annual budget:

- 1) \$4,500 from the Bernhard Music Fund, which is restricted for use by the Minister of Music
- 2) \$30,000 from the annual growth in the total investment accounts, for general use in the Operating Fund

But recently, in addition to these dollars, the Endowment Committee has been asked to give extra funds to help close the Budget Gap.

Each June, just before the start of our new fiscal year, the Finance Committee works to establish a proposed Annual Budget (which is then approved by the Congregation at our Annual Meeting). If a Budget Gap is projected for the upcoming year, the Finance Committee calculates if it has enough extra Cash to close the Gap. If not, the Endowment Committee will be asked to assist, and a targeted amount of Endowment funds will be shown on the Proposed Annual Budget.

At the end of each Fiscal Year, we do a Budget Reforecast. Based on this Reforecast, the Budget Gap is sometimes less than had been projected. And sometimes the Budget Gap is greater than had been projected.

Based on the actual end-of-year Gap amount, Endowment will contribute funds up to the dollar amount that had been committed at the start of the Fiscal Year. The final dollar amount contributed by Endowment is based on the need.

The Congregation should understand that use of Endowment funds comes with an opportunity cost. Unlike Cash that sits in our checking account, Endowment funds are “earning assets”. They are invested with the goal of increasing in value each year. If some of these earning assets are liquidated to help close the Budget Gap, those dollars are spent, and any potential future growth is lost.

Respectfully submitted by Steve Grathwohl, Treasurer

		2020-2021 Profit & Loss Statement and 2021-2022 Proposed Budget as of 04-26-2021	2020-2021 Annual Budget	2020-2021 Estimated Year End as of 04/08/2021	Proposed 2021-2022 Annual Budget	Proposed 2021-2022 Budget vs 2020-2021 Estimated Year-end	
1		<b>Income (cash)</b>					
2		Pledge Income	450,000	459,568	450,000	-9,568	
3		Unrestricted Contributions	43,000	90,259	55,000	-35,259	
4		Restricted Contributions	7,200	21,466	27,800	6,334	
5		Event Proceeds	29,000	10,700	25,000	14,300	
6		Pass Thru Income – to charities	9,000	27,499	20,000	-7,499	
7		Facility Use Fees	116,200	81,200	102,200	21,000	
8		Other Income	13,494	15,750	3,500	-12,250	
9		<b>Gross Ordinary Income ("A")</b>	<b>667,894</b>	<b>706,442</b>	<b>683,500</b>	<b>-22,942</b>	<b>A</b>
10							
11		<b>Expense (cash)</b>					
12		Total People Cost	568,212	575,556	633,723	58,167	
13		Maintenance & Insurance	82,000	71,168	75,100	3,932	
14		Materials for Program & Worship	30,603	16,425	30,083	13,658	
15		Office & Utilities	67,107	72,950	66,538	-6,412	
16		Denominational	16,500	16,500	16,500	0	
17		Fundraising Expenses	15,000	1,716	1,500	-216	
18		Pass Thru to Charity	13,000	37,248	25,000	-12,248	
19		Audit, Payment Processing and Bank Fees	15,770	17,625	17,250	-375	
20		Miscellaneous Expense	15,080	5,000	11,550	6,550	
21		Building and Grounds Projects	10,000	3,000	5,000	2,000	
22		<b>Total Expense ("B")</b>	<b>833,272</b>	<b>817,188</b>	<b>882,244</b>	<b>65,056</b>	<b>B</b>
23							
24		<b>Net Ordinary Income - Cash Basis ("C" = A - B)</b>	<b>-165,378</b>	<b>-110,746</b>	<b>-198,744</b>	<b>-87,998</b>	<b>C</b>
25							
26							
27		<b>Other Sources of Cash</b>					
28		Use of Prior Year Reserves	92,278	47,006	25,583	-21,423	
29		Endowment Distribution to Operating	74,200	30,000	34,500	4,500	
30		Extra Endowment Distribution to Operating	0	0	40,000	40,000	
31		<b>Total Sources of Cash ("D")</b>	<b>166,478</b>	<b>77,006</b>	<b>100,083</b>	<b>23,077</b>	<b>D</b>
32							

