



**Unitarian Universalist Church
of Medford**

**Annual Report
2018-2019**

Annual Report 2018-2019

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Latest updates to this report may be found online at this URL:

http://uumedford.org/uucm_2019_annual_report/

Annual Meeting Agenda – May 19, 2019

1. Call to Order.
2. Chalice lighting and invocation.
3. Choose a moderator.
4. Act upon the minutes of the congregational meeting of May 20, 2018.
5. Receive and act upon the written or oral annual reports of the Minister, the Director of Religious Education, the Board of Trustees, and various committees.
6. To receive a report from the Board of Trustees regarding expenditures beyond the previously approved 2018-2019 operating budget.
7. To approve the disposition of funds received from the Estate of Janice Brenner in the amount to date of \$70,000 (see [Appendix](#)).
8. Accept and approve the proposed financial operating budget for 2019-2020.
9. To accept nominations and vote on candidates for the offices of Trustee, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Clerk, Collector, and Nominating Committee.
10. To elect delegates to the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association.
11. Adjourn

WARRANT

For an Annual Meeting of the Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford to be held May 19, 2019 at 12:00 noon, or immediately following church services.

GREETINGS

To the members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford, Massachusetts: You are hereby notified that the Annual Meeting will take place in the Sanctuary on Sunday, the 19th of May, 2019, at 12:00 noon, or immediately following Church services, at which time and place the following articles are to be acted upon and determined exclusively by Voting Members, in accordance with and subject to the bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford.

1. To choose a moderator;
2. To act upon the minutes of the congregational meeting of May 20, 2018;
3. To receive and act upon the written or oral annual reports of the Minister, the Director of Religious Education, the Board of Trustees, and various committees;
4. To receive a report from the Board of Trustees regarding any expenditures beyond the previously approved 2018-2019 operating budget;
5. To approve the disposition of funds received from the Estate of Janice Brenner in the amount to date of \$70,000;
6. To accept and approve the proposed financial operating budget for 2019-2020;
7. To accept nominations and vote on candidates for the offices of Trustee, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Clerk, Collector, and Nominating Committee;
8. To elect delegates to the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association;

Faithfully submitted,

The Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford

Nancy Kurtz, Co-Chair

Molly Ruggles, Co-Chair

Loren Bernardi

April Evans

Robert Heintz

Susan Jhirad

Steve Schmidt

Minutes from May 20, 2018 Annual Congregational Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Nancy Kurtz, clerk, at 12:37 pm. Rev. Marta offered opening words and the chalice was lit.

1.) Nancy Kurtz was selected to be moderator without objection. Tammy McKanan served as clerk pro tem for the meeting. A quorum was present.

2.) Without objection, the minutes of the June 4, 2017 Annual Meeting were accepted.

3.) In February, we wrote a new church covenant which has been in use since then. As part of the process, we agreed that the covenant would be voted on at the annual meeting. It was moved and seconded to accept the new church covenant as presented to the meeting, to be in effect until it may be changed by a community process.

Members spoke both against and in favor of the motion, with the preponderance of speakers preferring to retain the previous covenant.

Reasons against the proposal included: preference for traditional language, current members all joined under the previous covenant, new covenant lacks language of church/transcendence/God, difficult to remember, reads like an employment contract.

Reasons in support of the proposal included: The process involved almost 50 people and was valuable to the community, previous covenant had not been voted on or chosen by the community, removal of reference to God respects diverse beliefs of the community.

The motion passed by a vote of 15 to 11, after a hand vote.

4.) The annual reports of the Minister, the Director of Religious Education, the Board of Trustees, and various committees were submitted in written form in the Annual Report available at the meeting, as well as online. Brendan Shea summarized some of the highlights. Several workshops will be held on understanding the budget, with the first to be following the service on June 3, 2018. The issue of special appeals to cover the expected budget deficit will be discussed by the Board. A question was raised as to how many members were lost during the year and Steve Schmidt agreed to provide that number.

By unanimous vote, the reports were accepted.

