UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF DUBUQUE

2023 Annual Report

DEEPENING CONNECTIONS & WIDENING COMMUNITY

Mission: To provide a welcoming community that inspires growth by encouraging individuals and families to examine their religious and spiritual beliefs, to explore new ideas, to share our journeys, to respect and enjoy each other's differences, and to be active and supportive in the community that surrounds us.

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2023 Board of Trustees

President: Marian Maciej-Hiner (2022-2023)
Treasurer: Jerry Guenther (2023-2024)
Secretary: Wendy Woodhouse (2022-2023)
Trustee (2 Year): Linda Ressler (2022-2023)
Trustee (2 Year): Gail Guenther (2023-2024)
Trustee (1 Year): Julia Omarzu (Jan-Feb 2023); Amy Ressler (Mar-Dec 2023)

Agenda of 2023 Annual Business Meeting

Sunday, December 3, 2023 – 10:30-11:30am
(in-person and via Zoom)

1) Call to order – Marian Maciej-Hiner, President
2) Member Count (in-person and via Zoom) – Wendy Woodhouse, Secretary
3) Reports
    a. 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes/approval – Wendy Woodhouse
    b. 2023 Review and 2024 Priorities – Marian Maciej-Hiner
    c. 2023 Budget Update and 2024 Budget Proposal/approval – Jerry Guenther, Treasurer
4) Affirmation of Rev. Samuel Felderman's Ministry to the Fellowship – Linda Ressler, Trustee
5) Action Items
    a. Nomination/Election of Board positions (only members vote) – Marian Maciej-Hiner
    b. Committee Member Recruitment – Linda Ressler
6) Information
    a. Leadership Team Retreat (Board Members and Committee Chairs): January 2024
    b. 2024 UUA General Assembly: All Virtual June 20-23, 2024
    c. Denominational Stewardship: Gold Star Congregation
7) Adjourn

Minutes of 2022 Annual Business Meeting

Sunday, November 13, 2022 – 11:00 am to 11:58 am In-person and via Zoom

In Attendance: Samuel Felderman, John Butler (friend), Alice Butler (friend), Marian Maciej-Hiner, Jerry Guenther, Gail Guenther, Cyndi Hartley, Jon Luckstead (friend), Tam Prenosil, Pam Kress-Dunn, Bob Dunn, Laura Hoffman, Calvin Gatch (friend), Jo Ellen Langerman, Ed Zaccaro, Sara Zaccaro, Alyssa Zasada (zoom), Jean Becker (zoom), Frank Potter, Dave Overby, Diane Baker, Sandy Nickel (zoom), Mike Omarzu (friend), Julia Omarzu,, Judy Nauman, Wendy Woodhouse, Jeanne Harrington, Linda Ressler, Amy Ressler (zoom), Barbara Gatch (friend, zoom), Merilyn Tommaro, Tom Griep, Louise Thurn (friend, zoom)

1) Call to order at 11:00am and Opening Words– Marian Maciej-Hiner, President

2) Member Count – 26 members and 7 friends in attendance, Wendy Woodhouse, Secretary

3) Reports

a. 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes – presented by Wendy Woodhouse. Samuel Felderman moved to approve and Cyndi Hartley seconded. Unanimously approved.

b. 2022 In Review and 2023 Board Priorities – Marian Maciej-Hiner

i. Congratulations to Samuel Felderman on ordination as Interfaith Minister.

ii. For the areas the Board oversees - Fellowship Life/Operations and Building Project Management. The Fellowship community is thriving, thanks to capable, committed, caring people. We are grateful to our partners on the Building Project - Gronen Restoration, Heritage Works, Stickley-Morton Architects - for helping us navigate the challenges and celebrate the discoveries over the past 12 months.

iii. Recognize Committees, Teams and Work Groups for work in 2022:

- The Program Committee, Reopening and Zoom Teams worked together to prepare for hybrid services.
- Religious Exploration and Social Action Committees involved us in community, denominational needs, opportunities, activities and events.
- Spiritual leadership presented the Board with a plan in 2021,, put on hold until building completed.
- Building & Grounds, Finance, & Long-Range Planning Committees carried out purposes & missions.
- Membership & Care Committees provided connection with fellowship and welcomed visitors.
- Music and Historic District Coffee House Teams connected us with musicians in and out of fellowship.
- Construction Oversight, Fundraising & Interior Design Groups led/responded to requests for input/feedback and led new enterprises.

iv. 2023 Board Priorities

- Recruit childcare provider to serve children using childcare room when families attend Sunday services.
- Ensure committees, teams & work groups have resources needed to meet 2023 goals.
- Create a Team to develop Covenant of Right Relations aligned with UUA work on principles/values.

v. Article II of the UUA ByLaws being reviewed – can participate in Zoom session and provide feedback

c. 2022 Budget Update & 2023 Budget Approval - Jerry Guenther, Treasurer

i. 2022 Operations – Income =$42,371 - pledges came in as expected, some even prepaid 2023 pledges. Expenses = $34,665. Difference =+7,706. Complete report by Jan. 2023.

ii. 2022 Building Project - on budget - Gronen Construction will cover any $ shortfall until we receive our tax credits and then Gronen will be paid.

iii. 2023 Budget proposal is income and expenses of $40,000, same amount as last year. Julia Omarzu moved to approve and Linda Ressler seconded. Unanimously approved.

