

*Unitarian Universalist
Church in Meriden*



*Annual Report
Fiscal Year
2018 – 2019*

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Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden

Sunday Serves at 10:30 am
Religious Education at 10:30 am
Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull, Minister
Donna Stimpson, President
Alan Dougherty, Musician
Steven Nahas, Office Administrator

May 24, 2019

Dear Members of UUCM,

The Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden is hereby called for Sunday June 9 at 12 noon at the Meetinghouse immediately after the service.

Sandwiches and beverages will be served.

Items on the agenda include the following:

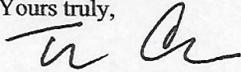
- Minutes of June 10, 2019.
- Treasure's Report for fiscal year 2018-2019
- the budget for fiscal year 2019-2020
- Election of officers and at-large members: Slate of nominees as of today:

President: Jane Dioguardi
Vice President: Tina Caplan
Treasurer: Trish Schneider
Clerk: Kathy Lindberg
Finance Chair: Sandy Duffy
Property Chair: Randy Heath
At-Large Member: Open
At-Large Member: Open

- Annual Report FY 2018-2019
- Celebration of Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull's Ministry Date: June 14, 2019
- Report: Transitional Ministry
- Any other business that shall come before the meeting

Members of at least 30 days by June 9 are eligible to vote. Please plan to attend this important meeting.

Yours truly,



Tina Caplan, Clerk, Board of Trustees

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Minutes of the Annual Meeting
June 10, 2018

Ms. Donna Stimpson, President of the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden opened the Annual Congregational Meeting at 12:15 pm on June 10, 2018.

Clerk of the Board, Tracy Smith, read the Call to Meeting to the congregants.

Board of Trustees members in attendance were:

President	Donna Stimpson	Present
Vice-President	Trish Schneider	Present
Clerk	Tracy Smith	Present
Treasurer	Cori Theriault	Present
Finance Chair	Sandy Duffy	Present
Property Chair	Randy Heath	Present
Trustee-at-Large	Jane Dioguardi	Present
Trustee-at-Large	Michael Milardo	Present
Trustee-at-Large	Ann Smith	Present

The Clerk asked for a count of members to determine a quorum: 30 congregants being present, a quorum was achieved.

The Clerk read the Call to Congregational Meeting, and the minutes of two Special Congregational Meetings held on October 15 and December 3, 2017. Jeff May made the motion to accept all the minutes; Lisa Urso seconded. All were accepted by voice acclamation.

Sandy Duffy called for acceptance of the Final Treasurer's Report for FY 2016-17. Paul & Barbara Kline made and seconded the motion; motion was approved unanimously.

Donna called on the congregation to review the Annual Report Year in Review which was distributed previously. Hearing no objections, Lisa Urso made the motion to accept the Annual Report; Trish seconded. The congregation approved unanimously.

Cori reviewed the proposed 2018 – 19 budget in detail. A question was asked re: additional expenses, considering we are acting as a sanctuary congregation. Sandy responded that the sanctuary expenses are considered 'off-budget,' and expenses over the budgeted amounts will be paid by sanctuary funds/donations. 'Off-budget' funds are being accounted for by the Sanctuary Committee. In the spirit of transparency, Donna announced the Treasurer's Report and Sanctuary Team's report will be posted monthly on a bulletin board.

A question was asked whether nursery services were included in the budget; Megumi responded we do not have anyone who is available (on a volunteer basis) for nursery services. Cori added we do have funding available for additional background checks.

Sandy explained the UUCM position on dues paid to the UUA, which is based on *expenses*, not on membership or income. Sandy calculated dues at \$9200, but due to the UUCM budget condition, we will contribute \$5000. Discussion ensued.

A vote on the budget was taken: Lisa Urso made the motion to accept – Paul Kline seconded. Motion passed.

Donna called for recognition of Team and Committee leaders by the congregation for their service. Recognition was also given to the existing Board of Trustees members.

The following members were recommended to serve on the Board of Trustees:

Vice-President (one year) - Jane Dioguardi

At-Large (three years) - Kathy Lindberg

At-Large (one year) - vacant

Tina Caplan was nominated from the floor by Barbara Kline – Steve Volpini seconded. Janet Hiller made the motion to accept the slate as presented – Paul Kline seconded. Motion carried.

Rev. Jan spoke to the meeting congregants and thanked numerous individuals for all they give to the congregation.

Discussion ensued regarding signs on the church building: Black Lives Matter – On The Side of Love banner – and the Rainbow flag. Angie Swanger spoke for the Social Justice Council to make a motion to install these flags on the building – Tina seconded. Discussion ensued. Motion passed unanimously.

With no other business brought forward, Rev. Jan gave the congregation a parting message of encouragement.

Barbara Kline made a motion to adjourn, Cindy Ferguson seconded. Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tracy Smith
Clerk, Board of Trustees

Report from the Ministerial Transition Team

With the impending retirement of Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull, the UU Meriden (UUCM) Board of Trustees appointed a ministerial search committee, consisting of Tina Petrolini-Caplan, Jane C. Dioguardi, and Jeff May. After lengthy consideration of the Church's finances and pastoral needs, UU Meriden's Board of Trustees entered into a partnership with Mattatuck Unitarian Universalist Society (MUUS) of Woodbury, whose minister was also considering retirement. The MUUS ministerial search committee consisted of John Cummings, Denise Pedane, and Eileen Resnick. The two Boards decided to pursue a yoked ministry, in which each congregation would retain its own bylaws and identity but would seek to share, on a fifty-fifty basis, the services of a minister. The three UUCM and three MUUS ministerial search committee members formed a joint ministerial transition search task force. The UUCM-MUUS ministerial transition search task force interviewed the qualified candidates interested in the position, and selected Rev. Anthony Lorenzen. The task force determined that a traditional transitional ministry (which would have a firm cutoff point of no more than two years) would probably not be in the best interests of the congregations, which, at the suggestion of Rev. Lorenzen, would benefit from a developmental ministry model. In conclusion, Rev. Lorenzen was offered the position of contract minister, at a full-time salary, with the option of contract renewal at the end of his first year. He will begin his term effective August 19, 2019, and will alternate his time between the two congregations' Sunday services according to a schedule to be determined.