5.) Geoff Ward reported on expenditures for building and grounds in excess of the 2017-2018 operating budget. These were primarily due to the failure of the basement sump pump during a large rainstorm last summer which resulted in a basement flood, damaging the gas burner. Repairs and installation of a new backup pump will avoid the problem in the future. Roof work was made necessary by the same large storm, which caused leaking into the church library. In addition, pipes froze in Osgood House during the January cold spell, in part due to the failure of the downstairs bathroom radiator. Repairs and improvements have also been made to improve heating for exposed pipes. The budget item for buildings and grounds exceeded the budget by approximately \$10,000.

6.) Proposed budget for 2018-2019

Geoff, as member of the Finance Committee, presented the proposed budget developed by the Board in conjunction with the Finance Committee. The budgeted amount for buildings and grounds has been increased to reflect experiences from recent years. Other items that exceeded the budget were energy use, and payroll. Snow removal was on target. The proposed budget projects a deficit of about \$15,000 to be financed from a drawdown of principal from the NPO and Ministerial Funds. In response to a question, it was stated that the UUA dues we pay are nominal amounts, not the fair share.

After motion and second to approve the budget, it was voted 25-0 to accept the budget.

7.) Geoff Ward presented the Nominating Committee's slate for Trustees and Officers as follows:

Trustees (3 slots)

April Evans – three year term
Susan Jhirad – three year term
Steve Schmidt – three year term

Officers

Russell Tripp – Collector
Nancy Kurtz – Clerk
Emily Hanna – Assistant Treasurer

Nominating Committee

Geoff Ward
Tammy McKanan
Liz Ammons

Upon motion and second, it was voted unanimously to approve the election of Trustees, Officers, and Nomination Committee as submitted to the meeting.

8.) Upon motion and second, it was unanimously approved to designate Oriana McKanan and Brendan Shea our delegates to the General Assembly in Kansas City this year.

There was no new business.

With no further business to come before the meeting, upon motion and second, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 1:35 pm..

Note: A quorum of the congregation was present. The sign-in sheet shows 27 members and 3 non-members were in attendance.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy McKanan
Clerk *Pro Tem*

Annual Report from the Board of Trustees – May 19, 2019

The powers and responsibilities delegated to the Board of Trustees by the UUCM congregation, as specified in our church Bylaws, include: (1) Appoint annually the chairs and other members of the Religious Education, Finance, Property, Membership, and Worship committees, and define their responsibilities and powers. (2) Appoint, from time to time, the chairs and other members of such special committees as it deems advisable, define the responsibilities and powers, and receive the reports of such committees. (3) Administer, directly or by delegation, all the affairs of the church except as expressly provided otherwise in the Constitution and Bylaws and report its actions at the Annual Meeting, including a report of the proposed annual financial budget.

This year had many rewards and challenges. To these we have brought many strengths which help us change, survive and grow.

First among these strengths is the completion of a full year with our fine professional staff. Led by Reverend Marta with Mimi Olivier as Director of Religious Education, Alex Cumming as Music Director, Brenda Bonetti as Office Administrator, and Fred Humphreys as Sexton, they have provided steady and inspiring leadership and service, including special celebrations of Día de Muertos and Christmas Eve, as well as the Family Dances which filled Benker Hall with fun.

Our worship services are varied and vibrant, whether led by Rev. Marta or by the excellent worship leaders selected by our Worship Committee, who also provide our wonderful team of Worship Associates. Our Small Group program encompasses a variety of groups meeting monthly to discuss books on social justice, delve into our Soul Matters themes, and explore the inevitable issues of aging. New this year were several events for our 20-40-something cohort.

Our expanded Outreach Committee revitalized our website with information about our events, a revised Events Calendar, and other useful documentation, as well as promoted our services and other activities through Facebook and listings on various sites, including the local *Medford Transcript*.

The Board created two policies as we try to clarify how things happen at our church. With the Outreach Committee we developed a policy for how events can be listed on the Event Calendar. We are working on combining our Event Calendar (for church-related events) and our Building Use Calendar (for regular users of our space and one-time events) so that all events can be found in one place, as well as meet the various needs of the Board, congregation members who wish to hold events, and the building and grounds committee which facilitates use by outside organizations.