4) 2023 Congregational Goals - Samuel Felderman

a. Samuel led attendees in identifying their dreams and wishes for the Fellowship for 2023, writing them down and placing them in terra cotta pot that will be planted on church grounds in spring. [Adaptation of Buddhist tradition of writing down intentions and burying them in the ground so they can be released.]

b. Board and Committees will develop plans from the "Dreams and Wishes" at the Leadership Retreat (Board members & Committee chairs), to coordinate implementation & support each other's activities.

5) Action Steps - Voting for Board Vacancies & Committee Member Recruitment

a. All attendees signed in, only members voted (in-person and on Zoom). Ballots were counted by 2 members.

b. Slate of nominees submitted by Nominating Committee - the only nominations (no nominations from floor). All nominees won by unanimous votes! Jerry Guenther 2-year Treasurer term. Trustees - Julia Omarzu 1-year term and Gail Guenther 2-year term.

c. Linda Ressler outlined openings for committees and teams and encouraged others to sign up.

6) Information

a. 2023 UUA General Assembly: June 21 - 25, 2023 in Pittsburgh, PA.

b. Leadership Retreat (Board Members and Committee Chairs) to be held in January 2023.

c. We remain a Gold Star Congregation.

d.Project to be completed by end of 11/22, with move back to church 12/22 and celebration in spring 2023.

7) Adjourn – Closing by Marian. Gail Guenther moved to adjourn at 11:58 am and Diane Baker seconded. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by Wendy Woodhouse, Board Secretary

President's Report

Building Project
The highlight of the year was to return to our physical church home in January! It took us awhile to get used to being in our new/old building, but we navigated the Shakedown Cruise and are living into our beautiful space. We celebrated the project completion with an Open House! Thanks to the Open House Planning Committee, chaired by Sandy Nickel, for making it a festive event! Thanks to Katie Heil for creating an inspiring tribute to all of our donors, that ran during the event. Thanks to our partners for their comments – including commendation for preserving our historic building, giving it new life.

Retraditioning
Returning to our church building posed some challenges for us – not just because the physical space was in many ways new to us, but because we didn't just fall back into our regular routines. Things had changed over 3 years, and we found we needed to develop new routines – a work-in-progress in some areas. For example, we hired someone to clean the church because the space we are using has doubled with access to the Fellowship Hall and we no longer have the volunteers to carry out this task.

Rev. Michele Grove introduced us to the term "retraditioning" – making choices and decisions about what we'll continue doing as we've always done, and what we need to do differently to accommodate who we are now, not as we were years ago.

Deepening Connections & Widening Community
The development of this theme was the result of lively, thought-provoking, thoughtful and insightful discussion – and we want to share this experience with everyone in the Fellowship. So much of our time and energy the past 3 years has been focused on the Building Project – it feels good to turn more of our attention to meeting the needs and expectations of our congregation while also reaching out to the larger community. When we develop goals for 2024, I expect these areas will emerge as priorities:

- **Spirituality** – growth and development
- **Volunteer** – recruitment and retention
- **Membership** – recruitment, engagement, retention (purpose of Membership Committee 2019)

Treasurer's Report for December 2023 Annual Meeting

General Fund Update – Through October 30, 2023:

Income: $40,125
Expenses: $35,600 *
Difference: $4,525
* Expenses include $3,400 payment for 1/2 cost of new chairs by realigning 2023 budget lines. Also included was $5,000 set aside for a Building Fund, for future facility needs.

Building Project Update – Through October 30, 2023:
We have paid about $1.9 million in expenses. We have $145,000 available (in cash and the Bridge Loan) to cover the final payment to Gronen and our future loan interest payments, until we receive our Tax Credits. The Tax Credits will be used to repay the expected $300,000 loan total.

In addition to the audit of the Building Restoration Funds and Expenses – to be conducted by an external Accounting Firm – UUFD will also do an internal audit of our General Funds and Expenses in 2024.

Treasurer's FINAL Budget and Actuals Report (March 26, 2024)

INCOME	BUDGET	ACTUALS
Annual Pledges	$35,000	$27,005
Other Contributions	$ 5,000	$11,574
TOTAL INCOME	**$40,000**	**$38,579**

EXPENSES	BUDGET	ACTUALS
Administration		
Facilities (utilities, repairs)	$12,000	$20,400 *
Supplies & Miscellaneous (PayPal, etc.)	$ 1,075	$ 1,654 **
Phone/Internet	$ 800	$ 1,765 ***
Leadership Development	$ 1,000	$ 1,210
Facility Rental	$ 4,000	$ 200
Ministerial Functions	$ 5,000	$ 0
Workers Comp Insurance	$ 225	$ 212
Sub-total	***$24,100***	***$25,441***
Sunday Services		
Guest Ministers & Speakers	$ 5,200	$ 6,350
Child Care	$ 600	$ 0
Music	$ 100	$ 0
Sunday Service (printing, etc.)	$ 100	$ 274
Sub-total	***$ 6,000***	***$ 6,624***
Other Committee Functions		
Buildings & Grounds	$ 100	$ 0
Care Committee	$ 100	$ 0
Library	$ 200	$ 300
Long-Range Planning	$ 100	$ 0
Membership	$ 300	$ 0
Religious Exploration	$ 300	$ 254
Social Action	$ 300	$ 300
Sub-total	***$ 1,400***	***$ 854***
Denomination and Community Connection		
Dubuque Branch - NAACP	$ 150	$ 30
Dubuque Area Congregations United	$ 150	$ 150
Iowa UU Witness Advocacy Network	$ 100	$ 100
UU@UN	$ 100	$ 0
Unitarian Universalist Association	$ 3,000	$ 2,616
Sub-total	***$ 3,500***	***$ 2,896***
Total Operating Expenses	**$35,000**	**$35,815**