Jane C. Dioguardi

Annual Report of the President

Donna Stimpson

Several highlights from the past year come easily to my mind. Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull continued to ensure that our worship services were a rich and rewarding experience. Rev. Jan continued the second part of her sabbatical in Vietnam in the fall of 2018. We have received rich spiritual lessons from her shared insights from this trip. As you know, Rev. Jan will retire from parish ministry at the end of this fiscal year after seven years of serving our congregation. We will miss her greatly! The Worship Associates program continued deepening the contribution of members in lay ministry and will continue to have an important role in worship services.

The Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden Board of Trustees voted to explore hiring a yoked/shared transitional minister with the Mattatuck Unitarian Universalist Society (MUUS) located in Woodbury, Connecticut. The purpose of the yoked association is to combine resources to strengthen ministries and to be more impactful than either could be alone. Each congregation will retain its own governing board, bylaws, budget, and identity. The two congregations have worked well together to find a minister. All of the Transitional Search Committee members are enthusiastic about Rev. Anthony (Tony) Lorenzen joining us in mid-August 2019. The congregations will enter into a covenant specifying how they will work together and with the new minister. This is a time of new beginnings.

Our Congregation made some headway in further enacting our congregational mission: *Practicing Loving Community, Advancing Justice, and Nurturing Spiritual Growth.* Our social justice focus continues to expand as we become more involved in the immigrant rights movement and as we continue to be a sanctuary church, which we began in October, 2017. Our sanctuary guests have become our friends over the past 1 ½ years and refer to us as “our church.” We continue to learn as a sanctuary church and have offered our insights to others interested in becoming a sanctuary house of worship. We are still hopeful for a legal remedy, though it is slow progress, and that our sanctuary guests will be able to stay in the United States. (Editor’s note: Sujitno was freed on May 31 because, as an accepted applicant for a U-visa, his case is no longer under the aegis of ICE.) We continued to be a spiritual center of racial justice, environmental and health care justice, LGBTIQ and other social justice struggles in Central Connecticut. Last fall we celebrated the placement of our “Black Lives Matter” banner on our building. We continue to participate in Moral Mondays and Immigration Rights events.

The Leadership Development Team provided excellent education and trainings and held several Board of Trustees retreats to orient new board members and to further develop Board of Trustees goals and objectives.

In a critical fundraising complement to membership pledges, we had much success in the Holiday Fair, our Daffodil Festival concession, service auction, and the spring tag sale. There is still the difficulty of balancing our expenses and income. We would love to do more but are limited by finances. We are experiencing the outcome of our decision made three years ago to eliminate the professional Director of Religious Education position and to have our minister at two-thirds time. The return to a lay-led church school is ongoing, and as expected, we see challenges and opportunities ahead.

Since we started late to gather pledges for the coming fiscal year, it is unclear, as of this writing, if we have a balanced budget. Kudos to the Treasurer, and members of Stewardship and Finance who all wrestled with the budget on a regular basis for the past several years. We come together as a community of faith and commitment at this 2019 Congregational Meeting (June 9). We did develop short- and long-term goals for the Board of Trustees and made some headway on them, namely in the areas of transparency and selecting a new (transitional) minister. We encouraged each of the Councils, Committees, and Teams to develop goals and objectives to help measure how we have progressed and take a longer approach to issues. Although we did not accomplish all of the goals I had hoped for in this past year, I hope our congregation will continue with the new leadership and Board of Trustees to further our mission in the coming year. With Rev. Tony, the new UUCM Board of Trustees will reexamine our goals and objectives and move us forward to a bright future for our congregation.

Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to serve this congregation as President. As I step down from my role on the Board of Trustees, I look forward to using my talents in other ways to benefit this congregation. I hope you will join me in supporting our Board, new minister, and congregation in the year to come.

Annual Report of the Minister
Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

Joys



Challenges



Hopes



Every month of my seven-year ministry with you, I have concluded my report to our Board of Trustees with Joys & Challenges, and in my last few Annual Reports I have added Dreams. For my final Annual Report, however, I replace Dreams with Hopes; for Dreams are now your Dreams to forge and realize, while I hold Hopes as you move through this transition into new professional ministry and a fresh chapter of congregational life. Such is the structure of my final report to you.

What are the **joys** that I witnessed and experienced over the course of this past year, and of our time together?