The Membership Committee, working closely with Rev. Marta, drafted a membership policy to describe how we welcome newcomers and assist prospective members with their decision as to whether to request membership. Through education about UUCM, learning about the expectations of membership, and developing an understanding of the larger UU community, we hope newcomers will make the journey to join us in fellowship and become part of our beloved community.

Our congregation members responded to community needs by attending the Shabbat Service at Temple Shalom in Medford in commemoration and sympathy for the victims of the Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue bombing and the Citywide Interfaith Candlelight Vigil to support our Muslim community after the Christchurch, New Zealand mosque attacks. Our DRE and others represented the church at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Interfaith Blessing of the new Mosque and Islamic Cultural Center on High Street in Medford. We dedicated a collection to the innovative worship congregation, Sanctuary Boston, in which our guest worship leader Matt Meyer is involved. Mimi led our youth in visiting

Sanctuary Boston on several occasions. Our Christmas Eve plate was donated to two worthy charities, Lawrence Groundworks, and the LGBTQ Asylum Task Force of Worcester.

Financially, the news is promising. The Church received an unexpected and generous bequest of \$70,000 from the Estate of Janice Brenner, whose parents were very active in this church many years ago. We also received a gift of stock in the amount of \$10,000 from Ron and Janice Dallas, former members, for music and general purposes. Our fundraising efforts through the rummage sale, concerts, Valentine card sales, and breakfasts are on target to exceed the budgeted amount, and our annual commitment campaign is also on track to reach or come close to our fundraising goals of \$75,000 and 100% participation. We still face ongoing budget deficits which require the use of our endowment funds. Our goal is to continue to reduce the level of these withdrawals so that we become financially sustainable.

An important gift during the past year was the donation of \$11,880 by twelve members to replace the old floor in Benker Hall. We have been enjoying our lovely new floor! Many thanks to those generous donors: Michael Glenn and Susan Jhirad, Nancy Kurtz, Liz Ammons, Betty and Joe Walters, Cathy Collins, Mary and Dana MacNamee, Susan Jordan, Karen Johnston and Dave Parker, Robert and Ann Heintz, Marsha Lawson, Brendan Shea and Melissa Radzyminski, and Margery Gans.

Our historic buildings remain a challenge. With funds now available under Medford's Community Preservation Act for historic preservation, we are applying this year for a grant to make needed repairs to Osgood House, including window replacement and door repairs, as well as external painting. Osgood House is one of the few homes from the 18th century in Medford which remain largely intact, and it is closely related to important Medford figures such as Lydia Maria Child, Rev. David Osgood, and George Luther Stearns. Thanks to Susan Jhirad, Loren Bernardi, Wendy Fearing, and Geoff Ward for leading this effort.

Significant challenges for our congregation were presented by both internal and external events. In the fall, Rev. Marta shared with us a racist incident at the UUA and challenged us to advance our own and our church's understanding of racial bias in our denomination, our community and even in our congregation. The Board committed to read and discuss together Robin DiAngelo's book *White Fragility*, an examination of the ways in which our predominantly white culture has shaped our perceptions of racism. We had four 30-45 minute discussions prior to Board meetings and four separate two-hour discussions. This is a challenging book, and it has been a learning process. We are grateful to Melissa Radzyminski and Marsha Lawson for serving as facilitators for our meetings. The Board will be discussing how to continue and expand this work to increase our understanding of the ways people of color can be hurt, often unintentionally, in a predominantly white setting, and to identify how we as a church can stand up to racism in our society.

The implementation of a new use for the postings in our former Wayside Pulpit, initiated by the Outreach Committee and approved by the Board, raised issues within our congregation about Board decision making and the communication of changes. The discussion of these issues which took place on our unmoderated email discussion platform, as well as in person, was hurtful to several of those involved. We held a listening session, moderated by Lourie August with support from Alex Daum, in December to share our feelings about this change and how it was handled. We held a discussion session in February to solicit ideas for how we might use some of the Brenner gift, and ideas for improving communication between the Board and the congregation. Going forward, the Board will initiate regular opportunities for the congregation and Board members to discuss ongoing initiatives and events.

