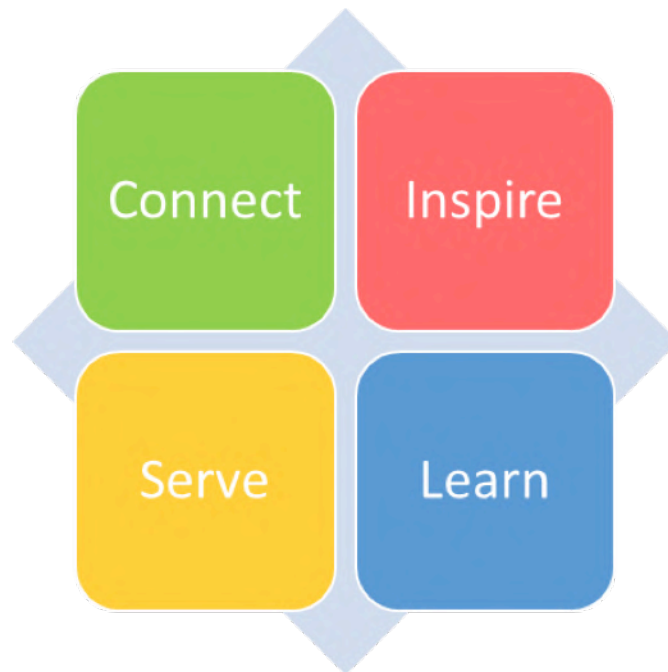




First Unitarian Church  
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# *Annual Report 2020*



## *Board of Trustees*

Martin Schmidt, President (2017–2020)

Scott Smith, Vice President (2018–2021)

Claus Makowka, Treasurer (2017–2020)

Eleanor Mayfield, Secretary (2018–2021)

Sarah Benson (2017–2020)

Julie Downs (2019–2022)

Ebe Emmons (2019–2022)

Sam Hens-Greco (2019–2022)

Lynne Porterfield (2018–2021)

Rev. Constance Grant, Interim Minister (ex-officio)

Kurt Summersgill, Recording Secretary (ex-officio)



## Report of the President of the Board of Trustees, 2019–2020

Wow, what a year! A year of change, challenge, and opportunities galore! That was the opening line from my report last year and it is equally true this year.

In August, we welcomed our Interim Minister, the Rev. Connie Grant, as we transitioned out of our period of lay-led ministry. Just as we were getting used to having a minister in the pulpit again, we found ourselves experiencing a whole new form of worship due to the COVID19 pandemic – online streaming via YouTube. Thank you, Rev. Connie, Ellen Gozion, Kris Rust, and all the staff and volunteers who have helped to keep us spiritually together even when we are physically apart.

I want to thank Rev. Grant, the church staff, and the entire Board for their leadership, calm, and resolve during this very challenging time. We have prioritized the health and well-being of our community above all else. We responded quickly to the viral threat by closing the church to all groups, thereby protecting our members, friends, visitors and staff. We will use sound judgment, science, and health policy as we make decisions on how and when to re-open our church building.

The Board is also committed to continuing full compensation for all staff. We thank the finance team for their quick and decisive actions by applying for and receiving a small loan through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. All funds from this loan that are used to pay our staff salaries and utility bills during May and June will be forgiven. This funding does not replace the need for those congregants who can do so to continue making their pledge payments. Rental income is currently non-existent, and some congregants may be unable to pay their pledges because of temporary or even long-term unemployment. This loan will help us meet our commitment to continue staff compensation.

One of the final items of business for the 2019–2020 Board of Trustees was to assemble a New Minister Search Committee. Many of you attended the Zoom meeting in March when our UUA Transitions Coach outlined the process by which UU congregations search for a new settled minister. Due to the confidential nature of the search process, each congregation relies on the discretion, integrity, and Judgement of their search committee.

To assemble this team, the Board solicited nominations from every congregant. Ultimately, we received 529 nominations from 170 congregants. Those receiving overwhelming congregational trust and support were asked to serve. Today, at our Annual Meeting, we will cast our ballots to formally endorse the selection of these volunteers. Over the next year, we should all give them our support and trust. I am confident that at our next Annual Meeting we will be introducing our new minister.

After three years of service on the Board of Trustees and two as Board President, it's time for me to rotate off the Board. I was reflecting on this church year and decided to review our strategic plan (available on our web site). We had set two overarching goals for ourselves: 1) Create a strong sense of belonging for all who enter our doors and 2) Explore paths to the formation of long-lasting and meaningful First Unitarian–Community partnerships. These are aspirational goals and though I believe we have made progress, we will never be able to check off some box and say “Done!”.

Still, we have made substantial progress on both fronts. We have strengthened our connections to the wider community through our efforts with Habitat for Humanity, by providing meals to the men's shelter through the East End Cooperative Ministry, and even by singing together as our UU Singers join voices with other community choirs.

We have also fostered a sense of belonging in numerous ways, including the Religious Education department's initiation of a weekly family-friendly social hour.



One specific objective we set to foster a greater sense of belonging was to upgrade our exterior signage. This is one box we can check off. Done! The old signs were removed and the new sign was installed in March 2020. The new sign is stunning and easy to read even at a distance. It reads as follows “First Unitarian Church, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Est. 1820”.

Our congregation was established in 1820, making this our 200<sup>th</sup> year. I was looking forward to the spring picnic this year, with our new sign and renewed commitment to fostering UU values for this year and even the next 200 years. It seems unlikely that we will be together in person to celebrate flower communion and enjoy a picnic together.

While our circumstances are very different this spring, our commitment to one another and to the inherent worth and dignity of all people remains unchanged. Our community is strong and we will get through this together.

Respectfully submitted,

Martin Schmidt  
President, Board of Trustees  
2019–2020



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## Minister's Report to the Congregation

May 17, 2020

In some ways, last August seems like a very long time ago. In these nine-and-a-half months, your congregation has changed, and the world has changed.

You had previously spent eight months as a lay-led congregation, and you developed confidence and capability to do many things for yourselves and to minister to each other. You also came to appreciate and to be hopeful about what a professional minister can do for you.

We have built on that groundwork. This is the process of change that we are engaged in together, as expressed in a sermon in September:

*Change can be unsettling, difficult, and risky. Change can also lead to new ways that may be more authentic to who we are and who we want to be. Change can open us to new opportunities. To change one thing changes everything. Isn't this the way the universe works? Chaos theory tells us that a small change makes a big difference. You can't change one thing without affecting everything else.*

*Some things have changed and continue to change around here.... You're in between what was and what will be; you're in transition. Rev. David is gone; after eight months as a lay-led congregation you now have a minister again. Rev. Connie is here, for now. I'm pre-fired. After two years of transitional ministry, I'll be leaving, and you'll call a new settled minister.*

*Some years back interim ministers were expected to "shake things up" by changing things for the sake of change. But just by being here, I've changed things already, and the philosophy of interim ministry has shifted to a gentler understanding of the interim minister's role. We're all works in progress, and we learn to relate to each other and to work together as minister and congregation.*

*Your Board of Trustees, teams, committees, and councils have identified some ways that they want help revising how some things are done. The volunteers who have kept your church functioning so well over these past eight months are appropriately proud of the work they have done. And some of those volunteers are ready to turn some of that work back over to your minister and staff. Yet the role of volunteers is important and ongoing. It's your church. Ministers come and go.*

*My job is not to change things for the sake of change. My job is not to change things, or to change you. My job, as your interim minister, is to help you do what you want to do and be who you are, at your best, and to help you envision what your "best" looks like.*

*How will you respect and learn from the heritage that helps shape you?*

*How will you carry forward those aspects that are useful and meaningful?*

*How will you change the things that you want to change?*

*Will you be resistant to transition, or open to transformation?*

*After all, you can't change one thing.*

Some highlights of our transitional work together:

### ***Timeline of perspectives on congregational history***

The overwhelming theme of the notes that congregants placed on the timeline of perspectives on congregational history in November was appreciation. Appreciation for people: for your ministers, for fellow congregants, for programs and events, and for the church itself.

Appreciation for words and acts of kindness that made all the difference in someone's life.

Yet some of the notes expressed regrets, frustrations, and questions. There were regrets about people and programs whose time had come and gone in the natural course of events. There were bittersweet memories of beloved people and of meaningful programs that are no more.

There were regrets about what might have been, particularly in the areas of racial justice initiatives. It was mentioned that in the 1960s, a number of African Americans joined the church as a consequence of the civil rights movement and the church's activities in that movement. Those members stayed for years until they passed away, but there has never been a large influx of people of color into the congregation.

There were regrets, frustrations, and unanswered questions about the departures of ministers and other personnel. And, of course, many of those questions can never be fully answered for reasons of individuals' privacy. Personnel matters are often complicated by personal and interpersonal issues, even when there is an explanation given publicly for the departure. This emphasis on privacy may seem like the enemy of transparency, but in personnel matters the superficial reasons are often not the only reasons. As we Unitarian Universalists know, often there is more than one truth in any given situation, not simply "the truth." As in theological matters, respecting each other's truths is essential to our ongoing relationships and conversations with each other.

### ***"Getting to the Heart of the Matter"***

At the beginning of March, your Transition Team and VIM Team co-sponsored a gathering we called "Getting to the Heart of the Matter (in six words more-or-less): A Congregational Experience." The objectives of this congregational gathering were two-fold:

- To offer an opportunity for congregants to articulate and share their thoughts and feelings (in six words more-or-less) about what this congregation is and can be, for themselves, for each other, and for the larger community
- To generate a congregational covenant that can become part of Sunday morning liturgy, expressing the foundational and aspirational identity of the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh.

The final steps in crafting the congregational covenant were set aside when in-person worship was suspended a couple of weeks after the workshop, but we'll soon offer opportunities for

you to try out a covenantal statement with the potential of endorsing it as a congregation in the fall.