- **Our mission!** *Practicing loving community, advancing justice, nurturing spiritual growth.* We are called by our mission. We are challenged by our mission to bring it to life in our worship, our meetings, our gatherings with and without agendas, our justice ministries, and every dimension of our life together.
- **Soul Matters**, because it does, but Soul Matters is also the new program that we have been using since March, offering resources specific to worship, religious education, and Small Group Ministry. Beginning with March, our monthly themes have been Journey, Wholeness, Curiosity, and (in June) Beauty.
- **Worship** reaching in and out through the melded efforts of our committed and imaginative **Worship Associates** and me as your minister. I cannot sing loudly enough the praises of **Lynne Grobsky, Barbara Kline, Jeff May, John Sepples, and Lisa Urso.**
- **Alan Dougherty**, our much-loved pianist and his new kidney. Oh joy!
- **Sujitno and Dahlia Sajuti, your courage, resilience, and grace.** **As of the date of our Annual Meeting, Sujitno would have been in sanctuary here for 608 days! A shout-out to our Chalice Sanctuary Team, brilliantly led by Nancy Burton.** Brava/Bravo to the **Unitarian Society of New Haven**, which has gone way beyond the second mile in their generosity of time and treasure. Bravo to **Alok Bhatt**, our faithful representative from **CIRA (CT Immigrant Rights Alliance).**

Ongoing gratitude to the **Council on American Islamic Relations and Drinking Liberally Meriden**, (the latter as an unlikely partner), both sponsoring community-building events that enhanced the quality of life for Sujitno and Dahlia and all of us. Ongoing gratitude to **Diana Blank and the New Haven Legal Aid Assistance Team; Rev. Paul Fleck, former coordinator of New Sanctuary CT; Gini King**, key coordinator of immigration ministries in the southern part of CT; and to all who are unnamed in these accolades for this ministry. Abundant thanks also to **UACT (United Action CT)** and the early focus of immigrant justice that was spawned through this organization, for which **Steve Volpini** has been a guiding light.

- **Our committed Board of Trustees**, led for these past two years by **Donna Stimpson, with Jane Dioguardi as Vice President and Leadership Council Chair, Trish Schneider as Treasurer, Tina Caplan, Sandy Duffy, Randy Heath, Cathy Lindberg, and Ann Smith**. Brava and Bravo!
- **Steven Nahas**, our Office Administrator, who began this spring. Steven is here with a host of skills, not the least of which is a welcome and thoughtful spirit.
- **Ministries of justice** are multiple and overlap. However, our most focused modes of advancing justice are the ministries of sanctuary (cited above) and anti-racism. Brava to **Angie Swanger** and all who have engaged in our anti-racism work. During my first year with you, in the spring of 2013, we birthed our Anti-Racism Task Force with an intensive anti-racism workshop in which 25 of you participated. From then on, we have read and discussed multiple books and films; and many of us have participated in Black Lives Matter/CT, headed by **Bishop John and Lady Pamela Selders**, to whom we are exceedingly indebted for their guidance, leadership, and call to those of us who are white to get “woke” from our white privilege and to challenge white supremacy. Yes, to the Black Lives Matter, Siding with Love Banner on the front of our Meeting House! Anti-racism is for the long haul.
- **Religious education and exploration across the lifespan**. How can we ever sing loudly enough and long enough praises for our teachers and all of you who have served on the Children & Youth RE Committee? For **Richard Gault**, who currently chairs this committee, and to **Molly Nolan, our former DRE**, thank you! For all who have taught OWL (Our Whole Lives) over the years, thank you! As for Adult Religious Exploration, thanks to **Lynne Grobsky**, who currently chairs ARE. It took hold, for this fall, Lynne will begin studies at Meadville Lombard Theological School in preparation for UU ministry. **Lynne** also launched the much-loved **Women’s Sacred Singing Circle**, which meets weekly. This past March, **Barbara Kline** led a compelling workshop on “Map and Share Your UU Journey.” **Rev. Jan** is completing on May 23 a three-part series on “Closing Chapters: End of Life Planning.” Brava to **Pamela Mulready and Jenn Maynard** for launching the Buddhanature Gathering Group, due to resume in the fall. And thank you to **Steve Volpini and Cathy Lindberg** for co-facilitating Small Group Ministry this year and several previous years.
- **My sabbatical**. April and May 2018 marked phase 1, during which I prepared for a November pilgrimage to Viet Nam with Soldiers’ Heart. While my incentive was profoundly personal and shared with you in the February 4, 2018 worship service, it was a taproot for my revisiting with you the spiritual/social/political frailties of this nation as we know it. Phase 2 spanned late October through November, during which I embarked on a three-week pilgrimage to Viet Nam. **During** this time, I kept a blog, still accessible at <http://pastor.uumeriden.org/>. Upon return, I reflected on the richness of this pilgrimage in at least two worship experiences—“Return Again” in early December and “The Spirit of Tet,” in early February, with Dr. Edward Tick, co-founder of Soldier’s Heart, and Dr. Seb Perumbilly, a fellow pilgrim. Thanks to our Committee on Ministry, which served also as my sabbatical committee: **Tim O’Brien, Pat Stark, and Bob Reutenauer**.

- **Our children and youngsters.** Week after week you kindle our chalice, often participate in worship, guess with astounding intuition what is in the wonder box, and grace this congregation with your honesty and vitality.
- **Each of you for all you do and all you are!**

What are the **challenges** that I have witnessed and experienced?

- **Living into the full possibility of our mission.** This is for the long haul.
- **Stamina and stewardship.** How to regenerate when you have perhaps served in leadership positions for many years? It seems that we never have quite enough teaching staff for our children and youngsters. Our sanctuary ministry is a gift while testing our perseverance as volunteers. Commonly, fear attaches to being asked to do this or that or to pledge more. How to create mini-sabbaticals without some of you feeling that you “need to take a break from church” as if it’s hard labor, which it has perhaps become? How to restore fun and joy to living our mission? How to plan more agenda-less gatherings? How to express gratitude that mirrors what you have done and inspires what you will do?
- **Honoring our theological pluralism** is a tough nut for any UU congregation. How to respect religious scar tissue without having to walk on egg shells? How to honor the texture rather than the puree of who we are theologically? How to see ourselves as a tree bearing endless varieties of fruit and flowering in rebirth every spring? How to tap terms like “God” and “religion” in ways that don’t assume singular meanings?
- **Visitors who visit a few times and drift way, folks who join and drop out.** How to present congregational life as a magnetic force that holds the wherewithal to be more than we could be without it? How to open the arms of our hearts to newcomers without overwhelming them? How to understand that not everyone who visits will find what they seek or know what they seek? How not to water down what membership means but to hold up the vision of a fuller richer life because of it?
- **Anxiety in the social/political climate that describes this slice of history.** Enough said.
- **The deep and profound loss of Megumi Yamamoto.**

What **hope** do I hold for this congregation?