* Facilities included $3,366 for final church chairs payment, $1,340 for electric lawn mower/snow blower, $975 for church cleaning, and $860 for the church sound system.

** Supplies and miscellaneous included $944 for the Open House and other advertising.

*** Phone/internet included $651 web page expense.

NOTE: Social Concerns - $2,956 was donated to various charities but was not budgeted because the amount is dependent upon Sunday service cash collections or special collections. It is not listed above as operating income or expenses.
Building Fund = $5,000 was transferred to the Building Fund savings account and is not listed above.

2024 Budget Proposal

Annual Pledges	$35,000
Other Contributions	$ 5,000
TOTAL INCOME	**$40,000**
EXPENSES	
Administration	
Facilities (utilities, repairs)	$14,000
Supplies & Miscellaneous (PayPal, etc.)	$ 1,075
Phone/Internet	$ 1,700
Leadership Development	$ 1,000
Ministerial Functions	$ 4,000
Workers Comp Insurance	$ 225
Sub-total	***$22,000***
Sunday Services	
Guest Ministers & Speakers	$ 7,200
Child Care	$ 1,500
Order of Service Printing	$ 300
Sub-total	***$ 9,000***
Other Committee Functions	
Religious Exploration	$ 1,000
Social Action	$ 1,000
Membership	$ 300
Library	$ 300
Care Committee	$ 100
Sub-total	***$ 2,700***
Denomination and Community Connection	
Dubuque Branch - NAACP	$ 150
Dubuque Area Congregations United	$ 150
Iowa UU Witness Advocacy Network	$ 100
UU@UN	$ 100
Unitarian Universalist Association	$ 2,800
Sub-total	***$ 3,300***
Total Operating Expenses	**$37,000**
Building Fund	**$ 3,000**
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$40,000**
TOTAL INCOME	**$40,000**
BALANCE	**0**

NOTE: There will be additional expenditures for Social Concerns, ie. Bi-Monthly Charity or Thanksgiving Meal. These are not budgeted, and are dependent on Sunday service cash contributions or special collections.

Fellowship Life: Board of Trustees

Members:
Marian Maciej-Hiner, Wendy Woodhouse, Jerry Guenther, Linda Ressler, Gail Guenther, Amy Ressler

The Board's role in **Fellowship Life Administration** involves overseeing the operation of the organization and sustaining the health and well-being of the Fellowship as a religious community.

Deepening Connections & Widening Community
At our 2022 Annual Meeting, Rev. Samuel Felderman asked participants to identify "Dreams & Wishes" for 2023, when we would return to our building and resume congregational life. In sorting through the responses, two categories emerged that became the theme guiding our work in 2023:

Deepening Connections within our congregation to get to really know each other and be more supportive of each other's growth, and **Widening Community** by engaging with individuals and groups in our neighborhood and to grow our membership with more families and more diversity.

2023 Priorities and Accomplishments

Deepening Connections

- **Bring Board Members and Committee Chairs together for Leadership Retreat**
  Rev. Michele Grove, Stockton UU, facilitated the March 18 Retreat, with 13 UUFD leaders participating. Michele led us in team building activities and shared "big picture" information about some of the challenges we are facing – some unique to UUFD and others faced by everyone, such as recovering from the pandemic. In returning to our congregational life in our new building, Michele encouraged us to ask the question "**WHY?**" when we think about our activities and where we're putting our time and energy – to clarify **why** what we're doing is important.

  The Leadership Team met again on June 3, for a Leadership Workshop facilitated by **Amy Ressler**.

- **Ensure all committees have resources needed to carry out the Fellowship's mission**
  Board Liaisons worked with Committee Chairs to strengthen communication between Committees and the Board, to identify needs and requests for resources.

- **Work with congregation to determine direction for Spiritual Leadership**
  The Board has been mindful of the recommendations of the Spiritual Leadership Team, in the report submitted to the Board in 2021. We assessed the congregation's needs for spiritual leadership and evaluated Rev. Samuel Felderman's preparation, strengths and skills to serve the Fellowship. We are offering a 2-year contract to Samuel – starting January 2024 – for at least one Sunday service per month – and Pastoral Care and Rites of Passage, as needed.

- **Create a Team to lead the development of a Covenant of Right Relations**
  With the demand for volunteers to meet immediate needs of the congregation, this was put on hold.

Widening Community

- **Recruit Child Care Provider**
  Thanks to Linda Ressler we have a Sunday service child care provider for families with young children.