### ***Adapting to a changing world***

Since March 22, worship services have been live-streamed from the sanctuary via YouTube. According to YouTube analytics, “peak concurrent views” average 134 for these seven Sundays, and we now have 111 subscribers to the First Unitarian Pittsburgh YouTube channel. The pews aren’t really empty, because you are there. Creating these services is the work of your dedicated program staff, including Erica Shadowsong, Director of Lifespan Religious Education; Ellen Gozion, Instrumental Music Director; and Kris Rust, Vocal Music Director. Volunteer musicians Maddy Izzo, Brian Junker, Hugh McGough, and Al, Rob, and Charlie Schwartz have also contributed their talents, as have Mary Pat Mengato and Commissioned Lay Minister Stephanie Pawlowski. Tech crew volunteers Paul Cunningham, Joe Jencik, Brian Junker, Will Snavely, and Emily Sweeny devote many hours to ensure high-quality production.

Your administrative staff members have also stepped up to do what needs to be done, as they always do. Rita Gates, Business Manager; Cicely Moultrie, Communications Coordinator; and Dan Laity, Sexton have been working from home when possible and coming in to the office when necessary, to keep the building safe and to support the work of the congregation.

### ***Looking forward***

You will soon endorse your Ministerial Search Committee, and they will begin the work of searching for your next settled minister in earnest. I will support them and you in this process. They will be working toward presenting a candidate to you for your vote a year from now, with the potential for that minister to begin work with you in August 2021.

And in the meantime, we’ll continue to gather for Sunday morning worship services using technology until such time that it’s safe to gather in person. I’m available to you for pastoral care and other concerns, even if we can’t meet face-to-face. We’ll continue learning new ways.

- *Rev. Connie Grant*, Interim Minister

# Church Committees and Activity Teams

## Connect Council

Lay leader: Joan Harvey  
Staff: Rev. Constance Grant

### **Hospitality Ministry**

Membership Team: Joan Harvey [joanhv@gmail.com](mailto:joanhv@gmail.com)  
Sanctuary Preparation Team: Jack Philips [jwphilips@verizon.net](mailto:jwphilips@verizon.net)  
Ushers and Greeters Team: Rob Schwartz [rob.j.schwartz@gmail.com](mailto:rob.j.schwartz@gmail.com)

### **Pastoral Care Ministry**

Pastoral Care Team: Kathy Miller [kathymillerotter@gmail.com](mailto:kathymillerotter@gmail.com)  
Jim Cunningham [cunni@comcast.net](mailto:cunni@comcast.net)  
Medical Equipment  
Loan Program: Jim Reitz [j5650r@comcast.net](mailto:j5650r@comcast.net)

### **Small-Group Ministry**

Covenant Groups Team: Alice Bright [ab03@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:ab03@andrew.cmu.edu)  
Lynne Porterfield [lporterfield@yahoo.com](mailto:lporterfield@yahoo.com)  
Gathering of Men: Jim Reitz [j5650r@comcast.net](mailto:j5650r@comcast.net)  
WomanSpirit: Pat Schuetz [patschuetz@verizon.net](mailto:patschuetz@verizon.net) (evening group)  
Women's Alliance: Alice Carnes [alice.carnes51@yahoo.com](mailto:alice.carnes51@yahoo.com) (daytime group)  
Kathy Fein [kathyrsp@comcast.net](mailto:kathyrsp@comcast.net)  
Addictions Ministry  
Sharing Group: Jim Pashek [jimpashek@gmail.com](mailto:jimpashek@gmail.com)  
Transitions Group: MR Kelsey [maryruthkelsey@gmail.com](mailto:maryruthkelsey@gmail.com)  
Bob Sullivan [r.sullivan13@verizon.net](mailto:r.sullivan13@verizon.net)

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## Inspire Council

Staff: Rev. Constance Grant  
Ellen Gozion, Director of Instrumental Music  
Kris Rust, Director of Vocal Music

### **Worship Celebration Ministry**

Liturgists Team: Stephanie Pawlowski [sbpawlowski@gmail.com](mailto:sbpawlowski@gmail.com)

### **Music and the Arts Ministry**

Art Committee: Ali Masalehdan [ali@masimex.com](mailto:ali@masimex.com)  
Dance Choir: Mary Pat Mengato [mpmengato@gmail.com](mailto:mpmengato@gmail.com)

UU Singers: Kris Rust [kdrust@aol.com](mailto:kdrust@aol.com)  
SongSpace  
Concert Series: Brian Junker [junkerb@gmail.com](mailto:junkerb@gmail.com)  
UU Quilters: Barb Gengler [bgengler000@gmail.com](mailto:bgengler000@gmail.com)

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## Serve Council

Staff: Rev. Constance Grant

### ***Social Justice Ministry***

Green Sanctuary Team: Peg Schmidt [pegchmidttoo@gmail.com](mailto:pegchmidttoo@gmail.com)  
Barbara Litt [brlitt@gmail.com](mailto:brlitt@gmail.com)  
PIIN Core Team Sandy Woolley [sandy.woolley@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.woolley@gmail.com)  
UU PA Legislative Action  
Network (UUPLAN): Becky Studer [rkstuder@gmail.com](mailto:rkstuder@gmail.com)  
UUs for Justice in the  
Middle East Ali Masalehdan [ali@masimex.com](mailto:ali@masimex.com)

### ***Humanitarian Service Ministry***

Alternative Gift Market Team: Karen Burns [burnskaren00@gmail.com](mailto:burnskaren00@gmail.com)  
Nancy Latimer [nlatimerc@gmail.com](mailto:nlatimerc@gmail.com)  
East End Cooperative Ministry  
Homeless Shelter Meal  
Coordinating Team: Mary Denison [marydenison@gmail.com](mailto:marydenison@gmail.com)  
Habitat for Humanity Team: Marty Lieb [liebm38@yahoo.com](mailto:liebm38@yahoo.com)  
Khasi Hills Partnership Team: Karen Litzinger [litzingerkaren@aol.com](mailto:litzingerkaren@aol.com)  
Annual Day of Service: Kim Francis [kafrancis610@gmail.com](mailto:kafrancis610@gmail.com)

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## Learn Council

Staff: Erica Shadowsong, Lifespan Religious Education Director

### ***Learning Ministry for Adults***

Adult Faith Development Team: Lynne Porterfield [ljporterfield@yahoo.com](mailto:ljporterfield@yahoo.com)  
Young Adult Steering Team Jamie Kunning [jamie.kunning@utexas.edu](mailto:jamie.kunning@utexas.edu)  
Kelly Dugan [kelly.dugan2@gmail.com](mailto:kelly.dugan2@gmail.com)  
Adult Library Team: Mary Denison [marydenison@gmail.com](mailto:marydenison@gmail.com)  
Lynne Porterfield [ljporterfield@yahoo.com](mailto:ljporterfield@yahoo.com)  
Sunday Morning Forum  
Steering Team: Kim Francis [uusundaymorning-forum@gmail.com](mailto:uusundaymorning-forum@gmail.com)



***Learning Ministry for Children and Youth***

Children's Library Team: Mary Denison [marydenison@gmail.com](mailto:marydenison@gmail.com)  
Family Ministries Team: Jenn Layman, Heather Masterson

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**Church Administrative Staff**

Business Manager: Rita Gates  
Communications Coordinator: Cicely Moultrie  
Sexton: Dan Laity  
Building Security Provider: Kensie McElfresh

# Connect

## Hospitality Ministry

### *Membership Team*

**Members:** Amy De Chicchis, Joan Harvey (chair), Nancy Latimer, Eleanor Mayfield, Lauren McVay, with support from Rev. Connie Grant

As part of the Connections Council, the Membership Team helps members and potential members connect with the church community and discover and pursue their own path to spiritual growth.

We welcomed the following 12 people as new church members during the 2019-2020 church year:

Siamak Adibi	Sarah Hooper
Robert Eshbaugh	Trevett Hooper
Peter Frank	Rebeka Plaskon
Chris Gall	Delia White
Jayne Gall	Mark Whittaker
Emily Gomez	Susan Whittaker

Volunteering with the Membership Team provides an opportunity to help others become more deeply connected to the church in a way that is meaningful to them. We welcome new members to join us! Many opportunities exist to contribute to the work of the Membership Team. Several tasks involve a small time commitment but are very meaningful. Other tasks involve overseeing particular pieces of membership or joining the leadership team in monthly meetings. Volunteer opportunities include

- Staffing the Welcome Table on Sunday mornings,
- Helping with database maintenance,
- Following up with church visitors and new members,
- Helping with the celebration of new members,
- Organizing and hosting periodic potluck dinners for new members,
- Participating in new member orientations, and
- Helping to organize Activities Fairs that showcase the many and varied opportunities that our church offers to engage with others, advance one's spiritual growth, and contribute to our church community, the Pittsburgh community, and the UU denomination.

If any of these activities is a good match for your interests and time, the Membership Team welcomes your participation in helping people to *connect, be inspired, serve, and learn* within our beloved community.

– *Joan Harvey*

## ***Community Table*** (food during social hour)

**Members:** Shelley Ross (chair), Mary Alice Drusbasky, Betty Duquesnoy, Lois Hurt, M.R. Kelsey, Alice Lieb, Tracy Safran, Al Schwartz, Irma Tani

Throughout the 2019–2020 year, the Community Table Team fulfilled its mission of building community by coordinating refreshments during the social hour following Sunday morning worship celebrations. All members and friends of First Unitarian Church were invited to contribute to the Community Table according to the first letter of their last name. The result was a variety of delicious and much-appreciated refreshments every Sunday of the year, and this made our Social Hour a much more attractive opportunity for people to have conversations with one another.

The team provided gluten-free snacks and communicated with the congregation about scheduling. On occasion, due to staff shortages, the team also took on some of the sexton's duties.

The team disbanded in the late winter of 2020 in favor of a more shared approach to providing social hour refreshments. Rev. Connie Grant advocated for this and developed plans for groups to take on social hour for a month at a time. This was very successful when the Board took on the first month.

– *Shelley Ross*

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## ***Social Events Team***

**Members:** Raeann Olander-Murray, Chair. Significant leadership and support from Irma Tani. Members and friends regularly contributed to the success of the events.