- That you love into the fullness of your hearts.
- That you stretch into the depth of your souls.
- That you welcome the new interim minister and understand that he is not/cannot be a messiah (whom many of you say you don’t believe in anyway!!).
- A deep understanding that justice making is spiritual.
- Abiding humor.

Adapting the words of Mary Oliver, “What is it that you will now do with your wild and precious life?”

Annual Report of the Committee on Shared Ministry
Tim O'Brien

In FY 2019, the members of the Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) were Bob Reutenauer, Pat Stark, and Tim O'Brien, chair.

The focus of the COSM is to review the spiritual health of the entire ministry of the congregation as a reflection of mission fulfillment. The overall goal is to bring awareness of the mission of the church to the congregation as they participate in church activities and in their lives.

In the fall, the COSM worked as the Sabbatical Committee for the second part of Rev. Jan's sabbatical. The committee collaborated with Jan to plan and create the Sabbatical Brochure that outlined her undertaking to seek "truth, healing, and reconciliation" on her pilgrimage to Viet Nam.

With Rev. Jan's retirement at the end of the church year, in conference with Rev. Jan and the Board of Trustees, it was decided to disband the COSM.

A COSM can be a valuable asset to a congregation. As chair of the committee, I regret that we were not able to become a stronger, more visible presence within the congregation. Hopefully in the future, the church will find skilled leaders to form another Committee on Shared Ministry that will be able to fulfill these worthwhile goals.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim O'Brien

Annual Report of the Adult Religious Exploration Committee
Lynne Growsky

Adult RE goals for 2018 -19 fiscal year were:

- Work with members of the congregation and committees to provide opportunities for learning and community beyond Sunday worship.
- Explore ways to bring 21st century technology into the Adult RE program to meet the needs of members of UUCM.

Adult RE collaborated with members of the congregation to offer the following programs in 2018-19: TED Talks, Buddhanature Gathering Group, Mid-week Worship, Hands-On Saturdays, Women's Sacred Singing Circle. Special events: 1. Creating Your Personal Altar 2. Women's Sacred Singing Circle

Workshop 3. Mapping Your Spiritual Life. Adult RE has finetuned an Adult RE event-planning Toolbox. The hope is to empower members to share their knowledge and gifts.

ARE had limited success in bringing technology into the Adult RE program. TED Talks was the only offering that used technology.

ARE worked to increase our visibility by publicizing events in the following ways: an Adult RE Table during Sunday Coffee Hour, posting Adult RE events on UUCM's Facebook page and on the Adult RE page on the UUCM website.

Lynne Grobsky would like to thank the people who have played vital roles in organizing events, serving on the team, leading workshops, and more over the past year. Special thanks to Trish Schneider, Molly Nolan, Barbara Kline, Diane Szymaszek, Angie Swanger, and Pam Mulready.

Next Year's Goals

Adult RE will continue to work with members of the congregation and committees to provide opportunities for learning and community beyond Sunday worship. They will explore ways to bring 21st century technology into the Adult RE program to meet the needs of members of UUCM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Grobsky, Adult RE Chairperson

Annual Report of the Children & Youth Religious Education Committee ***Richard Gault***

We started out with an emergency committee meeting led by Donna Stimpson and Trish Schneider. Our chair had to bow out as chair for personal reasons. At that meeting we tried to set up the schedule for classes. Jim Dawson took on this task by the first class meeting for the Sing to the Power unit on September 23rd. During the fall, there were several changes in the schedule, due partially to the sabbatical of Rev. Jan. Thanks to all who persevered through to the Christmas services: Steve Volpini, Jim Dawson, Karen Silva, Jeanie Jalbert, and especially to assistants Samira Mayers and Danie Gomez. I also would like to thank Pat Stark, Jane Dioguardi, and Diane Szymaszek for assisting. Jim Dawson led a special class for Veterans' Day. Our attendance started to dwindle, partially due to the death of our beloved Megumi. We were also having a hard time using the Sing to the Power curriculum with our younger children.

In January as I was taking on the duties of chairperson, we started moving in a different direction. It was suggested by both Trish Schneider and Barbara Kline that we look into using the Soul Matters curriculum. I wish to acknowledge the sustained involvement of Angelique Metivier, Barbara Kline, Jim Dawson, Tina Caplan, and Jeanie Jalbert. During January, we practiced the Stone Soup play as re-created by Jennifer Hadley, who stalwartly aided in the production. The play was a wonderful success. Thank you to all who participated. In February, we officially adopted the Soul Matters curriculum for the rest of the year. Around this time, Samira and Danie took on the project of reorganizing our supplies, discarding old worn-out material, and putting the rest in orderly fashion. They also started on a crane mural to commemorate Megumi. When their project is finished, the north classroom will be reserved for activities such as meditation, drumming, and yoga with a brand new rug on the floor. I wish to thank everyone for their continued commitment in this year with its many changes. I especially wish to thank Molly Nolan, our former RE Director, for invaluable assistance.