- **Expand the visibility of the Fellowship**
  While this was not an explicit goal for the Board, we seized opportunities presented to us:
  1) Participated in Architecture Week (May) – opening our doors to building tours (~100 people)
  2) Provided input/feedback to Pam Kress-Dunn and Bob Dunn, who arranged for publicity in 365ink – an article (April) and 3 ads (September/October)
  3) Hosted an Open House (October) to celebrate completion of the building project (~100 people)

2024 Goals will be developed in January 2024

Buildings and Grounds Committee

Members: Frank Potter (chair), Jon Luckstead, Craig Reber

Mission: Maintain the physical interior and exterior properties of the UUFD in a safe and frugal manor. Sidewalks and lawn are maintained, along with appliances such as dishwasher, refrigerators and microwaves, fire equipment and safety signs, and routine maintenance such as replacing furnace/air conditioner filters. Trash is removed and set out. The B&G advises the Board on maintenance issues.

Reporting: The Committee reports to the Board through Liaison Linda Ressler. Frank routinely pays vendors for items or repairs needed, since he has a discount at Lowe's, and is reimbursed by the Treasurer. Any major anticipated expense goes through the Board before purchasing. The Board consults with the Committee before any project is undertaken that relates to the B&G mission. Offering of gifts to the Fellowship will go through the B&G before being accepted.

Church Building: Most equipment is new so we are learning how to operate and maintain it. From our observation of the work they have done, we find that Gronen has been a great partner. We have been monitoring the functions of the new building and working with Gronen and their contractors to make adjustments with their products and work as needed, for example adjustments of locks and doors.

We have had no issues with central heating and air conditioning. The sump pump on the West side of the Fellowship Hall needs to be replaced and Gronen's plumber is investigating odors.

As the result of a Fire Department inspection, we learned that no gas machines can be in or attached to our building – so we are replacing with battery-powered ones. The tool box which was outside the Emerson House is now by the church. We may remove it and store tools in the basement stairwell.

The Board has hired a janitor to clean the church weekly.

Electronics: At this time, the Board has assumed responsibility for electronics as we learn to operate and maintain the new audiovisual system installed in the sanctuary. Equipment includes: Internet through ImOn, router for two WiFi connections, iPad control panel, laptop, speaker, camera, microphones, remote for presentations, and enhanced listening devices for persons with hearing impairment. Frank assisted with supplemental listening devices and a goose-neck holder for the podium microphone.

Internet service proved to be a major challenge when we returned to services in the church in January, but it is working well now. Frank was involved with getting Internet service. Since Century Link did not have adequate speed for Zoom, we engaged T Mobile. Their speed did not meet our needs so we contracted with ImOn, a fiber network. This costs substantially more but we need it for hybrid services.

Emerson House: The Emerson House has not been used by UUFD this past year since it has been in use for storage and work for the building project. Gronen restored the exterior and added some supports for the building in the basement. They will be doing some rewiring in the basement in December.

Grounds: Gronen has done landscaping on the east and near the Emerson House, and some temporary work between the buildings and between the Emerson House and 17th Street. Frank expects some follow-up next spring. Craig continues to mow the lawn and Frank will blow snow again this year.

Frank replaced the broken light to the exterior UUFD sign with two new LED flood lamps.

Submitted by Frank Potter, Chair

Care Committee

Members: Samuel Felderman (chair), Wendy Woodhouse, Gail Guenther

The Care Committee continues to respond to UU Fellowship members' needs as they arise. In 2023, Committee members did the following:

- Coordinated delivery of meals to those in need – through the "Meal Train"
- Sent cards to members and friends experiencing loss, illness and injury
- Extended condolences to members & friends who have lost family members – and invited Fellowship support, through email notices
- Encouraged visits and phone calls to those who are unable to attend Sunday services

There is also a very caring network among all UU members and friends who relate information, concerns and actions on behalf of the Fellowship.

Pastoral Care
Rev. Samuel Felderman provided pastoral care to those in need, including home, nursing home and hospital visits on behalf of UUFD. He conducted Celebration of Life services, and worked with Fellowship members on arrangements and serving lunch to family and friends following services held at the church.

Finance Committee

Members: Jerry Guenther (Chair), Gene Schaul, Merilyn Tommaro

Purpose: Fundraising, budgeting, pledge record-keeping, bookkeeping, audit, other financial tasks.

Goals:
- Budget, track, and report income and expenditures
- Plan and implement steps to remain financially solvent

Library Committee

While it was wonderful to bring the library back to the newly restored building, the theme of deepening connections & widening community via the library will require significant improvements.

Here are the goals set in 2022, and how they were (or not) met:

- Find at least two people to join the committee – Sara Zaccaro is our new member, and has learned to process books as well as aid in categorizing them.
- Shelve library books, in categorical order, in the lower level of the church – Done, though in an out-of-the way corner few people go to.
- Find financial support for built-in shelves, rather than the mismatched donated bookcases we have been using – Not done, but a fervent wish for 2024.
- Encourage more borrowing, by mentioning specific books (old and new) during announcements and in the newsletter, and by creating Sunday services – in tandem with the Program Committee – in which 4–5 readers present spirited "book reports." – We plan to do this service in early 2024, provided we find willing participants. Putting one book each week on the back counter has helped with awareness of our collection.
- Teach more people the Libib app, which provides a catalog with detailed descriptions of each book in the collection. – A good goal for 2024, preferably using video screens to demonstrate.
- Continue to partner with the Religious Exploration Committee for the UUA Common Read. – This partnership is happening with RE, especially in purchasing a set of Qurans, both in a well-reviewed translation and in three large-print copies, for the Ramadan Read.
- Continue requesting public library copies of books we own from Carnegie-Stout Public Library if they do not already own them, especially for the Common Read. – A continuing practice bearing excellent results.