		<b>2020-2021 Profit &amp; Loss Statement and 2021-2022 Proposed Budget as of 04-26-2021 (continued)</b>	<b>2020-2021 Annual Budget</b>	<b>2020-2021 Estimated Year End as of 04/08/2021</b>	<b>Proposed 2021-2022 Annual Budget</b>	<b>Proposed 2021-2022 Budget vs 2020-2021 Estimated Year-end</b>	
33		<b>Contributions to Reserves (Other Uses of Cash) ("E")</b>	<b>-1,100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>E</b>
34							
35		<b>NET INCOME BUDGET VIEW ("F" = C+D+E)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-33,740</b>	<b>-98,661</b>	<b>-64,921</b>	<b>F</b>
36							
37		<b>Use of Undesignated Cash ("G")</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33,740</b>	<b>98,661</b>	<b>64,921</b>	<b>G</b>
38							
39		<b>NET INCOME BUDGET VIEW AFTER USE OF</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>H</b>
40		<b>UNDESIGNATED CASH ("H" = F+G)</b>					
41							
42		<b>CASH REMAINING AT END OF FISCAL YEAR (June 30th)</b>		<b>173,930</b>	<b>49,686</b>	<b>-124,244</b>	

**TUCW BALANCE SHEET COMPARISON - 2020/2021 vs 2021/2022**

1	Balance Sheet				
2				June 30, 2020	April 30, 2021
3	<b>ASSETS</b>				
4	Current Assets				
5	Checking/Savings				
6	TUCW Checking and Savings			272,000	334,114
7	Capital Campaign Checking			923,763	279,382
8	ADM Account - Capital Campaign			0	726,784
9	Total Checking/Savings			1,195,763	1,340,280
10					
11	Other Current Assets				
12	CD – 6 month term			100,577	0
13					
14	Fixed Assets				
15	Land			1,000,000	1,000,000
16	Land Improvements			148,770	148,770
17	Church Building			1,000,000	1,000,000
18	Meeting House			900,000	900,000
19	Building Improvements			188,480	188,480
20	Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment			106,880	106,880
21	Capital Campaign Work in Process			111,608	306,457
22	Accumulated Depreciation			-472,714	-472,714
23	Total Fixed Assets			2,983,024	3,177,873
24					
25	Other Assets				
26	Endowment Investment Accounts			Market Value 6/30/20	Market Value 12/31/20
27	Unrestricted Inv-UUA Common Fund			546,043	649,555
28	Unrestricted Inv-Vanguard			386,789	392,059
29	Unrestricted Inv-Bernhard Music			205,793	232,251
30	Vanguard - Social Justice			39,712	46,918
31	Vanguard - Faith Formation			3,787	59,974
32	Vanguard - Building and Grounds			3,787	4,475
33	Vanguard - Music			77,848	91,975
34	Vanguard - Restricted			1,559,682	1,783,932
35	Total Endowment Investment Accounts			2,823,441	3,261,139
36	Total Other Assets			2,823,441	3,261,139
37					
38	<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>			<b>7,102,805</b>	<b>7,779,292</b>

## TUCW BALANCE SHEET COMPARISON - 2020/2021 vs 2021/2022

(continued)

				June 30, 2020	April 30, 2021
39	<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>				
40					
41	<b>Liabilities</b>				
		PPP Loan Payable		112,900	0
		Other Current Liabilities		100,878	78,639
42	Total Current Liabilities			213,778	78,639
43					
44	<b>Equity</b>				
45		Invested in Capital Assets		2,983,024	2,983,024
46		Reserves			
47		Memorial Garden Reserve		7,887	7,887
48		Building Reserve		83,768	51,733
49		Groundskeeping Reserve		42,666	32,666
50		Sabbatical Reserve		12,745	10,265
51		Faith Formation Reserve		7,434	7,434
52		Social Justice Reserve		21,024	19,024
53		Music Reserve		27,274	27,274
54		Worship & Ministries Reserve		7,085	6,958
55		Total Reserves		209,883	163,241
56					
57		Unrestricted Net Assets		728,921	1,235,048
58		Permanently Restricted Net Assets		1,559,682	1,559,682
59		Temporarily Restricted Net Assets		127,665	127,665
60		Capital Campaign Net Assets		773,763	773,763
61		Capital Campaign Net Income		689,932	275,295
62		TUCW Net Income		-183,843	582,935
63	<b>Total Equity</b>			6,889,027	7,700,653
64					
65	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>			<b>7,102,805</b>	<b>7,779,292</b>