I would like to thank the committee members: Richard Gault, Jennifer Hadley, Molly Nolan, and James Dawson and Jane Dioguardi (our newest volunteers!). Liz Hall and Molly Nolan's wisdom was invaluable to the successful transition to a completely volunteer-run church school. Ann Smith was an active liaison to the Board and great supporter of our work.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Gault

Annual Report of the FUNdraising Committee **Donna Stimpson**

Each year the church's budget is made based on the pledges. FUNdraising is a congregational commitment to raise the funds to realize our mission **Practicing Loving Community, Advancing Justice, and Nurturing Spiritual Growth** and to support the many ministries we hold dear. The FUNdraising Team raises money to fill the gap between projected expenses and anticipated pledge income. We had a goal of raising \$15,400 to meet our church obligations to our staff, maintain our church and property, and provide services to our congregation. We raised approximately \$13,577, a shortfall of \$1,823 or 11.86%. These figures will be updated after one more month of income from rentals and the Drumming Circle, along with updates on the Daffodil Festival. We expect the amount for rental, Drumming Circle and Daffodil Festival all to be down from last year's totals. UUCM did not participate in the Meriden-Markham Airport Fly-In, hold a paint night, or have concerts like we usually do. We need help from more volunteers and people willing to lead a fundraising project. We cannot expect the same few volunteer leaders to run multiple fundraisers throughout the year without burnout. It would be great if we had co-chairs of the FUNdraising Team. **Consider joining us!!**

The income from Stop and Shop Cash for Causes sales was slightly lower. We could make more money if UUCM members and friends bought more Stop and Shop cards. Five percent (5%) of the cash value of each card sold goes to the church. We will ask members and friends what grocery stores they frequent, and based on the results, explore whether other grocery stores have a similar program. Over the course of the year, we continue to hope this would be an easy way for members and friends to contribute.

The Service Auction income was down significantly due to fewer items auctioned and low turn-out of participant bidders. We did better on the Holiday Fair and Tag Sale. The sales from the Daffodil Festival are expected to be lower due to two cold rainy days. We sold a lot of hot chocolate, which was a lower price than the non-alcoholic lime rickey cold drinks. We are awaiting all expenses to be submitted to determine the net profit.

We clearly did not meet our fundraising goals this year. The FUNdraising Team and volunteers worked very hard to raise funds. We experimented with new ways to raise funds and will build on our successes. The following is a summary of the FUNdraising Projects that raised the funds this year:

Fundraising Project (7/1/2018 - 5/17/2019)	Raise Estimate	Actual Amount Raised	Comments
Renting Space at UUCM*	\$6,400.00	\$5,405.00	-\$995.00 (-15.55%)
Drum Circle*	\$ 625.00	\$. 299.00	-\$326.00 (-52.16%); Attendance down
Sub-total: (as of 5/17/2018)	\$7,025.00	\$5,704.00	-\$1,321.00 (-18.80%)

Miles of Pennies Collection and Bottle/Can Redemption:	\$150.00	\$203.87	+\$53.87 (+36.00%)
Holiday Fair	\$3,300.00	\$3,394.00	+\$94.00 (+2.85%)
1 Paint Night with Diane	\$ 250.00	\$0.00	Not scheduled
UUCM Service/Item Auction	\$4,000.00	\$2,411.00	-\$1,589.00 (-39.7%); Very low turn-out of bidders
Spring Tag Sale at UUCM	\$1,220.00	\$1,597.00	+\$377.00 (+30.9%); Savers is no longer giving payments for tag sale leftovers
Daffodil Festival	\$2,100.00	N/A	Cold and rainy weekend, not good sales; awaiting expenses to determine net profit
Stop & Shop Cash for Causes	\$300.00	\$252.50	-\$47.50 (15.83%)
The Coffee Grinders & Rocky Lawrence Concert	\$250.00 + \$100.00 (food)	0.00	Will schedule concert in the fall.
Shelly Segal Concert	\$0.00	\$15.00	Broke even two years ago.
Meriden-Markham Airport Fly-In	\$0.00	\$0.00	Raised \$250.00 two years ago.
Sub-Total Fundraising:	\$9,230.00	\$7,873.37	-\$1,356.63 (-14.70%)
Goal Total:	\$15,405.00	\$13,577.37	-\$1,827.63 (-11.86%)

*as of May 17, 2019

We could not do the fundraising without volunteers!! Thanks to the following volunteers who **shared their time and talent** by helping in fundraisers throughout the year (and to anyone whose name may have been inadvertently omitted):

Thank You!

THANKS, VOLUNTEERS!		
Penny Barsch	Janet Hiller	Lou and Betty Rinaldi
Tina and Mark Caplan	Jeanie Jalbert	Chet Rynaski
Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull	Richard Kargher	Anita Sanders
Jane Dioguardi	Joe Kiely	Trish Schneider
Ann Dougherty	Peg Kirkpatrick	John Sepples
Sandy Duffy	Emily Kwolek	Paula Snedeker
James Dawson	Barbara and Paul Kline	Jennifer Stark
Ginny Evensen	Kathy Lindberg	Pat Stark
Cindy Ferguson	Jeff May	Donna Stimpson
Richard Gault	Samira Mayers	Angie Swanger
Daniela Gomez	Angelique Metivier	Diane Szymaszek
Harriet Gottlieb	Marielle Metivier	Lisa Urso
Jennifer Hadley	Bob and Maureen Muir	Deirdre and Cori Theriault
Liz Hall	Molly Nolan	Steve Volpini
Randy Heath	Tim O'Brien	Cache Anderson
	Bob Reutenauer	

Annual Report of the Communications Committee

Trish Schneider

This committee produces the church newsletter, maintains our Website, engages with social media (Facebook and Twitter), and facilitates the dissemination of church news and events. We also facilitate getting church news releases out into the wider community.

The Committee chairperson was Trish Schneider. Members of the committee were Jeff May, Angie Swanger, Jane Dioguardi, and Molly Nolan. The Communications Committee has four teams: Weekly Update, Website, Social Media, and Newsletter. The communications chair keeps in touch with each team.