The following books were added this year, to support committee work, Sunday reflections and requests:

- ***The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why***, by Phyllis Tickle
- ***Mistakes & Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism***, by Nancy Palmer Jones
- ***Jesus for the Non-Religious***, by John Shelby Spong
- ***Best Spiritual Writing of 2012*** (with Pico Iyer's Sunday service inspiration "Chapels")
- ***Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World***, by Vivek Murthy
- ***30-Second Religion: The 50 Most Thought-provoking Religious Beliefs, Each Explained in Half a Minute***, by Russell Re Manning, ed.
- ***Ecowomanism at the Panama Canal***, by Sofia Betancourt (UUA President)
- ***Best Spiritual Writing 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, & 2008***
- ***Repentance & Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World*** (UUA 2023/24 Common Read)
- ***Come and See: The Monastic Way for Today***, by Abbot Brendan Freeman of New Melleray Abbey

Total spent for Books = $153.88
Expenses also incurred: Processing materials (cards, envelopes, dust jacket protectors): $50.14
Grand total spent = $204.02 ($4.02 over budget)

Goals for 2024

As noted above, we hope to continue several goals set for 2023, as well as a few more:

- Increase budget from $200 to $300 to allow more book purchases.
- Price and raise funds for built-in shelves. In order to truly improve library use and the theme of connections and community, the books need to come to the people – moving them from the current cramped area to built-in shelves along the west wall of Fellowship Hall. People gather there naturally after Sunday services, sitting at the long tables and talking. Books will naturally enter the conversation only if they are placed right there, where the people naturally congregate. Additionally, they should not be shelved so near the floor. Accessibility is key to use.
- Recruit one more member. Three is the ideal number for making decisions, keeping the books, and doing the manual labor of book processing.
- Encourage more borrowing by highlighting library materials in newsletter and announcements.
- Teach the Libib app.
- Partner with other committees in buying and using new books.
- Work with Membership committee by handing out "library cards."
- Lead Common Read activities.
- Support small-group gatherings such as documentary viewing, book (or essay) clubs, podcasts.
- Make the library more inviting – signs, a rug, comfy chairs, and the like.

Respectfully submitted by Pam Kress-Dunn, Library Committee Chair
November 15, 2023

Long-Range Planning Committee

Co-chairs: Amy Ressler and Tam Prenosil

2023 Activities
The Long Range Planning Committee last created a report 20 years ago, in 2003. The committee determined that a new congregational self-assessment would be the most effective step forward, to understand where we are now so that we might envision where we would like to be in the *next* 20 years.

Questions for the survey were gleaned from existing UUA congregational assessment surveys and modified to fit our congregation. Committees were also invited to submit questions. The committee hopes to clarify expectations, desires and needs of the congregation.

The survey was sent to members and friends near the end of November, with a quick turnaround requested of December 1st. Survey results will be scanned for themes and a report will be made available to the board and the congregation before the end of 2023.

Membership Committee

Co-chairs: Katie Heil and Amy Ressler

Katie and Amy agreed to co-chair the Committee, and a New Member Ceremony was to be planned in conjunction with the outdoor service at Murphy Park in the summer. But not all of the members who joined the Fellowship since March 2020 were able to attend, so it was postponed for another time.

Wendy Woodhouse, and Tom Griep coordinated to keep member contact information up to date with the UUA/***UU World*** magazine and the online UUFD directory. Alyssa Zasada, past chair of the Membership Committee, worked with Marian Maciej-Hiner to update the Book of Celebrations.

YoungUUns
The YoungUUns is a social group of young adults between the general ages of 18 and 40, though all ages are welcome. We continued having regular fires as social/spiritual gatherings. Many thanks to RRS Stewart for hosting the fires.

Goal for 2024
The Committee will be revived, with former and new members meeting to plan a Fellowship Orientation, New Member Ceremony, and other activities to recruit, engage and retain UUFD members:

Program Committee

Members: Bob Dunn (chair), Calvin Gatch, Ed Zaccaro, Pam Kress- Dunn, Judy Nauman
The group meets the 4th Tuesday of each month.

Mission: The Committee's main work is in the planning, preparing, and presenting of weekly Sunday services for the UUFD. Committee members typically function as facilitators at Sunday services. The committee recruits speakers from the fellowship, the local community and beyond to provide Sunday reflections. We seek to achieve a balance and blend of speakers and topics which relate to the mission and principles of the UUA and speak to both the spiritual and the secular.

This year witnessed the return of our fellowship to our building at 1699 Iowa. We had been meeting at St. John's Parish House for over a year due to ongoing renovations. The refurbished church provides a much-improved atmosphere for our services and the modernized Fellowship Hall has proved to be an excellent after-service location for coffee and conversation. An enhanced Audio-Video system has proven a challenge to master but hopefully will allow us to continue to Zoom our services to viewers off-site, as well as displaying images, videos, and text on our large TV monitors.