## Member List as of June 8, 2021

Lia Albo  
Michelle Albright  
Melanie Allen  
Karen Anderson  
Nancy Andre  
Harbans Arya  
John Austin  
Laura Axthelm  
Stephen Axthelm  
Beverly Bailey  
Richard Bailey  
Jim Baldyga  
Melissa Balmer  
Reed Balmer  
Donald Bancroft  
Martha Bancroft  
David Bauer  
Jackie Beck  
Diane Becker  
Diana Bell  
Pippa Bell Ader  
Eileen Belmont  
Anne Benson  
Casey Berg  
Chuck Berg  
Alex Beurle  
Ann-Marie Beurle  
Marti Bishop  
Sharon Bittenbender  
Bruce Blau  
Maggie Blau  
Lynda Shannon Bluestein  
Paul Bluestein  
Alex Boboc  
Sari Bodi  
Jennifer Boland  
Carol Boston  
Ann Bova

Deborah Barnett  
Brandt  
Robert Brandt  
Jan Braunle  
Charlie Brennan  
Shari Brennan  
Alan Brewster  
Linda Brewster  
Rainy Broomfield  
Dayle Brownstein  
Jodi Stevens Bryce  
Scott Bryce  
David Bue  
Marie-Claire Bue  
Randy Burnham  
Lynda Campbell  
Diane Cano  
Dave Caplan  
Laurel Carey  
Emily Carveth  
Leo Charles  
Cindy Clair  
Tanya Clemons  
Beth Cliff  
Candace Clinger  
Paul Cohen  
Lynn Colafrancesco  
Neil Coleman  
Charles Colletti  
Rosemarie Colletti  
Thomas Comer  
Brian Connelly  
Martha Constable  
Jim Cooper  
Mark Corcoran  
James Corradino  
Michael Costantino  
Joann Coviello  
Lynn Crager

Timothy Crager  
Kate Croarkin  
Tom Croarkin  
Mary-Jane Cross  
Robert Cygan  
Susan Dam  
Linda Daniels  
Doug Davidoff  
Suzanne Davino  
Marjolijn de Jager  
Wil De Sola  
Joy Del Rosso  
Stephen Del Rosso  
Douglas Dempsey  
Danielle DiGrazia  
Patty Dimon  
Cheryl Dixon  
Beth Dobseavage  
Lisa Donohue-Olivieri  
Peter Donovan  
Gina Rees Douglass  
Rose Dugan  
Sofia Dumery  
Joan Duncan  
Judith Eckert  
Teryl Eisenberg  
Jonathan Elkind  
Marsha Elkind  
Dave Emberling  
Stapley Emberling  
Mary Erlanger  
Douglas Flam  
Vicki Flam  
Adam Fleisher  
Michelle Fleisher  
Ruth Fontilla  
Jamie Forbes  
Jim Francek  
Pat Francek

Luisa Francoeur  
Jan Freddino  
Kim Fuchs  
Jon Gage  
Leigh Gage  
Jay Gaines  
Tina Gaines  
Anita Galvan-Henkin  
Monica Garrison  
Deb Garskof  
Josh Garskof  
Luke Garvey  
Michelle Garvey  
Jennifer Gerometta  
Carol Goddard  
Hazen Goddard  
Cory Goger  
Alex Gormley  
Peggy Gormley  
Steven Gormley  
Andrew Graham  
Steve Grathwohl  
Eric Gribin  
Ellie Grosso  
Catherine Guilliani-Groell  
Andy Gundell  
Carolyn Gundell  
Judith Hamer  
Carol Hamilton  
Lyn Hamilton  
Debbie Handler  
Len Handler  
Kevin Hanley  
Bob Hardin  
Kristi Hardin  
Charles Harrington  
Bill Hart  
Alec Head  
Tom Hearne  
Adair Heitmann  
Jack Hennessy  
Lindy Hennessy  
David Henry  
Bobbie Herman