The Committee has reviewed internal and external communications tactics. They found that UU Meriden needs to make changes in the way we do internal and external communications.

- Internal communications: The Committee is looking at ways to improve our internal communications. They are exploring other forms of getting the word out beyond email, such as Google groups and Facebook groups.
- External communications: In today's culture, seekers do their research online about faith communities. The Committee has worked with committees of the church to improve the UUCM Website. By partnering with the committees, we give those interested in our congregation an authentic picture of UU Meriden.
- Our Social Media presence has increased with the Social Justice Council joining Rev Jan in blogging. Angie Swanger is blogging for the Social Justice Council. The Social Media team has continued to post on our Facebook page events and news about UU Meriden. The UUCM Twitter account is less active than the UUCM Facebook page because we do not have a person dedicated to handling the account.

Communications Teams

- Facebook Team: Diane Szymaszek and Jeff May have joined the Facebook team. Diane is handling the Chalice Sanctuary team posts and inquiries.
- Steven Nahas continues to produce the Weekly Update with Tim O'Brien as backup. Janet Hiller handles the Everybody list email blast for the Communications Committee.
- Newsletter team: Janet Hiller is the copy editor; Trish Schneider is the publisher.
- The Website Team consists of Trish Schneider and Jeff May.

Communications Goals for 2020

- Review and improve internal and external congregational communications tactics.
- Develop brand and best practices for internal communications (e.g. ministry brochures).
- Develop local media/press releases and improved social media postings.
- Increase the visibility of the congregation to Meriden and surrounding communities.
- Assist with redesigning our congregation's website.

Thank you to all for their service on the Communications Committee and Communications Teams and to Rev. Jan for her input.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Schneider, Communications Chair

***Annual Report of the Leadership Development Team
Trish Schneider***

The Leadership Development Team (LDT) is charged with developing and implementing a year-round leadership development program that will ensure a ready pool of diverse, skilled leaders who reflect the values and mission of UU Meriden. The LDT has been working with a model of leadership development called the Five I's: Identify, Invite, Inform, Involve, and Inquire.

This year, the LDT has had limited success. We set the goals and completed the following:

- Ran a retreat for the Board of Trustees
- Set long-term Goals
- Worked with Leadership on creating job descriptions for Committee Chairs

LDT chair Trish Schneider would like to thank the people who have played vital roles serving on the team: Molly Nolan, Donna Stimpson, Jane Dioguardi, and Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull. Trish Schneider will step down as Team Leader as of June 30, 2019. Molly Nolan has agreed to become Leadership Development Team Leader.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Schneider

***Annual Report of the Leadership Council
Jane C. Dioguardi***

The UUCM Leadership Council is chaired by the vice president of the Board of Trustees (Jane Dioguardi) and consists of representatives of the following standing committees: Adult Religious Education, Children/Youth Religious Education, Communications, Finance, FUNdraising, Membership, Property, Small Group Ministry, Social Justice, and Worship. Monthly meetings are usually held on the second Saturday of each month. At-large members of the Board of Trustees are also invited to attend meetings if they wish.

The main function of this year's Leadership Council was to afford representatives of all committees, councils, and ministries the opportunity to meet face-to-face and discuss each group's goals and

activities, to encourage the direct communication and cooperation that can often be lost when different groups meet separately and don't have overlapping members. Two particular focuses were interaction with Communications (in the interests of publicizing church activities within the congregation and the larger community) and the updating of committee charters, both of which are still in progress at this writing.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane C. Dioguardi

Annual Report of the Membership Committee ***Molly Nolan***

The Membership Committee assists the Minister in helping visitors understand Unitarian Universalism and the Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden. We also are charged with hospitality on Sunday mornings, safety in the form of ushers, greeters, and entrance monitors, and caring and concern assistance.

Last year we refined our path to membership. Over the course of this year, we realized that our approach needs to be more focused on helping visitors explore UUCM to see if we are a good match. While discussing a shift in our long-term welcoming focus, Soul Matters came out with a four-part Newcomer program called Starting Point. We are currently reviewing the program for our use. We have struggled with hospitality and safety. Many weeks Rev. Jan is calling around to find ushers and greeters. Many weeks we did not have an entrance monitor. Our inability to put together a manageable system, especially staffing the entrance monitor position, is a serious problem. How we welcome people, newcomers and congregation members alike, reveals how we think about and care about each other. The absence of the entrance monitor speaks to how seriously we take the safety concerns of the whole congregation. Membership will begin again to get systems in place to train people to fulfill these important Sunday morning functions and establish a rotation of volunteers to finally solve this problem. For a time the Greeter/Usher/Monitor Team was self-sustaining and supported by the Membership Committee. We hope to go back to that model.

Hospitality is another area of frustration. When no one signs up for coffee and snack, the temptation to go without and see how that flies is strong. But you never know if we will have visitors. What kind of welcome are we offering when we do not provide refreshment during coffee hour, the time when visitors can engage with members of the congregation to find out more about us? Again, Membership is looking at how we put a system in place so this is not a last minute worry or worse, someone stepping in to save the day, over and over again, burning out in the process.

