UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF DUBUQUE

Celebrating 40 years as a liberal religious presence in the Tri-State Region

2025 Annual Report

FROM MOMENTUM TO MOVEMENT

"Movement together in community – lighting the way for each other" describes a powerful metaphor for collective action where individuals support and uplift one another, guiding each other toward a shared goal. This can be interpreted through the powerful sense of unity created in shared activities like group movement or spiritual practices.

The core idea is that each individual's contribution, no matter how small, illuminates the path forward for the entire community.

Source: AI Overview

UUFD 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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2025 Board of Trustees

President: Marian Maciej-Hiner (2024-2025)
Treasurer: Jerry Guenther (2025-2026)
Secretary: Amy Ressler (2024-2025)
Trustee (2 Year): Linda Ressler (2024-2025)
Trustee (2 Year): Gail Guenther (2025-2026)
Trustee (1 Year): Anne Benda (2025)

Agenda of 2025 Annual Business Meeting

Sunday, December 7, 2025 – 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) – Amy Ressler, Secretary
3) Reports
    a. 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes/approval – Amy Ressler
    b. 2025 Review and 2026 Priorities – Marian Maciej-Hiner
    c. 2025 Budget Update and 2026 Budget Proposal/approval – Jerry Guenther, Treasurer
4) Action Items
    a. Affirmation of UUFD Covenant of Good Relations – Cyndi Lawton, Strategic Planning
    b. Recruiting new minister, with Reverend Samuel Felderman's resignation effective May 2026 – Anne Benda, Trustee
    c. Nomination/Election of Board positions (only members vote) – Marian Maciej-Hiner
5) Information
    a. 2026 UUA General Assembly: Meet the Moment: Together Everywhere, June 14-21, 2026 – in-person Louisville, Kentucky and satellite sites, congregations can create their own local gathering experiences with UUA support
    b. UUFD Congregational Retreat: September 2026
    c. Denominational Stewardship: Gold Star Congregation
6) Adjourn

Minutes of 2024 Annual Business Meeting

Sunday, December 8, 2024 – 10:30-11:30am In-person at 1699 Iowa Street, Dubuque IA and via Zoom

1) Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. by Board President, Marian Maciej-Hiner
2) Member Count: List of attendees is attached, below the minutes.
3) Reports

a) The **2023 Annual Meeting Minutes** were unanimously approved

b) Treasurer's report: Jerry Guenther presented the proposed budget $45,000 up $5,000 from last year. The increase is due to the cleaning bill, each week for the church and soon to be added cleaning the Emerson house. It is no longer part of the facilities cost but listed has its own line item now. $2,500 increase for the Program Committee, primarily to bring in special services. Also $1,000 more in ministerial services. Reductions: $1,000 less in paying our annual dues, because of a new formula for determining congregational dues to UUA. Also: about $496,000 in tax credits are now expected. Hopefully to be received in the next few months. The tax credits will pay off the balance of our building rehabilitation loan. The treasurer's report was approved unanimously.

c) Committee goals for 2025 will be shared at a later date.

d) President's report: Marian thanked all the board members, the committees, the leaders, the teams. She reflected on the major accomplishments by committees, teams, etc., as collaborative efforts between people, partners, and unexpected opportunities. She noted that there is a cohesiveness of momentum, that we are focusing on our congregational life: we welcomed 11 new members, held our first congregational retreat. Leadership was expanded from board, to committees, groups, leadership team and now congregation. Individuals have contributed much as well. The technical team members transitioned from Zoom during Covid, working with an integrated AV system that supports events, hearing aids, etc. Building restoration projects: building rehab, ceiling restoration. Outreach: UUUU goes to nursing homes, etc.