### **Major programs/ activities / projects/ speakers during the church year 2019–20:**

- ***Flower Communion and All-Church Picnic:*** June 2, 2019. Social Events provided charcuterie and cheese boards and beverages. The congregation provided sides and desserts.
- ***Ingathering:*** September 8, 2019. Potluck provided by the congregation. Beverages provided by Social Events Team.
- ***Thanksgiving Lunch:*** November 24, 2019. Social Events Team prepared and served a simple lunch.
- ***Christmas Eve:*** December 24, 2019, following the 4:00 and 7:30 services. Many, many members and friends contributed cookies. The Social Events Team provided fruit and punch.

The Social Events Team typically coordinates 4 events throughout the church year.

- In-gathering
- Thanksgiving Lunch
- Cookies after Christmas Eve services
- Flower Communion All-Church Picnic

The term of the current Social Events Team chair ended at the end of 2019. New leadership and/or approaches will be needed moving forward to facilitate all-church social events. Planning and historical templates have been created to support the transition to new leadership.

– *Raeann Olander-Murray*

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### ***Ushers and Greeters Team***

Throughout the year, the Ushers and Greeters Team fulfilled its mission of building community at our worship celebrations by offering hospitality, providing information about the church, and helping to ensure the safety of everyone present. Members of the Ushers and Greeters Team provided a warm welcome throughout the year to all who attended our Sunday morning worship celebrations as well as our Winter Solstice and Christmas Eve worship celebrations. The Ushers and Greeters Team also collected the morning offering and recorded attendance at each worship celebration. Special thanks go to the Team Captains for their steady leadership.

Current active members of the Ushers and Greeters Team are:

#### ***1st Sunday Team***

Joan Adibi, Noah Lee, Jim Reitz

#### ***2nd Sunday Team***

Jan Carlino, Kimberly Francis, Mary Kostalos, **Ali Masalehdan (Team Captain)**, Barbara Rossi

#### ***3rd Sunday Team***

Nick Izzo, Bob Mitchell, Jim Pashek, Brian Rohleder, **Rob Schwartz (Team Captain)**

#### ***4th Sunday Team***

Herbert Barry, Alice Bright, Phyllis Genszler, Ward Kelsey, **MR Kelsey (Team Captain)**, Chas Murray, Jack Philips

#### ***5th Sunday Team (about 4 times per year)***

Eleanor Mayfield, **Kathy Miller (Team Captain)**, Robert Pego

#### ***Substitute Team***

Carl Bonner, Ebe Emmons

– *Rob Schwartz*

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# Pastoral Care Ministry

## *Pastoral Care Team*

**Members:** Chris Beregi, Jan Carlino, Julie Childers, Jim Cunningham (co-chair), Kathy Miller (co-chair), Bob Sullivan

Working with the minister, the Pastoral Care Team extends the pastoral care of the congregation in a ministry of presence and support to those who are in particular need because of illness, loss, isolation, or other life situation or event. Team members share in moments of joy, celebration, and sorrow, and assist people in finding community resources. Pastoral Care Team members provide nonjudgmental, empathetic listening and support.

At the Caring Table in the Undercroft Gallery on Sunday mornings we offer an opportunity for congregants to talk with us. We invite congregants to sign greeting cards for those dealing with illness, bereavement, joys, and blessings. We are developing lists of potential volunteers who are willing to help fellow congregants with transportation, providing a meal for an individual or family, shopping, bringing a food item or assisting with set-up or clean-up for a memorial service reception, or ushering at a memorial service.

David Doorley completed a year of service on the Pastoral Care Team in December. Julie Childers and Bob Sullivan joined the team in February and, together with the rest of the team, were recognized by the congregation in a worship service. Rev. Connie Grant began ongoing orientation and training for team members. If you are interested in joining the Pastoral Care Team, please speak with Rev. Connie.

During this time when we are unable to meet in person, we keep in touch with congregants by phone and email, paying special attention to those who may be alone and in need of support.

*- Rev. Connie Grant*

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## ***Minister's Benevolence Fund/Marion's Purse***

The minister's benevolence fund, known as Marion's Purse, is used to help congregants in temporary financial need, to help with such things as a utility bill or emergency car repair. The minister maintains an overview of needs in the congregation in order to make equitable distribution of funds.

Formerly known as the Minister's Discretionary Fund, the account was revived in 2012 with a significant donation from the Women's Alliance to honor the participation and financial contribution of longtime member Marion Schnurer. The fund continues to be supported by individual congregants and by periodic allocations from the Women's Alliance.

Donations to the fund may be made by writing a check to the church with "Marion's Purse" or "Minister's Benevolence Fund" in the memo line; [online](#) by selecting "Marion's Purse/Minister's

Benevolence Fund” from the dropdown list; or by texting "give" to 412-435-1050 with the designation “carefund.”

*- Rev. Connie Grant*

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### **Medical Equipment Loan Program**

The Medical Equipment Loan Program has been in existence for 7 years and has helped a great many of our church members, friends and family members. Currently we have available for loan: 7 walkers - including one with a seat; 1 nebulizer; 1 plastic bed pan; 2 shower/bath seats; 4 canes; 5 sets of crutches; 2 portable potty chairs; 1 raised toilet seat; 1 air cast for a left foot, size medium; 1 sling; 1 adjustable bedside table; 1 tub-side, clamp-on handle; 4 wheelchairs (3 regular size, 1 child size); 1 back stabilizer with straps; 1 long-handled grasping tool (for use, e.g., as a sock aid); 1 device for icing a swollen knee; and 1 glucometer. Additional items are added to the list from time to time.

If you are in need of a medical-equipment item, please contact Jim Reitz [J5650R@comcast.net](mailto:J5650R@comcast.net). You will be provided with the name(s) and contact information for the people who have these items to lend. It is up to you to arrange to pick up the item(s) from the owner's home. Please let Jim know when you have returned the loaned item(s) to the owner, so that the list of available equipment can be kept current.

Several basic items (a wheelchair, walker, cane, and crutches) are kept at the church in case of sudden need during a service or event. The walker, cane, and crutches are kept in a cabinet in the Schweitzer Room. The wheelchair is under the coat rack in the basement, near the restrooms. Please take a few minutes one Sunday (once the building is open again, of course) to find them so that you can locate them if someone has an emergent need.

From time to time when people have items of medical equipment that they cannot keep at home, they bring the items to church and they are then \ donated to Global Links, which distributes them to third-world countries.

*- Jim Reitz*

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## **Small-Group Ministry**

### **Covenant Groups Team**

**Members:** Alice Bright, Mary Ruth Kelsey, Lynne Porterfield, Jim Reitz

Currently 105 members and friends of First Unitarian Church participate in 13 covenant groups. Approximately 8 people were successfully placed into covenant groups during the past church year.

The Covenant Groups Team often hears church members say how connected and supported they feel by participating in a covenant group. The team endeavors either to place people in compatible existing groups or to start new groups. It also provides support by monitoring the healthy functioning of all covenant groups and leading them to resources for discussion such as *Soul Matters* and the discussion guides that were put together several years ago by Rev. David Herndon.

– *Alice Bright*

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## **Women's Alliance**

The Women's Alliance (WA) of First Unitarian Church has been affiliated with the church since 1891. It is a separate 501(c)(3) corporation with its own budget and funding. The mission of the WA is *to enable UU women to join together for mutual support, personal growth and spiritual enrichment, and through their combined strength and vision to work toward a future where all women will be empowered to live their lives with a sense of wholeness and integrity in a world at peace that recognizes the worth and dignity of each individual.*

WA is a dues-based organization; however, participation is not limited to paying members and anyone is invited to our meetings and events. (Only dues-paying members may vote.) Our twice-monthly meetings usually have between 15 and 18 attendees.

**Members of the Board:** Alice Carnes (Co-Chair), Kathy Fein (Co-Chair), Becky Studer (Secretary), Delia Parks (Treasurer), Denice Galpern (Program and Social Responsibility), Alice Bright (Membership), Margaret Stevens (Hospitality), Sandra Woolley (Bequests), Christine Michaels (Poet-in-Residence)

### **Meeting Schedule**

The Women's Alliance meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month in the Schweitzer room. Throughout the year the Program Chair invites speakers to present to the group, with the exception of the September, December and May luncheons, 5th Thursday meetings when we plan field trips or workshops, the 1st Thursday in December (holiday crafts workshop), and the 3rd Thursday in January (Book Club). A 30-minute business meeting occurs prior to the presentation, followed by Q & A, and brownbag lunch.

### **Presentations and Activities in 2019-2020**

Potluck "Porch Parties" occurred in members' homes in Summer 2019.

**6/13:** host Betsy Martin

**7/25:** host Betty Duquesnoy (on her boat!)

**8/17:** host Denice Galpern

**9/19:** A catered luncheon kicked off the 2019-2020 year. 29 members paid for the catered lunch and 5 First Unitarian staff (complimentary) attended, for a total of 34 attendees.

**10/3:** Mary Pat Mengato, First Unitarian member and a Unity in Motion teacher.

**10/17:** Dr. Anne Van Cott, First Unitarian member and an Associate Professor of Neurology at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Van Cott spoke about the comprehensive care of women with epilepsy.

**10/31:** Singing with the Lemington Choir Rev. Deryck Tines, Director at the Afro-American Music Center in Homewood. Organized by Kris Rust, First Unitarian's Director of Vocal Music, and followed by a potluck.

**11/7:** Rob Conroy, Director of Organizing for CeaseFirePA, a statewide organization working with Pennsylvanians to take a stand against gun violence.

**11/21:** Rev. Connie Grant, First Unitarian Interim Minister gave an informative talk about her work experience, how she was called to the ministry, and her interim role.

**12/5:** Christmas craft workshop with First Unitarian member Christine Milcarek.

**12/12:** Catered Holiday Luncheon 31 members paid for the catered lunch and 5 First Unitarian staff (complimentary) also attended, for a total of 36 attendees.

**1/16/2020** Book Club: *Becoming* by Michelle Obama.

**1/30:** SoulCollage® workshop facilitated by Alice Carnes.

**2/6:** Pete McQuillin and Laura Faessl, who manage the Penn Forest Natural Burial Park, which was founded in 2011 by long time UUs Pete and his wife, Nancy Chubb.