Currently Membership is working on visitor tracking and follow up, to cover what Rev. Jan has done in this area. We expect to modify somewhat how we do follow up and newcomer engagement once the Interim Minister joins us. The same is true for pastoral care. With the change in ministerial leadership and the time the Interim Minister will be working each week at UUCM, Membership is looking to create a more robust lay pastoral care team. We are researching pastoral care information and training options to help us organize the team and provide training and support for volunteers. We are actively seeking new members for the Membership Committee to build the teams and programs we see as vital to the health and vibrancy of our congregation. I have pointed out some of our challenges, and quite frankly our frustrations, but in so doing have shed light on several great opportunities for personal growth and service to our community. If we, the Membership Committee,

can fulfill the charge of our ministry, we can help all the other ministries of the congregation fulfill theirs and more. If you think you can be part of our welcoming and sustaining efforts, please email Molly Nolan at membership@uumeriden.org or call at 860-893-4818.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Nolan, Chair

Annual Report of the Property Committee Randall Heath

This has been a quiet year for the Property Committee. It has been a time of fixing and making small upgrades. Among the things accomplished this year are:

- Plumbing-in a new Bunn coffee machine
- Replacing the light fixtures in the kitchen and the front room with brighter and more energy-efficient LED fixtures
- Fixing several plumbing leaks that appeared
- Installing gutters on the shed to get the rainwater away from the damp floor
- Repairs to parking lot fencing (thank you to Cindy Ferguson and Donna Stimpson)
- Repairing a large pothole in the parking lot
- Repeated attempts to use Mastick to fix leaks in the sanctuary room (thanks to Joe Kiely)
- Several service calls on the dishwasher
- And, as always, fighting the ongoing battle with the mice in the basement

The Property Committee's membership remains bare bones. Donna Stimpson and Randy Heath have been the primary members, with as-needed assistance from others. I, as Property Chair, have not been performing the role with the diligence it deserves due to some personal issues, and I have failed completely to hold regular committee meetings. This is something that needs to be improved in the future.

Property does have a comprehensive list of projects available online; I will share the link to this database with anyone interested. Donna and I hope to hold a "Day of Service" to attack many of the issues on the Property To-Do list over the course of a weekend.

Respectfully submitted,

Randall Heath
Property Committee Chairperson
May 28, 2019

Annual Report of the Small Group Ministry Committee Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

We are completing the fifth full year of Small Group Ministry (SGM). This ministry is about small groups of eight to ten individuals (members and friends) meeting twice monthly with trained facilitators around matters of intimacy and ultimacy. The consistent structure of each session is designed to build trust, stretch souls, and deepen connections. Loving Community is at the core of SGM. We avoid becoming ingrown through a commitment by each group to two service ventures during the year—one for the benefit of the congregation, and another for the benefit of the larger community.

Abundant thanks to this year's facilitators: Steve Volpini and Kathy Lindberg, for the 1st & 3rd Saturday morning group. Participants build on a suggested behavioral covenant at the year's beginning. Facilitators build on a Facilitators' Covenant, which we introduced three years ago.

Examples of items in the Behavioral Covenant for groups are:

- We agree to practice active, caring listening.
- We agree to encourage people to speak from their own experiences and feelings rather than from what they've read or theorize.

Examples of items in the Facilitators' Covenant are:

- We agree to encourage participation in a way that everyone will be heard.
- We agree that our groups are not therapy groups and that we will refrain from addressing anyone's psychological issues.

Every session begins with chalice lighting and continues with a reading, a check-in (without feedback from other members), introduction of the topic, structured conversation on this topic, feedback on the session itself, introduction of the topic for the next session, and closing words. Session topics are suggested by participants at the potluck reflection, by facilitators during the periodic facilitator meetings, and by Rev. Jan, who is overall coordinator of SGM and seasoned in its content and process. This year's session topics included Autumn Grace, and Harvest. After the initial sessions, the group decided on topics, often selected from the extensive session plans located at the website of the UU Small Group Ministry Network, www.smallgroupministry.net/

This year's service projects included purchasing items at Christmas time for the men at Meriden's Shelter Now, wrapping and delivering them.

Small Group Ministry ran at Ashlar Village for the last few years but dissolved this past year, given the passing and/or ill health of previous participants.

The group co-facilitated by Steve and Kathy is continuing into the summer with the prospect of adding more members. Through this ministry of small groups, we deepen connection with one another, filling our wells and sharing the water.

Respectfully submitted by Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

***Annual Report of the Worship Associates
Barbara Kline***

Highlights of 2018-19

Worship Associates had a day-long retreat at UUCM to focus on service flow and working with technology. Jeff May helped with using the TV and better use of microphones.

This year we went with a theme for the year: Soul. Rev. Jan and the lay leaders were free to explore soul in different ways.

Summer of 2018 had nine services, two led by Rev. Jan, one by our youth group, five by Worship Associates, and Steve Volpini did his popular Poetry service. During the year we had 36 services, more than nine of them led by members and friends. In November, Rev. Jan was on sabbatical, and services were led by Worship Associates, with the exception of Nov. 11, when we had the pleasure of hearing Rev. Dr. Chris Antal. We also had a service in February that was co-led by Anita Sanders from UU of Greater Bridgeport and Donna Stimpson.

In March we started using Soul Matters, a program/service that encourages connection among all our ministries here at UUCM. We also are continuing to create lay-led services.

The Worship Associates are very grateful to Rev. Jan for helping us create this opportunity. She has been open to our vision of worship and encouraged us to share our gifts. She will be missed.

We are looking forward to working with Mattatuck Unitarian Universalist Society and our new yoked minister, Rev. Tony Lorenzen.

Blessed Be,

Barbara Kline, Co-chair Worship Associates

Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull, co-chair, Lisa Urso, Jeff May, John Sepples, and Lynne Grobsky

Annual Report of the Social Justice Council ***Steve Volpini***

Thanks to abundant notes from Angie Swanger, who organized most of the information in this report, financial and otherwise.

The report is divided by activity. The work of the Chalice Sanctuary Team — led by Nancy Burton — has a separate report this year.