4) Activity: Marian led a gratitude exchange activity: both expressing gratitude and receiving gratitude. Marian passed out gratitude cards as prompts for discussion of gratitude, to share with a partner.
5) Board Election: The slate of nominations for Board was presented, and as there were no additional nominations, the slate was approved unanimously by acclamation. Diane Baker was thanked for her board participation, and she responded that it was an honor. Anne Benda accepted the nomination and election to the board by acclamation.
6) Committee Recruitment: Linda Ressler talked about committee membership and invited everyone to participate on a committee. She asked everyone to consider how they might best serve on a committee. Everyone can contribute something to a committee.
7) Announcements: UUA General Assembly will be in June 2025 in Baltimore MD. UUFD Congregational Retreat will be planned for some time in September 2025.
8) Survey of classes: Michele Grove has offered a few options for Adult Religious Exploration classes to the UUFD. RE Committee Chair Cyndi Lawton passed out copies of the list of offerings for people to rank and give feedback to the Committee.
9) Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Ressler, Board Secretary

Those in attendance: Diane Baker, Jean Becker, Anne Benda, Bob Dunn, Nino Erba, Bonnie Garrity, Calvin Catch, Barbara Gatch, Tom Griep, Gail Guenther, Jerry Guenther, Katie Heil, Karen Kascel, Pam Kress-Dunn, Jo Ellen Langerman, Cyndi Lawton, Maureen Leytem, Marian Maciej-Hiner, Sandra Nickel, Frank Potter, Dick Pouzar, Tam Prenosil, Craig Reber, Amy Ressler, Linda Ressler, Merilyn Tommaro, Katherine Tully, Ed Zaccaro, Sara Zaccaro, Alyssa Zasada

Minister's Report

Dear friends,

As I look over the logs that I have kept this past year, I have been struck by what they contain. The raw data shows that I have logged well over one hundred hours of care visits this year. I have also driven over two hundred miles, crisscrossing our community again and again to visit your homes, meet you in coffee shops, gather with you around restaurant tables and meet for conversation via Zoom. While this data is useful, no amount of spread sheets, however, could truly reflect the laughter and tears, the joys, sorrows, grief, heartache, and happiness that were contained within these hours shared together.

It has been a privilege and blessing to walk with so many of you and some of the highest and lowest moments of life. As we look into 2026, I can see that there is much work ahead for us. As I come to the last months of my time as your minister, I hope that I can continue to meet with you and share with you in all your hopes and worries for this next chapter in our congregation's story, and in our life together.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for allowing me to serve in this capacity. I look forward to seeing where 2026 takes us!

With Love,

Rev. Samuel

Reverend Samuel Felderman
Interfaith Minister Proudly Serving the UUA

President's Report

2025 has been a year of movement – where we supported and lifted one another up, celebrated together, and guided each other toward shared goals. It has been a year of:

Celebration
- We have been a liberal religious presence in the Tri-State Region for 40 years!

Completion
- New library shelves installed
- Received State Historic Tax Credits
- Finalized Donor Recognition Plaque
- Ordered acoustic panels to improve ability to hear in the sanctuary

Community outreach
- Increased support for local charities through Sunday plate offerings (half of cash)
- Expanded role for events such as Pride and Juneteenth
- Increased visibility of our commitment to social justice

Caring community
- Developed Covenant of Right Relations to strengthen relationships
- Rev. Samuel responded to pastoral care needs of members and friends

Growth
- Welcomed 3 new members to the Fellowship
- Expanded youth and adult Religious Education programs
- Developed as a spiritual community – through Sunday services and pre-service gatherings

Grieving
- Loss of longtime friend Jon Luckstead and longtime member Charlie Winterwood
- Loss of our beloved child care provider Ann Hess
- Anticipation of Rev. Samuel leaving the Fellowship – we've been fortunate to have him for 6 years

Looking ahead
- Congregational Retreat resulted in 5 top priorities for 2026
- Will reflect on who we are – what we're about – where we're going as we recruit for a new minister

Treasurer's Report

General Fund Update
Our financial figures through October 30, 2025 will be presented at the Annual Meeting:

Current Income: $
Current Expenses: $

State Historic Tax Credits: Received the expected $497,439.22 from the Iowa Economic Development Authority, as reimbursement of eligible expenses we covered in the building project. We paid off the balance of $240,506.61 on our bridge loan and took out a CD for $256,500 so the funds would be earning interest. The Board will continue working on projects in the church and Emerson House that we were unable to complete in the original building project.