**2/20:** Joshua Malloy of Pittsburghers for Public Transit (PPT), a grass roots organization that raises consciousness about the importance and value of public mass transit.

**3/5:** Suzanne Powell, First Unitarian member, spoke about the genetic basis of sexual identity.

**3/12:** First Unitarian Church Board of Trustees suspended all in-person meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**3/19:** First virtual meeting. The Women's Alliance met via Zoom videoconference on 3/26/2020, 4/2/2020, 4/9/2020, and 4/16/2020. We plan to continue virtual weekly meetings until the quarantine is lifted and we can again meet in person. The May 16th catered luncheon was canceled.

– *Alice Carnes*

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## **WomanSpirit**

WomanSpirit is the evening women's group at First Unitarian Church. Currently we have over 150 church members and a few friends on our email distribution list. Our goal is to meet on the second Wednesday of every month for a potluck dinner in a member's home.

Between 8 and 20 members may attend in any given month, and dinner is often followed by a group discussion on a topic proposed by the host. These topics typically focus on what we value in our lives or how we can improve our own lives or our communities. We periodically engage as a group in a social service project and occasionally we devote an evening to political action. We welcome new members and friends of First Unitarian. A WomanSpirit dinner is an easy and entertaining way to meet other women of a broad range of ages and interests.



This past year we have again had some challenges finding members willing to host. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we recently held our first meeting on Zoom (thanks to Julie Childers for taking the initiative to organize it). We hope to resume regularly meeting in person once the pandemic is behind us and it's safe to again congregate in groups!

– *Pat Schuetz*

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### ***Gathering of Men***

The Men's group at the First Unitarian Church is now in its 29th year. Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 7:30 to 9:00, usually in the Priestly Room. At each meeting one of the men volunteers to lead a discussion. Men also volunteer to plan the program. Discussion topics are wide ranging and always very interesting. There is no pressure to be a discussion leader. Occasionally men attend who are not church members or do not attend church. There is no formal organization, but the contact person and coordinator is Jim Reitz. In 2019 the group met monthly and also organized five summer activities: a hike, a Pirates game, two museum trips, and an excursion to Rene Duquesnoy's boat. The group also serves one meal a year for the East End Community Ministry homeless shelter. Attendance averaged 8 members per meeting

– *Jim Reitz*

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### ***Transitions Group***

The Transitions Group meets on the second Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. to talk about life transitions, the challenges we face as we get older, as we want to downsize, as we find living in our homes harder, as we want to simplify our lives. We discuss whatever concerns are brought to us by whoever comes to the meeting. These discussions are confidential. The group is essentially a support group or covenant group. It is a constant work in progress. We enjoy one another's company and conversation and after the meeting we have lunch together.

– *MR Kelsey, Bob Sullivan*

# Inspire

## Worship Celebrations Ministry

### *Inspire Council*

#### *Liturgists Team*

Liturgists provide the framework and add their voices to our Sunday morning worship services. Led by Stephanie Pawlowski, Commissioned Lay Minister, liturgists this year have been Bryan Bandli, Alice Carnes, Kathy Fein, Louise Jencik, Ward Kelsey, and Scott Smith.

- *Rev. Connie Grant*

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## Music & the Arts Ministry

### *Music & Arts Team*

#### Members

**Regular members:** Gretchen Aiyangar, Brian Junker, Ward Kelsey, Ali Masalehdan, Mary Pat Mengato

**Staff and/or representatives of other relevant units:** Ellen Gozion, Kris Rust (music & program staff)

#### Major programs/ activities / projects/ speakers during the church year 2019-2020:

- **Art Team:** Report submitted separately (see below) by Ali Masalehdan (Chair)
- **Regular music and music-related groups:**
  - *UU Singers:* Thriving community choral group led by Kris Rust and occasionally guest conductors such as Deryck Tines.
  - *Family Choir*
    - Erica Shadowsong and Kris Rust provide staff leadership for Family Choir.
    - Lots of lay ownership and leadership, including providing a complete, inexpensive, healthy dinner to participants.
  - *Folk Circle:* Played a couple Sundays since Sept. They are currently learning *Trouble & Woe* for a future virtual performance.
  - *Hymn Band:* Played several times since September, including coming together for the No Rehearsal Christmas Pageant on Sunday morning, December 22. They always make hymn-singing in services a rousing experience.
  - *Dance Choir:* Report submitted separately (see below) by Mary Pat Mengato
- **Regular church-focused music activities:**

- Sunday morning services
  - Programming by Ellen and Kris, actively coordinated with Rev. Connie and Erica Shadowsong
  - Engaging and inspiring musical accompaniment by Ellen (most services), Kris, and occasional guest keyboardists.
  - Guest musicians from a variety of backgrounds and performing groups, including
    - Dr. James Johnson Jazz Trio
    - Puerto-Rican and Columbian-American musicians Geña y Peña
    - Guest accompanists Kazumi Petinaux, David Mahler, Eddie Leonard (Chamber Orchestra of Pittsburgh)
    - Members of the Incidental Chamber Players
    - Ben Barson and Gizel Rodriguez of the Afro-Yaqui Music Collective
    - Members of the Pittsburgh Festival Opera
  - Church members and friends provide additional ensemble or solo performances, including hymn band & various individual or small-group instrumental or vocal material.
- Christmas pageant, ad hoc small vocal & instrumental groups, and other opportunities for members to participate in musical performance on special occasions
- Other special services
  - Winter Solstice
  - Indigenous People service
- **Crankies:**
  - Ellen has brought her extensive knowledge of this multi-disciplinary folk art form to 1<sup>st</sup> UU. She organized and hosted the Pittsburgh Crankie-fest at 1<sup>st</sup> UU
  - An occasional, much-beloved feature Sunday services at 1<sup>st</sup> UU: The Family Choir performed their Flower Communion Song & Crankie in June 2019; guest Melanie Gulasy performed See Something Beautiful in honor of Pride; and most recently a video performance of Ellen’s “See the Flowers in the Field”
- **Collaborations:**
  - UU singers again collaborated with multiple area choirs in the annual Let Freedom Sing celebration of Martin Luther King’s birthday.
  - Ongoing collaborations with Deryck Tines and the Lemington Gospel Chorale – Deryck is a regular guest conductor, members of the Chorale come to sing with the UU Singers on Sunday mornings, and the UU Singers have many opportunities to sing off-campus with the Lemington Chorale
  - Ongoing collaborations with Coro Latinoamericano including opportunities to sing together on Sunday mornings and at off-campus events
  - Collaboration with Brittany Trotter, flute. In addition to playing as a soloist on Sunday mornings, she has come to rehearse and perform with congregants Maddy & Ebe, flutes, as a way to develop and enrich musicians in the congregation.

- ***Sponsored concert series***
  - SongSpace
    - 5 major and several minor concerts in 2018-2019 season (uusongspace.com)
  - Chamber Orchestra of Pittsburgh
    - 4 major performances this year (copgh.org)
  - Incidental Chamber Players
    - Limited performance schedule in 2019 while some internal reorganization took place. Several 2020 concerts planned, but on hold now due to pandemic.
  - Coro Latinamericano
    - Several 2020 concerts planned, but on hold now due to pandemic.

*– Ellen Gozion & Kris Rust*

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## **Art Team**

**Team members include:** Ali Masalehdan (Chair), Linda Kaufmann, Mary Weidner, Ralph Gurley, Kirsti Adkins, Alice Lieb, Mary Schinhofen, Mary Kostalos, Charlotte Toal, Joe Jencik, Audrey Masalehdan

Once again the Art Team worked together to present a diverse selection of art shows in the Undercroft Gallery (see next page).

*– Ali Masalehdan*

First Unitarian Art Team:

Undercroft Gallery Shows, 2019-2020

Month	Artist	Artist Contact Information	Medium	Show Up (7-9p.m.)	Show Down (7-9 p.m.)	Reception	Coordinator	Coordinator Contact Information
Sept 2019	Members Show		Mixed	9/12	10/3		Linda Kauffman	LK01@andrew.cmu.edu
Oct	Maria Mangato		Paintings	10/3	10/31	10/6?	Alice Lieb/ Sharon Wilcox	
Nov.	Polly Whitehorn		Drawings and prints	10/31	12/5	11/3	Kirsti Adkins	
Dec	Quilts	Annie Stunden Al Schwartz/ Barb Gengler	Quilts	12/5	1/2/2020	12/8	Annie Stunden	Annie Stunden <annie.stunden@gmail.com >
Jan 2019	IPhone Photo	Congregation	photo	1/2/2020	1/30/2020	1/5/2020	Kirsti Adkins	
February	WOV	Women of Vision	Mixed	1/30	3/12	2/2 ?	Sharon Wilcox	rbedeian@aol.com cell 412-979-5410
March	Kathy Sickles	Ruth Bedeian	watercolor	3/12	4/2	3/15?	Linda Kauffman	LK01@andrew.cmu.edu
April	Jake McCauley	<a href="mailto:jmcca729@gmail.com">jmcca729@gmail.com</a>	Painting	4/2	4/30	4/5	Ali Masalehdan	<a href="mailto:ali@masimex.com">ali@masimex.com</a> <a href="mailto:al_asgar@yahoo.com">al_asgar@yahoo.com</a> 412-805-5397
May	Liam Gannon/Gannon Family		paintings	4/30	6/18	5/3	Madeline Darnell	<a href="mailto:md36@ureach.com">md36@ureach.com</a> assisted by Alice Lieb; <a href="mailto:Lieba45@yahoo.com">Lieba45@yahoo.com</a>

June - Aug	Religious Education		Children's Art	6/13	9/6		Alice Lieb	lieba45@yahoo.com
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Art Team members include: Ali Masalehdan (Chair), Linda Kaufmann, Mary Weidner, Ralph Gurley, Kirsti Adkins, Alice Lieb, Mary Schinhofen, Mary Kostalos, Charlotte Toal, Joe Jencik, Sharon Wilcox and Madeline Darnell.

# Serve

## **SERVE (Social Justice & Humanitarian Service) Council**

Our short name (SERVE) comes from our mission: We serve each other and the world by providing support to those experiencing hardship or distress, working for social and environmental justice, and Siding with Love. Our long name exists so that people who don't know the jargon can understand what we do.