Robert Herman  
Jason Howard  
Linda Hudson  
David Hunter  
Michelle Hyland  
Daniel Iacovella  
Shahan Islam  
Dave Jacobs  
Melissa Jacobs  
Holly Jaffe  
Sherry Jagerson  
Melissa Jagoe-Seidl  
Ann Johnson-Lundberg  
Keith Johnston  
Anna Jones  
Doug Jones  
Meg Jones  
Scott Kadison  
Maryellen Keenan  
David Keeton  
Felicia Keeton  
Vaughn Keller  
Albert Kelly  
Sunny Khadjavi  
Bob Kleid  
Charles Klein  
Jenny Klein  
April Kleinman  
Lyn Kobsa  
Anatole Konstantin  
Rosaria Konstantin  
Jill Kovacs  
Mark Kovacs  
Sandra Kozma  
Steven Kunstler  
Kathy Kurzatkowski  
Dale Kutnick  
Laura Kutnick  
Joe Lack  
Nancy Lack  
Becky Lai  
Nick Lai  
Ann Lakhdir  
Lincoln LaMastro

Peter LaMastro  
Kate Scheffler Lannamann  
Brian Lasher  
Miki Lasher  
Rob Laug  
Terri Laug  
Lynne Laukhuf  
Brian LaVoie  
Patti LaVoie  
Kevin Leddy  
Kristen Leddy  
Matt Leonard  
Miriam Levin  
Virginia Levin  
Wendy Levy  
Kathy Lewis-Bain  
Patrick Leydon  
Sara Leydon  
Beverly Lieberman  
Jay Lubin  
Linda Lubin  
Jeff Lundberg  
Janet Luongo  
Jim Luongo  
Elizabeth Macdonald  
Darryl Manning  
Gerry Manning  
Allen Marks  
Alexa Marshall  
Fred Marshall  
Mary-Megan Marshall  
Danielle Masse  
Maureen McBride  
Cathy McElroy  
Carrie McEvoy  
Lawrenzo McGee  
Liz McGovern  
Allison McHenry  
Nancy McKeever  
Melinda McMillen  
Jenna McPartland  
Matthew McPartland  
John McWeeney  
Felicity Medinger-McWeeney

Diane Melish  
Elizabeth Miller  
Loren Mitchel  
Bruce Mitnick  
Michele Mitnick  
Diane Moller  
Sven Moller  
Mary Beth Mollica  
Sal Mollica  
Mary Money  
Eric Montgomery  
Kristin Morrell  
Gian Andrea Morresi  
Margaret Morrison  
Nina Nagy  
Beth Negron  
Denise Nelligan  
Shanonda Nelson  
Glenn Newell  
Noelle Newell  
Ed Nicolas  
Leslie Noordyk-Cenci  
Julyen Norman  
Deborah O'Brien  
Jeremiah O'Brien  
Jean O'Dell  
Lynn O'Donnell  
Patrick Olivieri  
Catherine Onyemelukwe  
Eileen O'Reilly  
Joanne Orenstein  
Kristine Oulman  
Neil Pabian  
Cathy Paine  
Gwen Parker  
Kiera Parrott  
Marjorie Partch  
Lauren Parzych  
Kristi Patterson  
Erik Paul  
Nate Pawelek  
Larry Perlstein  
Bob Perry  
Eloise Peterson