2026 Budget Proposal – tentative

INCOME	
Annual Pledges	$45,000
Other Contributions	$ 5,000
TOTAL INCOME	**$50,000**
EXPENSES	
Administration	
Facilities (utilities, repairs)	$15,300
Supplies & Miscellaneous (PayPal, etc.)	$ 1,075
Internet	$ 1,200
Congregational Retreat	$ 1,000
Ministerial Functions	$10,000
Cleaning – Church and Emerson House	$ 4,000
Child Care for Sunday services	$ 1,500
Workers Comp Insurance	$ 225
Sub-total	***$39,300***
Committees	
Program Committee	$10,000
Religious Exploration	$ 1,000
Social Action	$ 1,000
Membership	$ 600
Library	$ 300
Care Committee	$ 100
Sub-total	***$13,000***
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	$ 2,200
Sub-total	***$ 2,700***
Total Operating Expenses	**$50,000**
Building Fund	**$ 0**
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$50,000**
TOTAL INCOME	**$50,000**
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.

Board of Trustees

Members:
Marian Maciej-Hiner, President; Amy Ressler, Secretary; Jerry Guenther, Treasurer; Linda Ressler, 2-year Trustee; Gail Guenther, 2-year Trustee; Anne Benda, 1-year Trustee

2025 Accomplishments

- **Congregational Covenant:** Hosted small group discussions about the Covenant crafted by the Strategic Planning Committee (formerly Long Range Planning), with input and feedback from Members and Friends, to reflect on the value, relevance and application of the covenant. The Board affirmed the Covenant and introduced it in the newsletter, Order of Service, UUFD website, so we could live with and live into the Covenant for a few months before the Annual Meeting.
- **Congregational Retreat:** Held the Second Annual Congregational Retreat, hosted by the Board and Strategic Planning Committee, on Saturday, September 20, 2025 with 16 people participating in identifying our priorities for 2026: Community Outreach, Facility Improvements, Fellowship/Social Opportunities, Program Diversity/Spiritual Development, Visibility/Awareness.
- **AED acquisition:** A refurbished Automated External Defibrillator (AED) was secured via Dubuque Fire personnel at a cost of $290.00. This is a device meant for lay people – training is tentatively scheduled for December 21 for the congregation.
- **Mississippi River Cruise:** Encouraged long-time and new members and friends, and frequent visitors, to enjoy lunch and an afternoon on the river. 11 people attended on September 14.
- **Library shelving:** After reviewing proposals for building and installing the shelves – designed by an interior design consultant in 2024 – an Amish carpenter from Lancaster, Wisconsin was selected, and he completed the installation in November. He did a wonderful job – the shelves are beautiful.
- **Emerson House Building Inspection:** Contracted with Dubuqueland Home Inspection to conduct a full inspection of the Emerson House. There were no major concerns noted during the inspection, but recommendations were made for repairs, upgrades and improvements, monitoring, and maintenance. The report was shared with the Buildings and Grounds Committee.
- **Emerson House Use Work Group:** Formed Work Group to explore possible uses of the Emerson House, to guide updates and modifications of the interior of the building – which was not part of the building rehabilitation project.
- **Emerson House Windows:** Contracted with Gronen to replace all of the windows in the Emerson House, which had been part of the original building rehabilitation project.
- **Acoustic panels:** The hard plaster walls and parallel surfaces in the sanctuary result in echoing, making it difficult to hear the spoken word in this space. Contracted with Lifeline Audio Video Technologies to lay out coverage and placement of panels, and worked with architect Jeff Morton to finalize a design. Installation projected for mid-March 2026.
- **UUFD Minister Search:** Formed 5-member Ministerial Search Task Force and provided a charge to conduct the search for a new minister to serve the Fellowship after Rev. Samuel's resignation, effective May 2026. The Task Force will work with UUA and MidAmerica resources, and engage the congregation in identifying the community's needs and wants for a new minister.

2026 Goals

- **Communication:** Work with Leadership Team to communicate with the congregation about projects and work. Find ways to provide information about initiatives and decisions in addition to posting minutes on website, and host quarterly Congregational Conversations.
- **UUA Values:** Follow up on Rev. Samuel's reflection series on the UUA values approved at the 2025 General Assembly, engaging the congregation in conversations about what it means for the Fellowship and for us as individuals.
- **UUFD Minister Search:** Oversee search for new minister.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

Members: Frank Ebersold (chair), and Frank Potter

Mission: Maintain the physical interior and exterior properties of the UUFD in a safe and frugal manner. 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.

Summer baseline: mowing, edging, weeding, trimming, trash pick up. Occasional mowing around parking lot when warranted.