The committee wishes to recognize and applaud the work of our Sunday tech personnel – Katie Heil, Tom Griep, and RRS Stewart.

We have established Anchor Services, roughly one a month, throughout the year. These are meant to emphasize and accentuate our role in the broader community of Dubuque and deepen the ties within our fellowship.

Our goals for 2023 included:

- Involving more members in the services – as facilitators, readers, musicians, and presenters
- Maintaining a regular ministerial presence in the UUFD, primarily through Rev. Samuel Felderman (16 services/year) with occasional presentations from other UU ministers
- Integrating the new audio/video system into our services.
- Having a rotating schedule for people providing snacks and coffee on Sundays.
- Providing a balance of UU hymns and contemporary music at our services.
- Devising a system for locking the church and closing the parking lot after Sunday services.

The committee is always seeking names of potential speakers for our services and welcomes suggestions from UUFD members. We would welcome an additional committee member to ease the burden of recruiting speakers and facilitating Sunday services.

The committee strongly requests that Rev. Samuel be awarded the role of part-time minister of the UUFD. His recent presiding over memorial services and his other contributions besides Sunday reflections need to be recognized. This action would also benefit the collaboration between Samuel and the Program Committee in planning and executing the weekly services.

Respectfully submitted by Robert Dunn, Chair

Religious Exploration (RE) Committee

Members: Cyndi Hartley (Chair), Jo Ellen Langerman, Linda Ressler, Pam Kress-Dunn

Mission Statement

"The RE Committee seeks to deepen the spiritual life of the Fellowship's children, youth and adults through engagement and exploration of the Six Sources. We will strive to educate ourselves and our community in religious practices and texts and to help each other grow together as we intertwine our physical lives and knowledge with the spiritual. Through offering engaging and compelling religious education programming, we will instill and support a deeper understanding of our Unitarian Universalist principles and sources."

2023 activities focused on deepening connections within the fellowship:

- Restarted having Childrens' RE during Sunday service, utilizing the UUA's ***Tapestry of Faith*** curriculum.
- Facilitated a discussion of the UUA Common Read, ***Defund Fear: Safety Without Policing, Prisons, and Punishment*** by Zach Norris.
- Presented the reflection at Sunday service on the Baha'i Faith. Assisted with reflections on Lammas, Yom Kippur, and Diwali. Coordinated samplings of food after the reflections.
- Hosted Ed Zaccaro to lead a discussion of his book, ***Police Reform: Moving from Slogans to Solutions***.
- Hosted a project after the Annual Meeting to help UUFD members define why they choose to be a part of this Fellowship.

2023 activities focused on widening our community reach:

- Hosted Dr. Adib Kassas, imam at the Tri-State Islamic Center, who led multiple sessions during Ramadan to teach us about Islam and the Quran.
- Sponsored a visit to the Tri-State Islamic Center to observe weekly prayer and a tour of the mosque.
- Collaborated with the Social Action committee to host an informational table at Dubuque Pride.

Proposed 2024 activities to deepen connections within the fellowship:

- Coordinate workshops for Adult RE.
- Create opportunities for UUFD members to join together in small group activities.
- Collaborate with other committees to renew our Welcoming Congregation status with the UUA.
- Facilitate a discussion of the UUA Common Read, ***On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World*** by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg.

Proposed 2024 activities to widen our community reach:

- Invite Dr. Kassas to return for continued discussion of Islam and the Quran. We purchased copies of the Quran for participants to borrow. Ramadan in 2024 is March 10-April 8.
- Continuing our presence at Dubuque Pride and expanding our presence to other community events.

Respectfully submitted by Cyndi Hartley, Chair

Social Action Committee

Members: Cyndi Hartley (Chair), Jo Ellen Langerman, Tam Prenosil, Diane Baker, Frank Ebersold

During 2022, the Social Action Committee supported our community by engaging in the following:

- Bimonthly donations to local charities via "plate collections"
  - Jan/Feb - Dubuque for Refugee Kids - $385.00
  - Mar/April - Dubuque Rescue Mission - $399.00
  - May/June - The Y Crisis Services - $388.00
  - July/Aug - Dream Center - $487.00
  - Sept/Oct - Avery Foundation - $446.00
  - Nov/Dec - Sierra Club/White Pine Group - $166.00 (as of Nov 18)
  - **Total - $2,271** (and counting!) For comparison, in 2022 we raised $1,744.

2023 activities focused on deepening connections within the fellowship:

- Hosted screening of the documentary ***Current Revolution,*** on transitioning to electric energy.
- Hosted Art Roche to share about his time aboard the *Golden Rule,* a traveling boat teaching about the bombing of the Marshall Islands and nuclear proliferation.