The Serve Council consists of Ministry Teams and recurring activities (approved by the minister and/or the Board of Trustees) that work on social justice and humanitarian service in our name. The Ministry Teams that are part of the Serve Council (as of April 2019) are listed below. All of them would benefit from the participation of additional engaged people. The ones most in need of new members are those listed under *Social Justice*, while those listed under *Humanitarian Service* are generally robust, with the exception of the Annual Day of Service.

The Serve Council meets three or four times a year. At our meetings, the various Serve Council team leaders or their designees can share updates about activities and discuss topics of interest. People unaffiliated with a team are also welcome to attend. Our mission has been to facilitate communications.

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### ***Humanitarian Service Ministry***

#### ***Alternative Gift Market Team***

The First UU Alternative Gift Market was held to great success on the first three Sundays in December 2019. This is a physical market hosted on site and featuring several domestic and global charitable causes that patrons can support by giving a charitable donation and providing a gift card – and short description of the cause - to friends and loved ones as a part of holiday giving.

With 50 orders, we raised a total of \$7,734 supporting Alternative Gifts International (AGI) (\$5,501.50), Khasi Hills (\$1,747.50) and Reading Ready Pittsburgh (\$485) – representing a 12% increase over AGM sales in 2018. The Market was staged with a few new display ideas and we introduced credit card sales to increase orders and convenience. We included one new local cause (Reading Ready Pittsburgh) as a choice for congregants/guests to support in addition to AGI and Khasi Hills. We were guided deftly in our first new team hosting by Raeann Olander-Murray and helped by a team of 6 additional volunteers who performed multiple tasks.

We are planning an expanded Market in 2020 and hope to include a few additional local charities. We will begin planning in July. Be a part of the fun and volunteer with us! Thank you for your support in 2019 – First U members were incredibly generous!

– *Karen Burns Rutigliano, Nancy Latimer* (co-chairs)

<https://alternativegifts.org/>

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## **East End Cooperative Ministry (EECM) Homeless Shelter Meal Preparation Coordinating Team**

*Members:* Mary Denison (group leader). Participants vary each month. Regular head chefs include David Hereth, Jim Reitz, Jim Cunningham, Sam and Kathryn Hens-Greco, Tony Rutigliano and Karen Burns, Becky Studer, and Mary Denison.

*Major programs/activities/projects:* The group served a meal for 52 residents in the East End Cooperative Ministry Homeless Shelter once each month including menu planning, shopping, cooking, and serving of the meal. We usually try to join the residents for dinner as well.

Some months the meal is taken care of by a church group such as the Men's Group, other times the meal is prepared by a small group of volunteers. Mary Denison maintains a Cooking Club volunteer list. Volunteers are notified when needed. This system has worked very well to provide a good experience for all involved. No single individual, outside of the group leader, is expected to shoulder too much of the responsibility.

Plans for the upcoming year: With the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the church may be asked to support the homeless more directly. Even over the past month, members of the church have offered an extra meal at the shelter. We may want to increase our support of EECM in their effort to support the individuals who are being affected the most severely by this crisis. Suggestions include:

- Increasing the number of meals we provide to twice monthly
- Providing materials for residents
- Helping with the after-school program – e.g., by providing books and school materials

– *Mary Denison* <https://www.first-unitarian-pgh.org/east-end-cooperative-ministry.html>

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## **Habitat for Humanity Team**

This team has been in existence since 2014, during which time 51 people have volunteered a total of 727 hours of service to help at least 25 different people have a safe and energy-efficient home. The team is led by Peggy Parsons, Jim Pashek, and Marty Lieb, who is responsible for communication. First Unitarian enjoys a great reputation with Habitat because we do fine work and our group has building skills that are valued. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has ended all work parties until the virus is under control.

In September, 2019, we entered a home in the Lincoln/Lemington area of Pittsburgh and stripped the walls to the studs – an extremely dirty job, as we faced coal dust from the early 1900s. This home will be brought up to 21st century standards for wiring, plumbing, insulation, heating and fixtures. In February 2020, we painted the entire interior of a new home in McKeesport and laid out ceramic floor tiles in the kitchen and bathroom.

– *Marty Lieb*



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## ***Khasi Hills Partnership Team***

The Khasi Hills Partnership Team raises funds to support a secondary school in the Khasi Hills of India and facilitates cultural exchange between our congregation and their students.

<https://www.first-unitarian-pgh.org/khasi-hills-partnership.html>

**Members:** Karen Litzinger (chair), Lois Hurt, Nancy Latimer, Mary Pat Mengato, Christine Milcarek, Maureen Porter, Shelley Ross, Anne Van Cott

### **Highlights of 2019-2020:**

- ***Funding New Teachers*** – For the new Higher Secondary school we funded in 2015-2016, we raised \$5500 of the \$9,600 goal of funding two teachers which we had done the last two years. Support was behind and then with the CO-VID 19 economic condition and rescheduling of March Share the Plate to May 17 remote services, we are concerned about support for our school. Donations reflect the fall campaign and Alternative Gift Market.
- ***Fall Pulpit Talk and Sponsorship Campaign*** – Anne Van Cott gave a brief talk and slide show on November 3 as part of the fall sponsorship. Bags of spices brought back from India were given as gifts.
- ***Diwali Social Hour*** – October 19, Celebrated the Hindu Festival of Lights with special food, decorations, and slide show
- ***Alternative Gift Market*** – This continues to be a critical avenue for sponsorship funds.
- ***Dinner with Interim Minister*** – We hosted a special January meeting/dinner at a local Indian restaurant.
- ***Holi Social Hour*** – March 8, Celebrated the Hindu Festival of Color with special food, decorations, slide show, butterfly children's craft activity, and modest dance choir collaboration in service.
- ***India Pilgrimage*** – Anne Van Cott, who was registered for the Spring 2020 Pilgrimage, unfortunately had to cancel due to an injury. Then it turned out that the Khasi Hills part of the India pilgrimage had to be canceled due to civil unrest related to immigration policy. Our congregation prepared handwritten cards for the teachers that were taken to India and returned, and will be sent by the UU Partner Church Council (UUPCC) once stay-at-home orders end.
- ***UUPCC Zoom Meetings*** – Multiple team members have participated in quarterly calls with leaders from India and other US churches to get updates and share ideas.

***Plans for next year:*** We expect to continue with annual activities and hope to fund 2 teachers until government funding kicks in. Additional future ideas we've discussed include a Khasi Hills Founders Day activity, a Sunday Morning Forum program, Zoom calls, and a local Indian dance group performance.

## ***Social Justice Ministry***

### ***Share the Plate***

On the third Sunday of each month, we share our offering with an organization that furthers our liberal religious mission. Guidelines include (1) helping local grassroots organizations that put our liberal religious values into practice; (2) supporting denominational causes and commitments; and (3) supporting projects along those lines that church members are involved with.

2019–2020 recipients and amounts:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Amount</b>
May	Unitarian Universalist Service Committee	755.00
Jun	SisTersPGH	795.24
Jul	Casa San Jose	1,697.21
Aug	UUPLAN	918.98
Sep	UUCT/No More Deaths (No Mas Muertes)	1,222.76
Oct	Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism	1,228.16
Nov	Afro American Music Institute	1,189.91
Dec	UU Ministry for the Earth	767.56
Jan	Bukit Bail Fund	1,599.47
Feb	UU the Vote	1,029.80
Mar	None	
Apr	Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank	1,387.80

*- Rev. Connie Grant*

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### ***Green Sanctuary Team***

**Current members:** Robert Baron, Mary Alice Drusbasky, Linda Fleming, Margaret Fuhrman, Eileen Kraus-Dobratz, Barbara Litt (co-chair), Chris Milcarek, Bob Mitchell, Monica Nogueira, Ray Schinhofen, Peg Schmidt (co-chair), Becky Studer.

**Meetings:** Our monthly meetings last an hour, though discussion sometimes continues.

- Current projects in progress are usually presented by the project lead.
- Sustainable living issues we notice during congregational activities are noted, such as recycling, commercial composting, the continued use of single-use plastics, and trash.
- Current issues are discussed briefly.

## Major Activities During the Church Year 2019–2020

- **EJEx (Environmental Justice Exchange) Program with New Voices Pittsburgh and the Hill District Consensus Group (HDCG):** During our meetings in September–December 2019, Barbara Litt and Peg Schmidt learned about the work of organizer Jamilah Lahijuddin and issues facing residents of the Hill District. Both attended a Renter’s Rights workshop on Oct. 23, 2019 to hear from residents directly and see this HDCG program in action. Barbara also attended the Housing Summit on Nov. 23, 2019. On February 15, 2020, Jamilah presented on behalf of her organization to our congregation. The audience included Lynne Porterfield, GST members and friends, and EJEx Coordinator Matt Dean.
- **Young Voices for the Planet Workshop:** Linda Fleming, Barbara Litt, and Bob Mitchell attended this June 26, 2019 workshop on empowering and centering youth through short documentary filmmaking. Pat Ulbrich attended a similar workshop earlier in 2019.
- **Global Climate Strike:** Downtown, Friday Sept. 20, 2019. Many GST members and other congregants sided with love to support the youth climate strikers and Fridays for the Future. We participated in an interfaith gathering at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral and the walking meditation to the first rally site (sponsored by PA Interfaith Power & Light Pittsburgh Chapter). Several congregants continued on with the march to the Market Square rally site.
- **Defending Our Water:** At least four congregants participated in this community event and activities on October 23, 2019. Indigenous leaders shared a Water Ceremony (also in attendance, gunboats on the Allegheny River), followed by a march to the annual Shale Insight conference with keynote speech by the President of the United States. The evening event, Decolonizing Green Power, featured indigenous people working to bring green power to reservations.
- **UUPLAN Environmental Justice:** Barbara Litt, Bob Mitchell, and Becky Studer continue their participation in this team.
- **Penn Future-Energize PA legislation:** Our team signed onto the coalition letter opposing Energize PA state legislation. The series of bills known as Energize PA provide tax breaks and subsidies to the natural gas and petrochemical industries.
- **LifeSpan RE classes:** Several GST members participated in several discussion classes for the UUA Common Read, *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States*.
- **Winter Solstice Service, December 20, 2019:** This lay-led service was coordinated by Director of Lifespan Education Erica Shadowsong with congregants Alice Carnes and Mary Pat Mengato. Linda Fleming, Barbara Litt, Monica Nogueira, and Peg Schmidt participated in this annual service.
- **Earth Sunday Service, April 19, 2020:** This year’s service was coordinated by Rev. Connie, with homilies by Erica Shadowsong and Rev. Connie. It was a virtual service, streamed live over YouTube, due to Covid-19 State of Emergency social distancing. Mary Pat Mengato represented the Dance Choir with a reprise of E Malama.
- **Light It Forward:** Bob Mitchell coordinates this effort that we hope to have approved and enacted through the Building & Grounds Committee with Ray Schinhofen's help. The church has received a bid for purchasing the LED fixtures and lamps as well as two bids for the labor that will be required. When conditions permit safe work at church, we can obtain final

bids for consideration by the Board. Originally introduced at the 2018 Summer Institute, this program combines updating lighting fixtures at church to reduce electricity use *and* using rebates we receive to seed the same program at another non-profit. Reducing our electric use/bills may enable a future switch to clean power sources.