Winter baseline: snow & ice removal, trash pick up

Notable closed projects: limestone curb repair, summer flooding, new blinds in Emerson House kitchen & living rooms, flushed Emerson House hot water heater, added railing in Fellowship Hall

Ongoing projects: Gronen supply room tuck-pointing, acoustic project, and Emerson House future plans assistance

Side Notes: last year we paid Kate Tully $200 for parking lot snow removal, need to do same again this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank Ebersold, Chair, with assistance of Frank Potter

Care Committee

Members: Anne Benda, Gail Guenther, Louise Thurn, Wendy Woodhouse

The Care Committee continues to respond to UU Fellowship members' needs as they arise. There is a very caring network among all UU members and friends who relate information, concerns and actions on behalf of the Fellowship. Everyone in the Fellowship is, in fact, part of our caring community.

2025 Accomplishments

- Coordinated delivery of meals to those in need – through the "Meal Train"
- Sent cards to members and friends experiencing loss, illness and injury – and encouraged everyone to send cards and messages of support
- 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
- Met with Rev. Samuel to discuss plans for the Care Committee in 2026

2026 Goals

- Reassess the role of the Care Committee, with Samuel's departure
- Explore working on Mission Gardens
- Work with Membership Committee to expand contacts with new members
- Solidify funeral protocol should we be called on to provide

Finance Committee

Members: Jerry Guenther (Chair), 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

Members: Pam Kress-Dunn (chair), Sara Zaccaro

Mission
The library's mission is to support the fellowship with books and other print materials. The library supports Sunday programming, religious exploration, social action, and children's programming, and other needs as they arise. The library operates with a yearly budget, most of which goes toward purchasing books – gently used, when possible – and materials that facilitate checking out books and keeping them in good shape (such as pockets and cards) and in good order (such as bookends and shelf labels). We subscribe to the Libib online catalog app. As in all libraries, weeding of old/damaged books is done regularly. Special purchases include challenged books or those by authors who give reflections at the fellowship. The committee maintains a spreadsheet to track all purchases and reimbursements.

Top three accomplishments
- New library shelves installed – wonderful!
- 75 books checked out (as of 11/21)
- Weekly book reviews for the newsletter

Top three goals for 2026
- Find a way to prevent the non-return of books
- Arrange books on new shelves to promote borrowing
- Have another "Book Report" reflection (work with Program Committee)

Other Accomplishments
- Added about 45 new books, many donated or used (list available)
- Began offering free magazines, donated by members and friends

Other Goals
- Reintroduce cards with QR codes for Libib, our online catalogue
- Lead a class on UU Common Read and/or UU Mental Health Network Book Club (work with Religious Exploration Committee)
- Find more ways to encourage borrowing of books – e.g., promote books that support Sunday reflections

Itemized Library Spending (as of 11/18/25)
- New/used books = 253.58
- Libib annual subscription = $74.25
- Checkout cards and pockets = $17.11
- Shelf label holders = $33.28
  TOTAL = $378.22 ($78.22 to come from Jensen family donation)

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Kress-Dunn (chair) and Sara Zaccaro

Membership Committee

Members: Jo Ellen Langerman (chair), Bonnie Garrity, Marian Maciej-Hiner, Wendy Woodhouse

2025 Accomplishments

- **Provide greeters for Sunday services:** We started with assigning Committee members to serve as greeters for as many Sundays as we could, and will bring in other congregation members in 2026
- **Create a brochure** about the UU Fellowship of Dubuque: This is a work-in-progress – many visitors get information from the UUFD website.
- **Host two Informational Meetings** to provide information and answer questions about UU and UUFD Held Informational Meetings after services on July 27 and October 12
- **Host two New Member Celebrations** to welcome new members: Held a cemony on Sunday, October 26 and welcomed three new members: Gary Stoppelman, Win Matsler, Amy Jenkins.
  - Created a new script for the Ceremony
  - Purchased additional ***UU Pocket Guides*** for new members and also to have them available for those interested in having a Pocket Guide before officially joining the Fellowship
- **Increase recruitment activities** by developing and running ads in ***365ink*** and the ***Telegraph Herald*** We decided to use our budget for other **recruitment** and **retention** activities:
  - Purchased and set up bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall, to allow for networking
  - Purchased UU shopping bags for members and friends, to help making demonination visible