The Board realizes that to make a part-time ministry successful, it is important for the congregation to have a clear idea of our goals in order to set priorities. It has been five years since we looked at ourselves and our hopes for the future with our interim minister Rev. Susan Milnor. We will work in

the coming year with Rev. Marta and the Northeast Region on a visioning process to discern who we are as a congregation and where we want to go over the next five years to guide the goal-setting for our shared ministry.

We give thanks to all the many people who make contributions to our church community in important ways, through worship, volunteering, pledging, helping out at church events, cleaning up after social hour, giving welcome to visitors, or offering fellowship through their presence. You make this church what it is, and it cannot exist without you.

In peace,

Nancy Kurtz and Molly Ruggles, Board Co-Chairs

Minister's Annual Report to the Congregation

The minister has now completed a little over two years in a shared ministry with you. I continue to believe that we are doing good ministry together, and that we are slowly learning what it means to be in a shared part-time ministry. This year a serious conversation has begun to be undertaken between the minister and the Board regarding the nature of our ministry and where the congregation would like to be headed. This had led to discussion of visioning process in the Fall. My main questions continue to be: What are we trying to build? And where are we headed?

The year started off with a well-attended Leadership Retreat on September 15 held at our neighboring Grace Church. The retreat was held for all leaders as well as any congregants wishing to participate in a discussion about worship and followed by a sharing of ideas and possibilities for the church year. A followup worship discussion was also held on April 7th to review the changes that have been happening in worship from the feedback received at the September retreat. The changes included more music and longer silences and how the minister does the Candles portion of the worship service.

Governance

I continue to enjoy working with your Board of dedicated people, as they face the many challenges as outlined in their annual report. Everything I said last year applies: Great care is taken as decisions are made, mindful of the challenges the church faces, balanced against who we say we are and want to be as Unitarian Universalists; I continue to feel welcomed at the table, my concerns have felt heard and responded to by the best of their abilities. I am pleased that the Board has voted to offer me a new contract for next year. It has been challenging for some congregants to understand what is possible for me to manage in the small window that is twenty hours a week. The expectation is that the visioning process, which may be completed with assistance from a Regional Staff Consultant (and conversations have been had already), will also make clear where the minister's time and energy might be best spent, according to our needs and wants.

It has been a joy working with Mimi Olivier (DRE), Alex Cumming (Music Director) and Brenda Bonetti (Administrator). UUCM is blessed with talented and dedicated staff to fulfill the ministry of the church. The Staff Team has truly become "a team," working very well together and meeting monthly with the minister to plan upcoming events/worship and review previous activities. We all genuinely enjoy each other's company.

This year I was evaluated in March. This generated some discussions about the tardiness of the evaluation (although it was a year from last year's, which was tardy), but steps are being taken to get it all back on track, and to create a fairer instrument and way of evaluating as well. In the absence of goals set with the Board it did not feel like a true evaluation. It was also noted that the other Staff has not been evaluated. Partly a communication breakdown, discussion remains regarding who will perform this important

function. In the absence of that, the minister agreed with the Board co-chair to do an informal assessment with each staff member as to how their year has progressed and note any concerns they may have. At this writing two have been completed.

Small Group Ministries

Soul Matters: Year two of the Soul Matters program for small groups and worship themes is almost completed with four groups running. The Meditation and Book groups have continued, and this year two “Aging with Wisdom” groups were started, as well as a 20s-40s group. While all of these are small group ministries the minister is only directly connected to the Soul Matters program. The decision was made to continue the Soul Matters program for a third year; all groups will begin again with new configurations so other combinations of congregants can get to know one another.

Thank you to Lourie August, Michael Glenn, Susan Jhirad, Ann Heintz, Brendan Shea, and Shaina Sawyer for being faithful facilitators of the small groups that allow the participants to go deeper with the subject matters.

Worship

Some of the special services (or that had special components) that I have led include: Christmas Eve, Stewardship Sunday, Easter Sunday, Membership Sunday (May 19), where we will welcome four, possibly five, new members, Bridging Ceremony, Flower Communion, and Volunteer Appreciation (June 9, for all you wonderful “keep the church going” folks!).