Anita Pfluger  
Marie Pham  
Chris Place  
Harvey Place  
Stephen Polmar  
Suzanne Polmar  
Carol Porter  
Cynthia Potter  
Carole Prescott  
Susan Pugliese  
Elizabeth Quesada  
Alan Rackson  
Alice Rago  
David Raymond  
Therese Raymond-  
Cline  
Marilynn Reed  
Dorothy Rich  
Kathy Roberts  
Connie Rockman  
Elena Rockman-Blake  
Glenn Rodriguez  
Ligia Rodriguez  
Mary Jo Romano  
Florence Romanov  
Liane Roseman  
Steven Rosenberg  
Bonnie Rother  
William Rother  
Roger Rowell  
Berta Russell  
Ravi Sankar  
Shrutika Sankar  
Sudha Sankar  
Reina Sauer  
Barb Schade  
Lily Scheyhing  
Penny Schneider  
Althea Seaborn  
Liz Seaman  
Carol Seiple  
Christopher Seiple  
Aaron Seymour  
Jane Sherman

Susan Sherman  
Victoria Sherrow  
Sheila Sherwood  
John Simboli  
Scott Singer  
David Smith  
Maria Mendoza Smith  
Robert Smith  
Tanya Smith  
Paula Soares-Somashekar  
Sam Somashekar  
Judy Soronen  
Susan Starkie  
Emily Staub  
Rob Staub  
Laura Steinbrecher  
Donna Stone  
Bart Stuck  
Jean Sturges  
Ted Sullivan  
Ulla Surland  
Ann Sikes Taylor  
Faith Taylor  
Ron Taylor  
Arnela Ten Meer  
David Thompson  
Edward Thompson  
Joyce Thompson  
Barbara Thormahlen  
Karen Thorsen  
Kate Throckmorton  
Bob Trefry  
Mary Trefry  
Gina Troisi  
Joanne Turmelle  
John Turmelle  
Peg Ulrich  
W. Arthur Ulrich  
Cindy Vaccaro  
John Vaccaro  
Dan Valentine  
Ade Van Duyn  
Andra Vebell  
David Vita

Jerusha Vogel  
 Ken Vogel  
 Jaqueline Wallace  
 John Wallace  
 Marliss Walther  
 Marguerite Webb  
 Bob Welsh

Marion Wertheim  
 Betty-Lynn White  
 Lynn Whitton  
 Caroline Williams  
 Gary Williams  
 Tim Wilson  
 Trina Wong

Linda Woodruff  
 Karen Wright  
 Julia Wyant  
 Melanie Wyler  
 Christine Yang  
 Ted Yang  
 Robert Zuckerman

## MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY

Year	2012	2013	2014	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Beginning of year	580	569	585	501	604	421
Additions	17	29	40	50	18	13
Losses	28	13	21	29	70*	49*
Moved Away					17	9
Deceased					11	7
Resigned					3	1
Other				57*	39	32
End of Year	569	585	604	604	421	383

\*additional correction for Constitutional definition revision of 2015

Year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Beginning of year	383	419	421	415
Additions	49	17	27	17
Losses:	13	15	33	32
Moved Away	6	3	11	2
Deceased	6	10	7	7
Resigned	1	2	0	0
Other			15	23
End of Year	419	421	415	400

\*additional correction for Constitutional definition revision of 2015

## APPENDIX

### **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 69<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UNITARIAN CHURCH IN WESTPORT JUNE 14, 2020**

**Call to Order:** Ken Vogel, President of the Board of Trustees (Board), called the meeting to order at 11:50 am. This meeting was conducted on a Zoom format.

**Quorum Report:** Mary-Jane Cross, Secretary of the Board, confirmed 101 Members signed in via ZOOM chat. This exceeds the quorum requirement of 65 Members.

**Centering:** Senior Minister Rev. John Morehouse lit the chalice and read words from Erik Walker Wikstrom on “the Work of the Congregation.”

**Approval of Minutes of Member Meeting Minutes:** Ken Vogel moved to approve the Minutes from two prior Member Meetings:

- 1) The Minutes from the 68th Annual Meeting on June 9, 2019
- 2) The Minutes from the Member Meeting on November 24, 2019

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**The Very Fine Lifetime Volunteer Service Award:** Carrie McEvoy, Vice-President of the Board, announced that the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Very Fine Lifetime Volunteer Service Award winner is Kristen Leddy. She received an ovation from all present.