2026 Goals: Visibility/Awareness Priority (from Congregational Retreat)

- **Develop an elevator speech:** Draft a set of elevator speeches to describe UUFD to a neighbor, friend, colleague. Invite members and friends to personalize the speeches, include what they find most appealing about UUFD
- **Develop a UUFD Brochure:** Develop a brochure specific to the Fellowship, to hand out to visitors
- **Coordinate greeters for all Sunday services**
  - Create description of duties for greeters at Sunday services
  - Recruit and assign greeters (expanding to include members and friends) for every service
  - Review what we learn from serving as greeters, to inform ways we can be more welcoming
- **Why UUFD?**
  - Invite members and friends to submit statements about what drew them to Unitarian Universalism and UUFD
  - Work with the Program Committee to include statements in each Sunday Order of Service
- **Develop New Member campaigns**
  - Encourage members to invite others to discover UUFD, such as “Bring a Friend Sunday”
  - Work with partners to host semi-annual events after Sunday services
- **Invite members to share stories**
  - Build community by sharing something others may not be aware of, in our members’ lives
- **Gather people together**
  - Plan social events and gatherings to bring members, friends, regular visitors together socially
- **Check in with new members periodically**
  - Help new members find their places in the Fellowship
- **Host 4 Informational Meetings**
  - January – April – July – October

Respectfully submitted,
Jo Ellen Langerman, Chair

Ministerial Committee

Members: Linda Ressler (chair), Julie Donovan, Nancy Turner

Overview
The UUFD Ministerial Committee is responsible for overseeing and supporting the professional ministry of our part-time minister, including providing feedback, facilitating conflict resolution, and assessing the alignment between the congregation's mission and the minister's work; essentially acting as a sounding board and advisor to the minister while representing the congregation's perspective.

Function
To provide guidance and support to the minister, evaluate performance, and ensure the ministry aligns with the congregation's needs and values.

Responsibilities
Conduct regular reviews of the minister, facilitate communication between the minister and congregation, address concerns or conflicts, and offer feedback on programs and initiatives.

Composition
Comprised of 3 members of the congregation who are selected by the Board of Trustees.

Confidentiality
Committee members are expected to maintain confidentiality regarding discussions and information shared during meetings with the minister.

Nominations Committee

Members: Anne Benda, Jo Ellen Langerman, Linda Ressler

A nominating committee will be established by the Board each year to gather nominees for open Board positions. Nominees must be Members of the Fellowship, according to our Bylaws.

Composition
Three members should serve on this ad hoc committee. They should contact Members and provide them with descriptions of Board responsibilities. They should start by contacting current Board members to find out if they intend to run for another term.

Nominees
A slate of nominees will be sent to Members in advance of the Annual Business Meeting, and will be included in the Annual Report for the Annual Meeting. Nominations may also be taken from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

Elections
Elections are held at the Annual Meeting. The term of each position is two years, except for one Trustee position which is one year. The goal is to stagger the terms each year.

Program Committee

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

The committee's main work is in the planning and presentation of weekly Sunday services for the UUFD. Committee members typically function as facilitators at Sunday services. We seek to provide services that relate to the mission and principles of the UUFD.

2025 Accomplishments

1. Successfully programmed and conducted 52 Sunday services, including a variety of diverse speakers, readings, and songs that relate to our UUFD principles.
2. Recruited more UUFD members to participate in the Sunday services as readers, greeters, musicians, and writers of testimonials in the order of service.
3. Updated our list of Anchor Services, adding: My Life's Turning Point (in January); Social Justice & Equality service (in February); and UU Principles service (in March). Also updated was the Speaker Brochure, which is sent to upcoming speakers, and the List of Responsibilities for facilitators.

2026 Goals

1. Continue to provide quality programming for Sunday Services.
2. Continue coordinating with our Tech Team to better incorporate sound and video into the Sunday Services.
3. Provide two evening or afternoon events such as theatre, music, or panel discussions relevant to our Fellowship.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Dunn (Chair)

Religious Exploration (RE) Committee

Members: Cyndi Lawton (Chair), Jo Ellen Langerman, Linda Ressler, Craig Reber

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."