- **Water Protector Support:** Peg Schmidt coordinated local support for the Water Protector that was incarcerated near us until his release in July 2019. He is currently at home in New Mexico and rebuilding his life. Ann Trondle-Price from Sunnyside is our local representative on the support team currently, though Peg remains connected. This UU-only multi-state support effort is an extension of the trusted relationship between Bismarck–Mandan UU Congregation and Water Protectors.
- **Urban EcoStewards:** Becky Studer leads this group that maintains two plots in Frick Park assigned to us. The group communicates by email and gathers to remove invasive species, plant native species, and clean the stream bank adjacent to our areas 3-4 times a year during the growth season. All may also work on the sites as their individual time allows.
- **Certification As a Green Sanctuary Congregation:** Request for accreditation is in progress.
- **Conference attendance:** Barbara Litt attended CMU's Conference, Settler Colonialism in the United States on Sept. 7, 2019 and several related events, the Racial Justice Summit on Jan. 25, 2020 and the PA Interfaith Power & Light Annual Conference, The Long Journey: From Extracting the Past to Cultivating the Future, on Feb. 9, 2020..
- **First Unitarian Church Climate Action:** Green Sanctuary and other church members are actively working for climate action as members of Citizens' Climate Lobby, a non-partisan organization whose goal is a livable world for our children and grandchildren. Church members including Barbara Litt, Claus Makowka, Bob Mitchell, and Rob Schwartz have supported this climate action in the following ways:
  - \* Directly lobbied members of Congress and/or their staff
  - \* Written multiple letters to the editor that were published in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and Tribune Review
  - \* Made presentations the Rotary clubs and other community groups

CCL specifically advocates carbon pricing, which is widely recognized by scientists and economists as essential to meeting the goal of net zero greenhouse emissions by mid century. In 2019 the UUA issued a statement in support of CCL's policy. The Unitarian Universalists' Action Team is a national group of UUs who support CCL initiatives.

– *Peg Schmidt & Barbara Litt*

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### ***UU Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network (UUPLAN) Team***

UUPLAN represents ~6000 UUs across the Commonwealth. Its goal is to “Bring UU Voices to the Public Square in Pennsylvania.” Its mission statement is: “UUPLAN educates and communicates with our congregations and partners to inspire action. We promote our values to policy makers to advance just legislation. We advocate for fairness and transparency in the democratic process.”

First Unitarian congregational co-liaisons Tony Rutigliano and Becky Studer attempt to keep the congregation informed about state-level legislative initiatives. UUPLAN includes the following active Justice Teams: criminal justice reform, economic justice, environmental justice, good government, gun violence prevention, and reproductive justice.

UUPLAN director Richard Williams led our worship service one Sunday in August and inspired a successful Share the Plate for UUPLAN. Several First U members attended the October Fall Advocacy Day in Harrisburg in person and the April 24–25, 2020, annual meeting held via Zoom. YouTube videos of that meeting and other information can be found at <https://www.uuplan.org/>. The keynote speakers on Saturday morning and the legislators’ panel on Saturday afternoon are well worth watching to become aware of current issues and how we are addressing them with our state government in Harrisburg. UUPLAN leadership is also working to coordinate UU the VOTE 2020 activities across Pennsylvania.

*– Tony Rutigliano & Becky Studer*

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### ***Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN) Team***

PIIN is a faith-based organization focused on equity and social justice in the region. It is a coalition of many local faith communities, with task forces addressing public safety, immigration, criminal justice reform, public education, and ratepayer justice. We have formed a First Church PIIN Core Team (Sarah Benson, Peggy Bonnell, Madeline Darnell, Linda Fleming, John Hooper, Kathy Miller, Gail Pesyna, Tami Prine, Karen Burns Rutigliano, Annie Stunden, and Sandy Woolley). Several members participated in task forces and the Anti-Racism Workshops offered at First Church by the Pittsburgh Freethought Community and First Church. The annual PIIN May banquet has been canceled. <http://www.piin.org/>

*- Sandy Woolley*

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### ***UUs for Justice in the Middle East (UUJME) Team***

Dedicated to a peaceful and just resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Joan Adibi is the current chair. Olive oil sales in the Undercroft Gallery have continued and have been satisfactory. Leaflets about the Palestinian situation are also handed out at the olive oil sale table.

<https://www.first-unitarian-pgh.org/justice-in-the-middle-east.html>  
<https://uujme.org/>

# Learn

## Lifespan Religious Education

### Children & Youth Religious Education

#### **Overview**

Religious education attendance and registration were consistent, on average, with last year. Events coordinated by the Family Ministries Team (family Ingathering activities, Pumpkifest, and the Holiday Craft Fair) saw excellent participation from both volunteering parents and attending families. The Family Social Hour had regular attendance, and was visibly missed when it was not happening. For this reason, Jane Ann Williams stepped up to be a regular volunteer to make sure the social hour was available if I were off on a Sunday or was involved in a service.

This year's theme in the traditional three-year rotation was wisdom from the world's religions. This year also saw a high school youth group after a two-year hiatus when the previous cohort graduated. Youth were very eager and self-directed, organizing a warm clothing drive for the winter, with donations going to The Free Store in Braddock.

This year's Christmas pageant was the first departure from the last 20+ years or so of the two rotating traditional scripts. Rev. Connie and the LRED organized a pop-up or "no rehearsal" pageant, in which participants were cast on the spot. The holidays saw another change: the pageant service and the candlelight Christmas Eve Service were separated into two services, both well attended. We believe most people were appreciative of this change, as it accommodated more schedules, with a few exceptions but no great upsets.

In the spring, we had one new multigenerational service called *What Makes a Family?* We had a couple of families participate in speaking, including the Laymans, who have children in the RE program.

Sadly, the RE program was halted on March 15, when the COVID-19 crisis began. As of now, April 18, there is not an RE program specifically happening. Many families were very disrupted in these first few weeks and could not commit to anything. However, two parent check-ins were held, and we will continue this monthly.

Also, the Family Ministries Team met and decided to reach out to families and volunteers in each RE class to see how they are doing and gauge what kind of continued participation they might be interested in. The parent check-in generated several ideas for families, and specifically the kids, to interact, which we may be experimenting with based on the information gathered through the Family Ministries Team and other feedback.

In the meantime, the virtual service is very appreciated by those who attend, and consistent positive feedback has been shared with staff and leaders after every service so far.

The LRED is maintaining a weekly RE blog that reflects on relevant topics, usually related to a previous or upcoming service, and includes multimedia and suggested activities for families to engage in. I have been very encouraged by the attendance at or responses to the check times

offered, both because people are attending and indicating they want this, but also if they can't attend they seem to know about it; in other words, people are paying attention to email and the church newsletter.

### ***Looking Ahead***

Before the COVID 19 disruption, I had shared with RE volunteers and with the minister my thoughts on evolving away from the traditional three-year rotational themes. The change would not be in content, but rather in how the rotations are organized. Instead of having completely different content each year, we would create a base of critical content that would include repetition of information throughout the course of a child's RE experience. The aim of this would be to create a stronger sense of Unitarian Universalism as a religion in its own right, with its own wisdom and theologies to explore, and to reinforce these lessons each year regardless of the content being offered. I see this as a next step from the already-successful three-year rotation that has been in play since before I arrived at First Unitarian.

The disruption of the year has us all exploring or trying to imagine a "new normal." Looking ahead, I am planning for a virtual RE program first and foremost, in the event that we are not able to return to regular gatherings in the fall, as some health experts and reports suggest. The amount of involvement of RE volunteers in the program – whether virtual or somewhat back to the more traditional – is uncertain at this time, but I believe we will know more as we head into the summer. The Family Ministries Team and I will be revisiting this at our May meeting.

Unfortunately, the greatest loss is that of the OWL program, which was abruptly interrupted. This class is critical to our rising youth and their families, and the fact that they were unable to finish it is very problematic. As I know I am not the only one of my colleagues who is facing this, I am reaching out to the UUA and to the facilitators to see what suggestions have been offered to continue this program.

This also throws into question the Coming of Age program, which should take place next year. At this time, I am not planning for a trip to Washington, DC, as it involves a large financial commitment and the logistics take the whole year to organize. However, the content of Coming of Age is not difficult to reproduce in a virtual or mixed setting, and I am optimistic that there are options for a heritage trip that might not inspire the same level of anticipation, but certainly can serve the purpose and can be put in place later. Local or regional heritage sites, for example, come to mind.

RE is continuing one way or another, perhaps further evolving into a more family-centered ministry model rather than grade and class...but that all remains to be seen.