**Board of Trustees Report:** Ken Vogel reviewed the activities of the Board during this past year noting that the Board has been monitoring progress towards the priority Congregation Ends. The Board continues to operate under the leadership model of policy-based governance, which is proving to be an effective method of governance. The full report is in the 2020 Annual Report.

#### **Financial Reports:**

**2020-2021 Pledge Report:** Mary Money, co-chair of the Year-Round Stewardship Committee, gave some highlights for the year in Stewardship. Although pledges are below goal, due to the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 and the economic recession, participation in pledge events was robust and most Congregants were reached via Visiting Stewards and virtual messaging.

**Endowment Committee:** Chair Kevin Leddy reviewed the income and disbursements from the Endowment, noting that they continue to contribute to the Annual Operating Budget and that the Endowment balance remains within the recommended guidelines of at least 2 ½-3 times TUCW’s annual operating budget. Details are in the Annual Report.

As was approved by Member vote last year, the Endowment Committee will continue to support a matching fund type of contribution, up to \$500,000 in total over three years, to the Capital Campaign.

**Financial Results & Proposed Budget:** Catherine Onyemelukwe, Treasurer, explained the 2019-2020 Profit and Loss (P/L) statement for the year, and presented the Proposed Budget and Contingencies for 2020-2021. She thanked the committee for its efforts. The full report is in the Annual Report.

Congregants expressed gratitude to Steve Grathwohl for initiating and facilitating the Payroll Protection Program loan that TUCW has been awarded in the amount of \$112,000. While at this time it is a loan, and therefore cannot be recorded as an item on the income side of the P/L statement, there is every indication that the terms of the loan agreement will be met, in which case the loan would be forgiven. This loan covers the income shortfall for this fiscal year.

**Ratification of the 2020-2021 Budget:** Catherine Onyemelukwe moved to ratify the 2020-2021 budget. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**Constitutional Amendment to Increase the Size of the Committee on Ministry (COM):** Randy Burnham, co-chair of COM, moved

To change Article X, Section 4, paragraph 1 of the Constitution to read, “The Committee On Ministries is comprised of seven members elected to serve for staggered five-year terms.”

The Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Per the Constitution, a second vote is required to ratify the proposed change. This vote will take place in September 2020.

**Elections:** Michelle Garvey, Co-Chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked the members of the committee and presented the following slate of candidates for election to office.

- **Board of Trustees** [3 year terms – to 2023]  
Beth Cliff (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Judy Eckert (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Andy Gundell (1<sup>st</sup>)  
Luke Garvey (1<sup>st</sup>) – to 2021, completing term
- **Endowment Committee** [5 year term – to 2025]  
Jamie Forbes
- **Committee on Ministries** [5 year term – to 2024]  
Martha Constable  
Linda Lubin – to 2024, completing term
- **Nominating Committee** [2 year term – to 2022]  
Tom Croarkin  
Lynne Laukhuf

A motion was made and seconded to approve the slate of nominees. The slate was approved as presented.

**Installation of New Board & Elected Committee Members:** Ken Vogel welcomed the newly elected Board and Elected Committee members, charging them to serve the Congregation to the best of their abilities, and charging their fellow committee members and the Congregation to support them in the work they are taking on.

Catherine Onyemelukwe thanked the exiting Board members for their service – Ken Vogel, Carrie McEvoy, Mary-Jane Cross.

**#MeToo Resolution Report:** Rev. John Morehouse reported on progress to date on the directives in the 2018 Congregation Resolution. He commended the great work done by Rev. Shelly on Covenanting, and praised the hard work done by Sudha Sankar and Cheryl Dixon, Co-Chairs of the Gender Equity Team. The progress that has been made over the past year has been both meaningful in the lives of individual women in the congregation and powerful in its focus on inspiring leaders to rethink the words they use and the ways TUCW can be more inclusive. The full report is in the 2020 Annual Report.

**Committee on Ministries (COM) Report:** Sudha Sankar reflected on the COM's role in support of the Ministry this past year and mentioned highlights of the work done, including the Pastoral Care Chaplains' outreach to contact everyone in the Congregation. She thanked the committee for its hard work. The full report is in the Annual Report.