2025 Accomplishments
- Provided consistent children's RE programming during Sunday service, focusing mostly on the new UU Values (JETPIG L).
- Hosted Crafts & Cozy Conversation for a fun, social get together.
- Invited Michele Grove to lead the class *Losing Our Story: The Modern Tension Between Fact & Myth.*
- Facilitated *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*, parts one and two.
- Coordinated regular carpools to the Tri-State Islamic Center for their monthly community potlucks.
- Joined with the Social Action Committee for informational outreach booths at the Dubuque Pride and Juneteenth celebrations.
- Springboarded a monthly children's service with Rev. Samuel Felderman.
- Hosted two film screenings: *Signs Out of Time* and *The Straight Story*.
- Sent a representative (Jason Denlinger) to Dubuque Nature Everywhere focus group in July for an interfaith discussion regarding outdoor children's programming.
- Helped launch Dick Pouzar's book discussion on *Awe: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life* by Dacher Keltner.
- Guided fellowship attendees in making vision boards for 2026.
- Collaborated with the Program Committee to invite Eric Anglada and Brenna Cussen Anglada for a service about indigenous people.

2026 Goals
- Continue with film screenings, outreach at public events, carpooling to the mosque, social events, and other popular activities.
- Host more adult RE classes, facilitated by other members of the congregation.
- Grow the children's programs.
- Collaborate with First Congregational United Church of Christ and/or Tri-State Islamic Center for kids and/or teens activities.
- Incorporate more Lifespan/Whole Church RE programming.

Respectfully submitted,
Cyndi Lawton, Chair

Social Action Committee

Members: Tam Prenosil (Chair), Diane Baker, Frank Ebersold, Jeanne Harrington, Jo Ellen Langerman, Linda Ressler, Katherine Tully

2025 Accomplishments

Engagement in the Community

- Surveyed congregation for bi-monthly charities
  - Food Pantry $ 779.19
  - Dubuque for Refugee Children $ 657.00
  - Convivium (in support for LGBTQ program) $ 414.00
  - Dubuque Rescue Mission $ 662.00
  - Opening Doors $ 473.00
  - **Total** $ 3,005.19

- Jackson Park Clean up, welcomed speaker about immigration, supported International Day of Peace, Table at Pride and Juneteenth
- Coordinated with Iowa Unitarian Universalist Witness Advocacy Network (IUUWAN), Dubuque Area Congregations United (DACU), Dubuque NAACP, Dubuque Interfaith Green Coalition (DIGC), Coalition for Non-Violence, Bread of Life Presbyterian Food Give-Away in Lacy mansion parking lot, Jackson Park Neighborhood Association

Engagement within the UUFD

- Sunday service about fast fashion, Newsletter pictures

2026 Goals

- Provide and publicize opportunities in which congregation members might participate (including the above activities), offer fair trade coffee to purchase
- Acknowledge the social justice activities in which Congregation members already participate
- Pursue the Green Sanctuary designation from the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)

Respectfully submitted:
Tam Prenosil, Chair

Strategic Planning Committee

Members: Amy Ressler (Chair), Cyndi Lawton, Marian Maciej-Hiner

Congregational Covenant
After crafting the Congregational Covenant of Good Relations and meeting with members and friends via Zoom to gather input and feedback at the end of 2024, the Committee and the Board worked together to take the engagement of the congregation around the Covenant to the next step: offering opportunities for members and friends to gather in small groups in-person, to reflect on what it would mean to have a Covenant and how they might apply it within the Fellowship and in their lives.

Based on feedback in the small groups and other communications with members and friends, the Board affirmed the Covenant and it was launched in *Fellowship Connections*, the UUFD website, and in the Sunday Order of Service mid-year – giving members and friends a chance to **live with** and **live into** the Covenant before the Annual Meeting, where it will be on the agenda to be affirmed.

Feedback suggests the application of the Covenant has been helpful for improving communications and strengthening relationships within the congregation.

Congregational Retreat
Worked closely with the Board to plan the September 20 Congregational Retreat, facilitated by beth triplett, leadership dots. Reviewing the five elements of the Covenant launched the Retreat. Small groups identified the behaviors that would be seen in the Fellowship as the Covenant was put into action. Retreat attendees then grouped those behaviors into five priorities:

- Community Outreach
- Facility Improvements
- Fellowship/Social Opportunities
- Program Diversity/Spiritual Development
- Visibility/Awareness

Small groups gathered around each priority and started creating preliminary goals and a possible timeframe – **Now**, **Later**, and **Eventually** – for those goals to be completed.