### ***Number Registered***

Nursery	4
Pre-K–K	17
1st–3rd grade	17
4th–6th grade	15
7th–8th grade	6
Our Whole Lives (7–9)	10 Fall, 9 Spring
Youth Group (9–12)	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>
RE volunteers	11

### **Attendance**

Average summer attendance	8
Average attendance September–February	23
Average attendance at multigenerational events	45
Regular participants in Family Choir	9 children, 10 adults

Average attendance at the Family Social Hour varied greatly; it was always well attended, with usually no fewer than 6 or 7 kids and accompanying adults, and as many as twice that.

### **Young Adults & Campus Ministry**

Wednesday-night meetings have continued consistently for the second year in a row, and the three main young adults who attend are very committed, sometimes organizing a separate outing or phone call if the meeting at the church is cancelled. My policy for this year had been to attend about once a month, both to keep evenings manageable for myself, and to give the young adults the space to continue to develop a culture of leadership among themselves. However, there has increasingly been an expressed interest in learning more about Unitarian Universalism and spirituality in general.

This was difficult to address before the COVID 19 situation, as my availability varied and we could not settle on committing to a specific “course” or book, for example. However, with the current quarantine conditions in place, this has become the perfect opportunity to offer a course, and so we have begun *Spirit in Practice*. The young adults are very enthusiastic about this and it is the first time I have offered this course, as I am easily available to lead it and do not need to rely, at least at the moment, on recruiting volunteer facilitators.

Campus ministry is not currently active, although some college students do attend First Unitarian. With this interim period and the vacancy of the young-adult coordinator position, the minister and I agreed that this was not an RE priority at this time as it would not be able to be done well and requires a lot more presence on campus. I expect to revisit this after the new settled minister arrives.

### **Adult Faith Development**

Adult Faith Development has not really had a formal team for the second year in a row. However, we discussed this at our Learn Council meetings, and I proposed that the team model is not really effective right now as we would need strong leadership to have it work.

Adult faith programming, however, has not suffered from this, in my opinion. Book groups have continued and remain a popular option, so I am putting efforts into continuing to encourage this. Currently one self-organized group reading the UU Common Read, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, and I am offering a three-part facilitated discussion of this book in May.

The anti-racism program introduced this year by John Hooper in partnership with the Pittsburgh Freethought Community, has had strong attendance. Meetings are continuing virtually.

It is my personal hope to offer more virtual classes, and I think that may be the case even when we return to meeting in person, as it allows me to be more available and I think it encourages participation and regular attendance. Rev. Connie is currently offering a virtual credo-writing



course, and we have talked about her offering another new-membership-oriented course during this time.

I would like to see book groups grow in popularity and participation, and my goal in the new year is to see such ongoing course offerings by myself and the minister – and perhaps eventually by volunteer facilitators – become more the norm.

### ***Worship & Congregational Life***

We have had a number of wonderful multigenerational services; unfortunately, the upcoming ones in the spring that might have been particularly fun had to be postponed because of the COVID-19 crisis.

Although family attendance is always varied and tends to be twice a month for most families who “regularly” attend, the Family Social Hour seems to be a grounding and appreciated space after the service. Some socializing between people who do not know each other has been encouraged, and could be encouraged even more. The Family Ministry Team was instrumental this year in taking the initiative to reach out to families we hadn’t seen in a while and, in April, reaching out to all the families as well as volunteers to try to continue to foster an ongoing sense of connection. This personal approach to staying in touch with families is made much, much better with their help.

### ***Professional Development***

After attending my annual LREDA fall conference, I decided that in the new year I wanted to commit to more personal development through reading, taking courses, whatever I can do, and to prioritize this over additional travel. This is because, while it is absolutely valuable and crucial to meet with colleagues, I can really only afford two conferences a year, and those I have chosen are the LREDA Fall Con and the *Finding Our Way Home* conference for religious professionals of color. While programming is offered at these and other events, such as the regional chapter retreat, travel is always expensive, and I feel that I might be better served by doing more self-study this year. It is something I have not had a lot of time for, and so having made this commitment has been really helpful and enriching.

My goal is not only to enrich my own knowledge but also to be a stronger resource to those I serve at the church. It is better, I believe, to be able to answer questions and facilitate discussions as they come up or interest is expressed, than to have to constantly point to recommended books, authors, or other sources. I think people really want their religious professionals to be sources of knowledge and play a primary role in religious instruction, and so it is increasingly important to me to advance my own learning and internalizing of historical, cultural, and theological knowledge on a variety of relevant topics.

To this end, I have committed more of my funding than in the past to books, audiobooks, and online courses such as the Great Courses series than I have done in the past, and this has been very rewarding and enriching. It also allows me to better be prepared to recommend continued reading and study for people who are seeking it.

Unfortunately, the *Finding Our Way Home* conference was cancelled because of COVID-19; however, they did provide a two-day virtual experience of some of the content, so that I was still able to participate, even though it was not nearly the same.

I am participating in several ongoing collegial connections: Chapter LREDA colleagues about once a month or so, UU professionals of color, and most recently, the Covenant of UU Pagans board, which I joined this year upon being asked. I am also a part of a small group of UU professionals of color that is specifically focused on discernment of personal spiritual direction. This is an excellent, unexpected opportunity for professional self-care that I am glad to have been invited to participate in.

### ***Bookstore and Adult Library Team***

Mary Schinhofen stepped down this year from leadership of both these ministries. In discussion with the Learn Council, Rev. Connie and I have decided to work together on re-envisioning the bookstore and the library, with input and aid from a couple of Learn Council volunteers.

Leadership: Rev. Connie Grant and Erica Shadowsong

Children's Library Team Leadership: Mary Denison

### ***Religious Education for Children & Youth Ministry Team***

Leadership: Heather Masterson, Jen Layman, Charlie Schwartz (youth rep), Cathy Rohrer, Michael Safran, Dara Lee, Alicia Pelfrey (stopped attending), Melody Platz

– *Erica Shadowsong*, Lifespan Religious Education Director

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## **Family Ministries Team**

**Members:** Jennifer Layman, Heather Masterson (co-chairs), Julie Downs (Board liaison) Sarah Hooper, Michael Safran, Erica Shadowsong (staff), Abby Slovanic

During the 2019-20 church year, the Family Ministries Team focused on connecting with families in the church, coordinating social opportunities for all ages, partnering with other members and groups on events, and working to strengthen multi-generational relationships within the congregation.

Highlights of the year included:

- Providing family-friendly activities at the Ingathering Luncheon including rock painting and chalk art, face painting, and outdoor games.
- Coordinating the logistics for the annual Family Holiday Craft Fair in November. More than 30 children attended this event to make crafts for themselves and to give as gifts during the holiday season.
- Coordinating a Holiday Toy Drive and Mitten and Hat Tree Drive for the children and families of the Mathilda Thiess Center. More than 200 toys were donated by our congregation that helped make the holidays special for many children!
- Reaching out to families with children in religious education to get to know them better and offer support where needed.
- Continuing to help host a Family Social Hour in the Schweitzer Room most Sundays following service. Meant to work in conjunction with the main Social Hour, the Family Social Hour gives those with younger children a place to gather and spread out where they can also play games, do puzzles, and color.

- Planning a new multi-generational event called "Everybody's Birthday" that was to take place on March 15 (postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic) at which the congregation was invited to a lunch celebration after service, complete with birthday cupcakes. The concept is that 12 tables are set up, one for each month. People sit at the table that represents their birth month and socialize and play games with others who also celebrate their birthday that month.
- The annual Easter Egg Hunt was canceled this year.
- In April and May 2020, team members will be reaching out to all families with children registered in RE classes and to the teachers as well. We will be checking in with them to see how they are doing during this time of social distancing and see if there is any help they may need from the church. We will work with teachers to try to set up zoom meetings for the children so they can connect with one another.

Over the coming year, the Family Ministries Team would like to

- Add a youth representative to the committee.
- Follow up with all families who visit the church by sending them a personal letter.
- Establish a process for ongoing check-ins with families, especially those who are absent from the church for extended periods of time, or those who are in need of family pastoral care.
- Explore ways for parents to connect with one another, perhaps by establishing parent support groups, information sessions on topics of shared interest, and family-focused covenant groups.

## Sunday Morning FORUM

### Members of the FORUM Committee:

**Coordinator:** Kimberly Francis

**Treasurer and Cinematographer:** Ralph Gurley

**Advisors:** Joan Harvey, Richard Haverlack, Michel Lotze, Ali Masalehdan, Audrey Geer Masalehdan, George Merrick, Suzanne Powell, Farial Rawji-Farkas, Billie Joy Reinhart, James Reitz

FORUM is a Sunday morning lecture series featuring presentations on topical issues by distinguished individuals from our congregation as well as from local universities, organizations, businesses, and government. FORUM generally runs from September to May and takes place in the Schweitzer Room on Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Date	Speaker/Facilitator	Topic/Title
September 15	Min. Evans D. Moore, Jr.	Families in Action: Sharing a More Accurate Narrative of Our Justice System
September 22	Tom Lawson, PhD	The Greatest Story Never Told: Why the Pyramids, the Sphinx and the Major Temples Were Really Built and Christ's Role in Them

<b>Date</b>	<b>Speaker/Facilitator</b>	<b>Topic/Title</b>
September 29	No FORUM	Great Race
October 6	No speaker available	
October 13	TED Talk Discussion	When technology can read minds, how will we protect our privacy?
October 20	No speaker available	
October 27	Ivonne Peña, PhD	The Value and Interplay Between Energy Storage and Power Generation
November 3	Mila Sanina	Fake News
November 10	Edwin K. Everhart, PhD	Accent and Dialect Discrimination - From Northern Japan to Western Pennsylvania
November 17	Michael Palladini	Medical Marijuana in PA
November 24	TED Talk Discussion	Sleep is Your Superpower
December 1	No FORUM	Thanksgiving Weekend
December 8	Michael Koyack, LAT, ATC, PES	Dormant Butt Syndrome: Reactivating the Gluteal Muscles
December 15	Sam Hens-Greco	2020: The Most Important Election of Our Lifetime
December 22	No FORUM	Christmas Holidays
December 29	No FORUM	Christmas Holidays
January 5	No FORUM	New Year's Weekend
January 12	Scott Morgenstern, PhD	Cuba, Venezuela, and Democracy in Latin America
January 19	No FORUM	MLK weekend
January 26	No speaker available	
February 2	Erika Strassburger	Pittsburgh Moving Forward: City Council 2020
February 9	Aradhna Oliphant	Leadership Pittsburgh Inc.
February 16	No speaker available	
February 23	Erica Shadowsong	UUA Common Read: An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz
March 1	Rob Conroy	Cease Fire Pittsburgh
March 8		
March 15	FORUM suspended (church closed due to COVID-19 pandemic)	