2023 activities focused on widening our community reach:

- Began raising money for the Dubuque Food Pantry instead of St. Stephen's food bank because our dollar can go further there (purchasing things they can't get from the food bank, such as milk and paper towels). Ultimately, we raised $36.61 for St. Stephen's and $45.69 for the Dubuque food pantry, for a total of **$82.30** to help with food insecurity.
- Collaborated with Religious Exploration Committee to host an informational table at Dubuque Pride.
- Expanded our "territory" of our Jackson Park adoption to the surrounding streets and stormwater grates (17th St. to 15th St. and Iowa St. to Main St.).
- Restarted hosting meetings of Dubuque Area Congregations United.
- Participated in serving at a weekly community meal provided by St. Patrick's Catholic Church.
- Donated money **($130)** and time to the Crop Walk to End World Hunger.
- Sent **$50** to the UU church in Plano, Texas, after their building was vandalized. The UUFD Board sent an additional **$200.** We also gathered cards from the congregation with words of encouragement and sent them to the Plano church.
- Donated **$50** to the Dubuque branch NAACP's turkey giveaway, providing 2 turkeys to local families.
- Encouraged the congregation to send postcards to the Iowa Utility Board, urging them to oppose the proposed CO2 pipelines.

Proposed 2024 activities to deepen connections within the fellowship:

- Collaborate with other committees to renew our Welcoming Congregation status with the UUA.
- Renew our Green Sanctuary status with the UUA.
- Human Rights Day and/or UN service or presentation.
- Apply for UU@UN Sixth Principle Award via UUA.
- Apply for Cool Congregations certification via Interfaith Power & Light.

Proposed 2024 activities to widen our community reach:

- Continuing our presence at Dubuque Pride and expanding our presence to other community events.
- Work towards reducing plastic waste through videos and hands-on projects.
- Donate **$700+** to co-sponsor community events.

Respectfully submitted by Cyndi Hartley, Chair

Teams

Communications Team

- **Members:** Cyndi Hartley, Facebook Coordinator and Newsletter Coordinator; Tom Griep, Alyssa Zasada, and RRS Stewart, Website Coordinators
- **Purpose:** To keep members, friends, our extended Fellowship network, and visitors informed of current information and events within the congregation, community, and UUA.

Historic District Coffee House Team

- **Members:** Art Roche and Karen Buechele, Zoom co-hosts
- **Purpose:** Provide an opportunity for musicians and performers at all levels to share their talents.

Leadership Team

- **Members:** Board of Trustees members, Committee chairs
- **Purpose:** Develop a shared understanding of purpose, priorities, and roles; work together to serve the congregation; collaborate when there may be opportunities to pool resources.

Music Team

- **Members:** Katie Heil, Maureen Leytem, Alyssa Zasada, Unitarian Universalist Ukulele Union (UUUU) members, Bob Dunn, Music Coordinator
- **Purpose:** Coordinate music for Sunday services; lead weekly UUUU sessions.

Tech Team

- **Members:** Tom Griep, Katie Heil, RRS Stewart
- **Purpose:** Work with Program Committee members to prepare for Sunday services; assist participants with connecting; serve as host for services – run slides, manage mute/unmute status.

Building Rehabilitation: Board of Trustees

Members:
Marian Maciej-Hiner (Project Coordinator), Jerry Guenther, Wendy Woodhouse, Linda Ressler, Gail Guenther, Amy Ressler

2023 Goals and Accomplishments

- **Apply for reimbursement of expenses paid**
  Work with CFO Randy Schmitt and accounting firm to document expenses for reimbursement

  At the recommendation of Randy Schmitt, the Board has contracted with Forge Financial and Management Consulting, Inc. – based in Des Moines, Iowa – to audit the project income and expenses. This is a requirement for applying to the State of Iowa for State Historic Tax Credits, to reimburse us for 25% of the qualified expenses we paid for – with donations, grants, and our bridge loan. We anticipate that we will apply for Tax Credit reimbursement in 2024.

- **Choose audiovisual partner**
  Compare proposals from two audiovisual firms and determine the best fit for the church

  The Board enlisted UUFD members with audiovisual experience to review the two proposals, compare key elements of each, and make a recommendation to the Board. Bob Dunn, Mike Omarzu and Alyssa Zasada conducted the reviews individually and recommended that we work with Embark, a firm based in Des Moines, Iowa. The rationale was that the quality of the components of the systems designed by both audiovisual firms were very similar but the cost differential was significant. We had limited funds to work with – we used the reimbursements for grants received from the State of Iowa ($30,000) and the City of Dubuque ($35,000) to cover the primary cost, along with interest income earned on the Escrow account at MidWestOne Bank. Many components of the audiovisual system are working, we are still troubleshooting with Embark on others. Embark will provide a final training session in December.

- **Restore the East wing ceiling**
  Work with Fundraising Work Group and Heritage Works to raise the additional ~$20,000 needed

  We commend the Fundraising Work Group – especially Wendy Woodhouse, grant writing lead – for applying for and being awarded a $5,000 grant for the ceiling restoration. Previous funds raised, along with a $1,200 grant from the City of Dubuque, bring the total available funds to $12,500. We will continue to work with the Fundraising Work Group to raise the remaining $12,500.