Strategic Plans
The Leadership Team – Board members and Committee chairs – came back together on November 1, with beth triplett facilitating the transition of the preliminary goals to committees. Small groups clarified with goals were realistic for committees to achieve, with people and financial resources. The committee chairs then took those goals to their committees to confirm specific goals committees would choose to work on in **2026**, and which could become goals for **2027** (**later**) and **2028** (**eventually**).

The **2026 goals** are reflected in this Annual Report.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Ressler, Chair and Marian Maciej-Hiner

Teams and Work Groups

TEAMS

Communications Team

- **Members:** Cyndi Lawton, 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, Stage Co-Hosts; RRS Stewart, Stage Manager
- **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:** Karen Buechele, Amy Ressler, 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:** Frank Ebersold, Tom Griep, Troy Hoppenjan, Scott Kilgore, 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.

WORK GROUPS

Emerson House Work Group

- **Members:** Frank Ebersold, Sandy Nickel, Linda Ressler
- **Purpose:** Explore options for using the Emerson House – to guide upgrades and renovations.

Fundraising Work Group

- **Members:** Marian Maciej-Hiner (lead), Calvin Gatch, Wendy Woodhouse
- **Purpose:** Submit final grant reports for grants received for the building project, and develop a Donor Recognition Plaque to celebrate all donations, grants, and credits used for the building project.

Ministerial Search Task Force

- **Members:** Anne Benda, Cyndi Lawton, Dick Pouzar, Amy Ressler, Linda Ressler
- **Purpose:** Work with the congregation, UUFD Board, UUA MidAmerica District, Unitarian Universalist Ministerial Association to identify congregational needs and wants; use UUA and local resources to recruit a minister who will be a good fit for the Fellowship, after Reverend Samuel Felderman's resignation is effective, May 2026.

Board Elections

Thanks to **the Nominations Committee** for seeking candidates for the open Board positions – Anne Benda, Chair; Jo Ellen Langerman, and Linda Ressler. 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:** Dick Pouzar
- **Trustee for One (1) Year:** Julia Omarzu

President (2-year term)

- **Marian Maciej-Hiner:** I have served as Board President since 2020 – completing three 2-year terms at the end of this year – and would like to be considered for a fourth term. I realize it's unusual to serve in consecutive terms for this length of time – this will be my last term. I have appreciated the opportunity to work with amazing people on the Board, Leadership Team, committees, work groups, teams, community partners, and a growing congregation during exciting and challenging times. Together we made things happen and charted the course for a bright future!

  As we look to 2026, we will be searching for a new minister, upgrading the Emerson House interior, increasing our visibility in the community, sharing our spiritual journeys, and expanding our social connections. I'd welcome the chance to help these enterprises succeed.

Secretary (2-year term)

- **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've served as RE teacher, musician, meeting facilitator, membership committee co-chair, Long Range Planning chair, and Board secretary. 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)

- **Dick Pouzar**: My long history with UUFD spans 20 months during which I have contributed animal stories, beat on drums, introduced a few speakers, and started an awesome book discussion, none of which qualifies me as a Trustee. I have been an active officer in four regional and statewide nonprofits, though. My work experience includes sales, marketing, technical consulting, and management with two large corporations which gave me some skills that may be of use to UUFD.

  As all of us believe, UUFD is exceptional, built and run by people of integrity as Craig has said. Its members and facilities have impressive potential. I hope, as a Trustee, to be capable of doing the mundane so that all of us can enjoy reaching for our individual and communal best. May we all learn, interact, grow, contribute, and have fun in a safe place this coming year.

Trustee (1-year term)

- **Julia Omarzu:** I'm honored to be nominated for the 1-year seat on the board. Since I've retired, I believe I have time to serve with appropriate care, and I hope my experiences as a psychology professor and administrator might be of use to the board and Fellowship. One of my goals would be to support ways for people with time-consuming work, school, or family responsibilities to still be involved with the Fellowship. I know from experience that this can be a challenge. Another goal would be to be a good listener and support clear communication between the board and members of the Fellowship. Last, I think the primary goal of the 1-year board member should be to ask questions and bring new perspectives to decisions.