Anti-Racism Task Force

Most visible to the public is the Black Lives Matter banner, which was installed on the meetinghouse on October 21, 2018, following a rousing service led by Bishop John Selders, leader of Moral Mondays Connecticut.

Self-education is a core of the church's anti-racism work. *Small Great Things*, a novel by Jodi Picoult, was assigned over the summer of 2018 and discussed in October.

White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo was also read and accompanied by a screening in several sessions of her YouTube video. These were followed by lively discussions.

UUSC Guest at Your Table

This effort was led by Tina Caplan and Angie Swanger in coordination with the Stone Soup Service and luncheon on February 10, 2019. The children performed well in the Stone Soup play, newly updated by Jennifer Hadley.

Voter Registration Activities

Along with two other UU churches, UUCM participated in the Gay Pride voter registration activities in Hartford.

Members of the church also attended the DUE Justice training September 8, 2019, and VOTE signs were prominently displayed on our lawn.

LGBTIQQA Welcoming Congregation Activities

A moving Transgender Remembrance Sunday service was held in November. The Rainbow Flag—which has so often blown away or been taken—was returned again to the front of the meetinghouse. Interest was generated in restarting a support group.

Environmental Task Force

The spiral garden, initiated and constructed by Diane Szymaszek, has once again been refreshed by Diane and a few volunteers. Timeline tags along the spiral remind visitors of the vastness and age of the universe—and humans' small and very recent toe-hold.

Three individuals have expressed interest in reviving the Environmental Task Force. The book *Justice on Earth* is being read. It is a primer on environmental degradation and its connection to other justice issues. The task force will continue its work in the fall.

Budget

We started the year with \$1,251.42 from fiscal 2017-18. Our sole source of revenue is 25% of the undesignated cash donations in the Sunday collections. Through this February, we've added \$721.51. Our expenditures were as follows:

- In August, United Action CT
- In September, two Black Lives Matter banners and Hartford Pride Day
- In October, Moral Mondays CT
- In November, to Quinnipiac Watershed Assn. and Meriden Land Trust
- In January, Martin Luther King/Albert Owens (breakfast) Scholarship Fund
- In February for Stone Soup Luncheon food
- In March, for the Immigrant Bail Fund

Current funds available are \$923.38, to be rolled over into the coming fiscal year

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Volpini

ANNUAL REPORT CHALICE SANCTUARY TEAM 2018-19

There are times when procrastination pays off. This is one of them. If this report had been written a couple of weeks ago, it would have had a very different ending. But because of the delay, it is written with joy and success. Sujitno Sajuti was able to leave our church on May 31 after spending almost 20 months in sanctuary. Due to the efforts of his legal team, with support from the staff of Senators Blumenthal and Murphy, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) determined that Mr. Sajuti was entitled to a hearing for a U Visa. This visa is given to people who have been

victims of a violent crime, which is the case for Mr. Sajuti. This visa application will also cover his wife, Dahlia, who has resided in our church with her husband during these months. Because of the USCIS decision, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) determined that they no longer have jurisdiction in the case. It will most likely be three to four years before this is totally resolved, but in the meantime the Sajutis can live in peace in their own apartment. There was a jubilant send off for them on May 31 after a press conference at the church. Senator Blumenthal spoke and representatives of Senator Murphy, Congresswoman Hayes, and Attorney General Tong attended. Meriden City Councilman Castro was also present. Many members and friends of our church, members of the Sajutis' faith community, and several other involved supporters were present to give them a rousing send off.

The Team was very busy keeping everything going for this couple and participating in the greater mission of justice for immigrants. Team members spoke at other congregations considering sanctuary. We attended several rallies in front of the Federal Building in Hartford and participated in lobby efforts for bills pertaining to immigrants' rights. We are a member congregation of New Sanctuary, a coalition of faith communities involved in sanctuary and supporting immigrants. Team members attended meetings of this group. We worked with the team supporting Nelson Pinos, who is in sanctuary in First and Summerfield Church in New Haven.

There will be a traveling photo exhibit at our church on June 8. This photo exhibit focuses on life in sanctuary for Sujitno and Nelson. For us, this will now be a partial celebration because Nelson is still not free. It is also likely there will be others needing sanctuary in the future. Ten faith congregations have signed on to provide sanctuary for someone facing deportation. Only three of those have actually had people in sanctuary so far. We will continue to support these efforts.

There will be a debriefing with our entire congregation to review our experience, share thoughts and ideas. The Team will also meet to discuss the appropriate use of any funds left in the Sanctuary account. Due to the generosity of the greater community, the expenses associated with having someone in sanctuary in our church did not come from our own church funds.

None of this would have been possible without the efforts of a small group of determined people who made up the Chalice Sanctuary Team. Some members have had to leave the Team for various reasons. Some have moved away. Below are the names of everyone who was a Team Member:

Alok Bhatt—from Connected Immigration Rights Alliance (CIRA)
Rev. Paul Fleck—from New Sanctuary Connecticut
Sarah Forman—from the Unitarian Society of New Haven (USNH)
Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull
Diane Szymaszek
Maureen Muir
Steve Volpini
Penny Barsch
Donna Stimpson
Sandy Duffy
Bob Reutenauer
Michael Milardo
Alice Sherard
Richard Gault
Peg Kirkpatrick

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Burton, Chair of the CST

Annual Report of the Stewardship Committee
Sandy Duffy

Due to extenuating circumstances, the Annual Report of the Stewardship Committee was not available at publication time.

Annual Report of the Finance Committee
Sandy Duffy

Due to extenuating circumstances, the Annual Report of the Finance Committee was not available at publication time.

APPENDIX – FY 2019-2020 BUDGET
Sandy Duffy

The 2019-2020 Budget will be released as a separate document.