**New Business:** There was no new business.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 am

Respectfully submitted,  
Stapley Emberling,  
Acting Secretary of the Board of Trustees

**DRAFT  
MINUTES OF THE MEMBER MEETING  
OF THE UNITARIAN CHURCH IN WESTPORT**

**SEPTEMBER 20, 2020**

**Call to Order:** Luke Garvey, President of the Board of Trustees (Board), called the meeting to order at 12:20 pm. This meeting was conducted on a Zoom format.

**Quorum Report:** Stapley Emberling, Secretary of the Board, confirmed 69 Members signed in via ZOOM chat. This exceeds the quorum requirement of 62 Members.

**Centering:** Beth Cliff, Board Member, lit the chalice and read inspirational words from Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

**Ratification of the Constitutional Amendment to Increase the Size of the Committee On Ministry (COM):** To change Article X, Section 4, paragraph 1 of the Constitution to read, “The Committee On Ministries is comprised of seven members elected to serve for staggered five-year terms.”

The Motion to make this change to the Constitution was made, seconded, and unanimously passed at the Annual Meeting on June 14, 2020. Per the Constitution, a second vote is required to ratify the proposed change. Today’s vote passed with 67 votes FOR, 2 votes AGAINST, and no abstentions. The Constitutional Amendment has been ratified.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stapley Emberling,  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees  
September 20, 2020

## **Anti-Racism Resolution - The Unitarian Church in Westport**

WHEREAS, we as Unitarian Universalists, according to our principles, strive for “justice, equity and compassion in human relations” and believe in the “inherent worth and dignity of every person” and “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part”;

WHEREAS, racism and its effects, including the deep divisions in our world caused by inequitable and unjust distribution of power and resources, are embedded in all social institutions as well as in ourselves and will not be eradicated without deliberate engagement in analysis and action and the undertaking of personal and institutional commitments to end racism;

WHEREAS, recent events have called our attention to the injustices that Black communities and other people of color face in our country, and to inequities and divisions with deep roots in centuries of harm, events demonstrating that we have much work to do if we are to live up to our UU principles;

WHEREAS, we are called by our faith to work to better understand the depth and consequences of racism and to work towards becoming anti-racists within ourselves, TUCW and the wider community;

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that we have all been born into a racist society and so no one has been or is able to escape its effects unless and until it is fully eliminated;

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that racism was created by human beings and so as human beings it is within our ability and power to eradicate racism and we commit to continue to work within and outside our congregation until that goal is reached;

WHEREAS, the UUA is considering an 8th principle which will affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. That we the members of TUCW condemn racism in its many forms and commit to becoming an intentionally and proactively anti-racist congregation, supporting the goals of the Black Lives Matter and other similar movements, as consistent with our Unitarian Universalist principles.
2. That we will carefully examine the effect that racism has on all our lives, our own conscious and unconscious racism as participants in a racist society regardless of our color and commit to hold ourselves and one another accountable to anti-racism.
3. That we will be mindful of intersectionality, the interconnected nature of racism and other systems of oppression based on class, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, culture, nationality, religion and language.
4. That we will be mindful of systems that restrict access to adequate housing, healthcare, education and other resources that increase vulnerability to environmental risks, including the exacerbation of climate change.

5. That we commit to teach our children in age-appropriate ways about racism and its effects, and will work with our youth groups to ensure greater participation in this effort;
6. That members of TUCW will encourage our ministers, particularly our senior minister, to offer sermons that guide us in better understanding racism and lead us in this very important work;
7. That we will offer and support programs that educate us about the many aspects of racism and lead to introspection and searching discussions among members of our congregation; programs may include but are not limited to multicultural artistic events, guest speakers, community conversations and participation in interfaith initiatives;
8. That we will advocate for justice and equity for all people of color on the local, state and federal level;
9. That we will, as a congregation, adopt the 8th Principle and advocate for its formal adoption by the UUA.
10. That all ministries and TUCW committees integrate anti-racism as a function of their mission.
11. That the Senior Minister and Racial Justice Council report annually to the congregation on progress in implementing this resolution.