2024 Goals

- Work with Randy Schmitt, Forge Financial, and Duane Hagerty with Heritage Works, to submit the final application for State Historic Tax Credit reimbursement
- Work with the Fundraising Work Group to raise the additional $12,000 needed to complete the East wing ceiling restoration
- Work with Gronen to complete the installation of storm windows – mostly covered by a $24,000 grant, with a $12,000 match

Construction Oversight Work Group

Members: Marian Maciej-Hiner and Jerry Guenther (co-leads), Frank Potter, RRS Stewart, Ed Zaccaro, Joe Keyes, Linda Ressler

Shakedown Cruise
With the completion of the church rehabilitation project in December 2022, the congregation returned to holding services in the church in January 2023 – and our focus was on helping the Board and congregation learn to live in the new/old building. **Joe Keyes** recommended that we take January and February to test all the functions of the building, to make sure everything worked – a Shakedown Cruise (a nautical term for testing a ship's performance, such as after a major overhaul has been made, to familiarize a crew with the vessel and to ensure all the ship's systems are functional).

The Board enlisted the help of everyone in the congregation to monitor what was working well and what needed attention. Things needing attention were reported to Terri Droessler, Project Manager for Gronen, to fix. The Shakedown Cruise continues – we are still attending to some issues with plumbing.

Fundraising Work Group

Members: Katie Heil (lead), Marian Maciej-Hiner, Calvin Gatch
Grant-writer: Wendy Woodhouse

The Fundraising Work Group focused on three main projects this year. The first was donor recognition. We contacted donors to find out their wishes regarding recognition and created a donor reel that could be played on the TVs above the stage before services and events. Going forward, the Work Group will be considering the creation of a more permanent display.

The second was on fundraising for the ceiling restoration. Wendy collaborated with Duane Hagerty of Heritage Works to apply for a $5,000 grant from the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund, which was awarded. We have raised ~$12,500 of the $25,000 needed to complete ceiling restoration, with $12,500 left. We had brochures by the display sign for the ceiling during the Open House, and will do a mailing to prospective donors. Wendy will collaborate with Duane to submit proposals to other funding agencies.

The third was on applying for a Historic Resource Development Program (HRDP) grant for storm windows to protect the original restored windows (work done with an earlier HRDP grant). Wendy collaborated with Duane to apply for a $24,000 grant to install storm windows, which was awarded.

Interior Design Work Group

Members: Diane Baker and Gail Guenther (co-leads), Sandy Nickel, Julia Omarzu, Merilyn Tommaro, Sara Zaccaro,

This past year the Interior Design Work Group gathered information on items in our charge. Kitchen appliances were purchased. Chairs were delivered and set up. The move back into the church was organized and accomplished. An inventory was completed during the move.

Board Elections

Thanks to **the Nominations Committee** for seeking candidates for the open Board positions. If there are no additional nominations from the floor, this Slate of Nominees will be presented at the Annual Meeting:

- **President for Two (2) Years:** Marian Maciej-Hiner
- **Secretary for Two (2) Years:** Amy Ressler
- **Trustee for Two (2) Years:** Linda Ressler
- **Trustee for One (1) Year:** Diane Baker

President (one nominee)
Marian Maciej-Hiner: I have appreciated serving as Board President for the Fellowship the past 4 years – working with a wonderful group of dedicated and committed members and friends of our community. Working together, we've demonstrated that we're a congregation that can make amazing things happen!

In continuing to serve as Board President, I can provide continuity with the Building Project through the next phases – receiving State Historic Tax Credits, overseeing the ceiling restoration and storm window installation, envisioning what the Emerson House could be when we restore the interior. I look forward to moving into the future together: using technology, embracing diversity, sharing our spiritual journeys, expanding leadership opportunities, opening pathways for new members to join our "beloved community."

Secretary (one nominee)
Amy Ressler: I have been an active member of the Fellowship for over 20 years, and would like to give back to the community that has given me so much. I have served as RE teacher, musician, meeting facilitator, Membership Committee co-chair, Long Range Planning Committee co-chair, and most recently as a Board member completing a term for someone who had to step down. I would like to continue serving on the Board as Secretary, which is a role I can do well both remotely or in person. I have experience serving on several nonprofit organization boards. I have strong organizational skills, I'm an effective communicator and I am dedicated to this Fellowship.

Trustee (2-year term) (one nominee)
Linda Ressler: I have served as Board president and on various committees throughout the 25 plus years I have been a member of UUFD. I am dedicated and committed to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. I currently serve on the Religious Exploration Committee and provide youth Religious Education when we have school-age children at Sunday services. I have served on the Board as a Trustee throughout the building rehabilitation project, and participate in meetings with the Board President, Board Treasurer and the Gronen Team, as a member of the Construction Oversight Work Group. I have also worked with our audiovisual vendor, Embark, on the implementation of our new sound and video system.

I would like to continue serving on the Board as UUFD forges new directions – now that we have returned to our beautiful space and are renewing our commitment to deepen connections within the congregation and reach out to widen our community connections, welcoming diverse participants to join us as members of our miracle church.

Trustee (1-year term) (one nominee)
Diane Baker:
I've been a member of UUFD for about 5 years, and previously attended Unity Temple, a UU church in Oak Park, Illinois. I served as a Trustee on the Board of UUFD during the restoration of our church.

My work experience includes Human Resource Management for a 600 employee company, and 20 years owning/operating an antique shop after "retirement." I live in Bellevue, have 3 grown children; enjoy reading, music, traveling, learning and staying busy.

Serving on the Board is interesting, important and challenging at times. I would be honored to serve again.