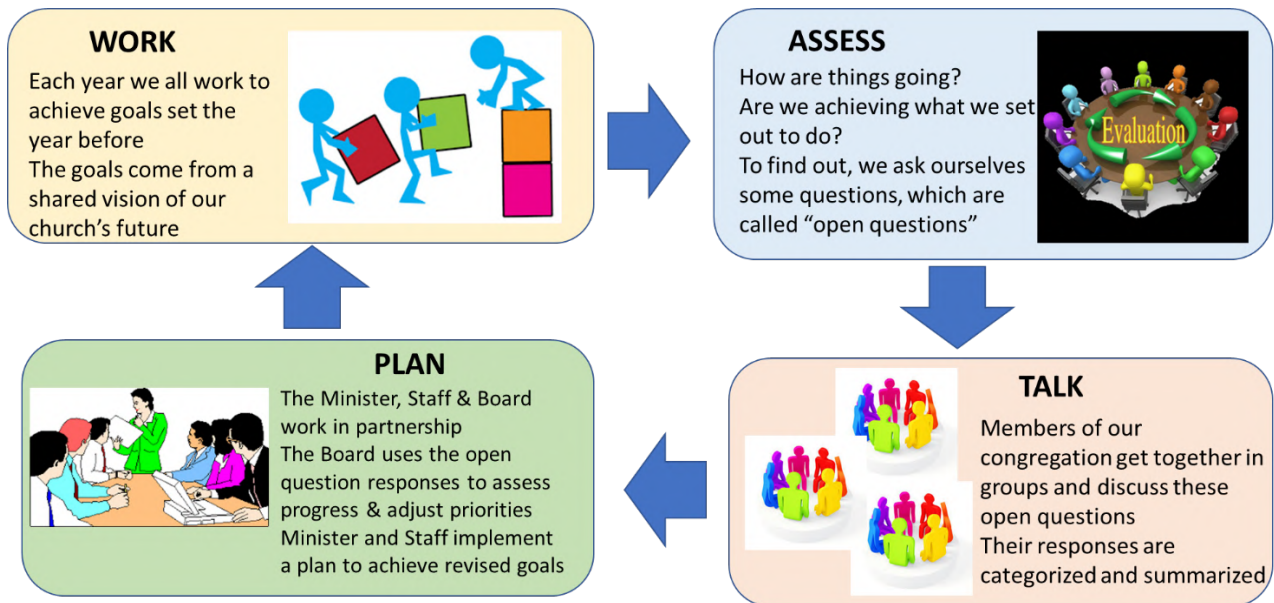
– *Kim Francis*

# Board Committees

## Vision, Identity, and Mission (VIM) Committee

**Members:** Ebe Emmons, Joan Harvey, Bob Mitchell, Lynne Porterfield, Cathy Rohrer, Michael Safran, Jean Schmidt

First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh recently revamped its governance process, moving into a “Partnership Governance Model” in which the Board, Minister, Staff, and Congregation are partners in determining the direction the church should take. The VIM Committee was formed to help the Board perform its “discernment” function by listening to the voices of all congregants. Within this new governance model, the church works through an annual cycle illustrated below.



**Work:** Congregants and staff work each year to achieve goals consistent with our mission. Emphasis is given to the church priorities established during the previous year's planning cycle.

**Assess:** Even as we continue the church's work, we step back to ask ourselves how things are going. Are we achieving the goals we set out for ourselves? Do those goals advance us toward a shared vision for the future? Each year the Board, working in partnership with the Staff and VIM Committee, identifies a set of “open questions” designed to address those issues.

**Talk:** The VIM Committee assists the Board by coordinating meetings of congregants who discuss the open questions. Responses are carefully recorded, then categorized and summarized for use in the planning process.

**Plan:** The Minister, Staff and Board work together in partnership to review the summarized responses to open questions. Together they discern the evolving identity and vision of church

members. The Board uses open question responses to further assess progress and adjust goals and priorities of the church. The Minister and Staff then devise a detailed plan to achieve the revised goals.

During the 2017–18 and 2018–19 church years, the VIM team chose to conduct “cottage meetings” of congregants asking open questions concerning the life of the church and congregants’ hopes for the future. From these VIM worked with the Board to identify a few goals, which have been reflected in the ministry plan for each of these years. Some of these goals and how they were implemented are mentioned below.

The current church year differs from most in two very important ways:

- We have begun a two-year period of interim ministry under the leadership of Rev. Connie Grant and begun the process of searching for a new settled minister.
- As a part of the larger denominational, national, and world communities, we are currently dealing with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

During the period of interim ministry, congregational interactions have continued using two new formats introduced by Rev. Grant. Last Fall members and friends shared their most striking memories of First Church by recording them on wall charts. A subsequent Sunday service featured members sharing those “Member Memories” by decade going back to the 1950’s. On March 1, 2020, congregants engaged in a “Getting to the Heart of the Matter” experience, in which they had the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings “about what this congregation is and can be, for themselves, for each other, and for the larger community.”

The planning process this year has of course been focused on the upcoming search process and on the implications of the pandemic and social distancing. Planning is also informed by discernment from the Member Memory and Heart of the Matter experiences.

During this unique time our work continues with the constraints of social distancing. The new situation also presents us with new opportunities to use social media not only to overcome distancing, but to find new ways to connect with each other and with the larger community. Highlights of the church’s work on our priorities of BELONGING and COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP include:

- Continued clarification of communications at every level, including improved signage outside and inside the church, streamlined weekly emails with regular input from the Board, and a new website hosting service
- A family-friendly social hour following worship services, featuring games, activities, and simple, healthy snack options as an alternative to the Coffee Hour in the Undercroft Gallery.
- UUA Common Read book discussion groups, this year featuring *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz
- Joint workshops with the Pittsburgh Freethought Community on understanding racism and white privilege.
- Engagement in voter registration and protecting voter rights to empower all eligible people to contribute their voices to the democratic process.

Many other initiatives continue and are documented elsewhere in this annual report.

Members of the VIM Committee are pleased to serve the congregation and the Board by facilitating the processes of discernment and planning – processes that are even more critical as we search for a settled minister and develop new ways to **Connect, Inspire, Serve, and Learn** during this time of social distancing.

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## Endowment Committees

### *Social Justice*

**2019 Committee Chair:** Maria Lauro

**Mission:** The Social Justice Endowment Committee considers requests for grants that will enable an individual or group to pursue a project that serves a social justice purpose of broad effect. Grants from this fund are not given to pay for a one-time benefit, but rather to fund an effort that will have a longer-term benefit with broadly felt implications.

**Method:** The committee members carefully considered the suitability of each application to the guidelines of the Endowment. We weighed the purposes as described in each application, the intent of each applicant, and the expected outcomes of the effort proposed.

#### **Social Justice Endowment awards in 2019:**

- 1/18/19: \$1,000.00 to Kris Rust to help defray the cost of producing and performing the 2019 Let Freedom Ring Concerts, which has the mission to bring together diverse groups of people from various choirs in the city and to convey Dr. King's message of love in song and spirit to audiences across the lines of race, religion, class and culture.
- 3/14/19: \$500.00 to Mary Denison for the building of two Little Free Libraries, one located along the busway in Swissvale and the other in Homestead.
- 4/22/19: \$750 to Annie Stunden to support the attendance of youth at the PIIN Banquet dinner to hear Diane Nash, first president of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and to make connections between youth affiliated with First Church and youth from other PIIN congregations, particularly in East Liberty and Homewood.
- 9/20/19: \$250 to Becky Studer to support attendance at UUPLAN Advocacy Day 2019. Since no support was requested, no funds were distributed.
- 10/16/19: \$450 to Kris Rust to support a musical performance at the PIIN Day of Action. This request was shared with the Music Endowment
- 10/26/19: \$1,000 to Sandy Woolley to provide funding for attendance at the Gamaliel 3<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Race & Power Conference by attendees from First Church as well as people from outside the church who are people of color, with the goal for participants to be better trained to build race consciousness among church members in the areas of oppression, implicit bias, and white privilege.
- 12/20/19: \$1,000 to Kris Rust Let Freedom Ring Concerts 2020, which we have been proud to support in the past.

**Summary of funds awarded in 2019:**

- The Annual Draw available to this committee for 2019 was \$7,271.02
- The total funds awarded in 2019 came to **\$4,700.00.**
- The remaining balance in the fund for 2019 was \$2,571.02.

– *Maria Lauro*

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***Music***

The Music Endowment provides support for our church's music ministry program.

<https://www.first-unitarian-pgh.org/music-endowment-committee.html>

**2019 Committee Chair:** Michael Shanley

**Awards in 2019**

- 6/3/19: \$575 to Kris Rust for UU Community Singers Outreach Programs
  - 10/22/2019: \$550 to Kris Rust for UU Community Singers Outreach Performance
  - 11/6/2019: \$1300 to Ellen Gozion to hire Pittsburgh Brass Project for Christmas Eve performance
  - 11/6/2019: \$1700 to Kris Rust for payment to vocalists performing in services on 12/15, 12/22, 12/24
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***Ministry with Children and Youth***

The Endowment for Ministry with Children and Youth provides financial support for our church's religious education program (infancy through the end of high school).

<https://www.first-unitarian-pgh.org/endowment-for-ministry-with-children-and-youth.html>

**2019 Committee Chair:** Julie Downs

**Awards in 2019**

12/6/19: \$500 to Erica Shadowsong to update the costumes for the pageant

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***Campus Ministry***

The Campus Ministry Endowment extends the ministry of the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh to local universities and colleges.

<https://www.first-unitarian-pgh.org/campus-ministry-endowment-committee.html>

**2019 Committee Chair:** Nick Izzo