This year in addition to our regular service leaders, Revs. Laura Randall, Lilia Cuervo, and Ian White Maher, we also welcomed a former Harvard Divinity School graduate Will Williamson; Rev. Aisha Ansano (minister of color); Rev. Natalie Malter (HDS PhD student); storyteller Sharon Kennedy; and musicians Betty Hauck, Will McMillan, and Matt Meyer.

Special thank you and kudos to our congregational service leaders: Carol Schachet, Steve Schmidt, Carolyn Cronin, Tammy McKanan, Susan Jhirad, Ann Heintz, Michael Glenn, Rada Ruggles, Alex Cumming, and all the voices from the multi-voiced services.

In addition, thank you and kudos for sharing their musical talents: Russell Tripp, Molly Ruggles, Joe Walters, Brendan Shea, Marsha Lawson, Alex Daum, and the wonderful choir members! And our outside musical guests: Sayida Rivers Farmer and Jacqueline Schwab.

Pastoral Care

I have maintained pastoral care as best as I could, both in-person and by phone. I imagine as I gain your confidence it may increase, but I will not take it personally if it doesn't. There appears to be a strong caring community here that communicates to each other. I also attended the Compassionate Listening Circle that was held on December 2nd, in response to a challenging “conversation” that emerged on the community email list in which feelings were hurt (as well as misunderstood). About mid-year a new system was put in place for the minister to receive information regarding pastoral concerns shared in the services in which the minister is not present.

Self-Care

This year I had the good fortune to have received an email with an offer to attend an interfaith retreat for two and a half days at Kripalu Yoga Center in western Massachusetts. A very generous donor donated funds for “clergy to have rest and renewal during these trying times”. Rev. Lilia Cuervo and I went together and were very grateful for the opportunity.

Denominational Participation

I participated in the annual “Finding Our Way Home” retreat for religious professionals of color in March this year in Miami, Florida. While there I co-led the opening worship, was a panelist for the Chronicles of People of Color History workshop as well as for the seminarians in the Ministry Formation Network, and will be at General Assembly in Spokane, Washington (June 18-24), this time representing us as the Sunday morning preacher. This year I will be on call for the GA Planning Committee in my consulting capacity to them on their decentering whiteness work. I also traveled to the UU Church of San Diego in my other decentering whiteness consulting work with the UU Church of San Diego. While most of these are on my own time, these are some ways in which UUCM is recognized in the larger denominational world because of my connection to you!

Thank you for another meaningful year!

Respectfully submitted,

Reverend Marta I. Valentín

Annual Report from the Director of Religious Education

The Religious Education Committee is pleased to offer this opportunity to review the highlights of a busy year.

The church year started with the debut of some new programs in RE. We were so excited to start an Adult RE class! Ann Heinz and Dan McKanan agreed to teach “Bringing UU History Home,” a review of our roots. The class meets monthly before church and has been extremely well attended. We also started a Coming of Age program for our younger teenagers. They were each matched up with a mentor from the congregation and Dal Coger agreed to co-teach the class alongside Mimi. Our Younger Kids class and Older Kids class also started up again after the summer break.

The fall got us up and moving around with our first Family Dance on October 14 and a rousing Halloween Party at the end of the month complete with every possible festivity EXCEPT candy!!!! Both events were fantastic opportunities for the generations to mingle and party together. Later in the season the Coming of Age program took a field trip to The Sanctuary Boston service and some of us have been going monthly ever since.

The winter season got us excited about the holidays. Everyone wanted to make holiday crafts!! We made cards in the younger and middle ages classes, and the younger kids class made a beautiful menorah under the creative tutelage of Liz Ammons. We set up craft tables in Benker Hall and kept them going throughout the season. One Sunday we enjoyed baking, decorating, and eating yummy cookies along with making crafts. Thanks to Karen Johnston and April Evans for making this happen. Then, of course, everybody had a wonderful time with the Holiday Pageant. This year’s effort was especially adorable and we learned how invested our church children are in this tradition!

Middle winter brought another Family Dance which brightened our spirits in the cold. Our hearts were similarly warmed by participating in the Opening of the Mosque and Islamic Cultural Center of Medford on January 26th. It was a joyous event and we were proud to be there. The Coming of Age youth brightened their winter doldrums by baking vegan desserts and eating them together! This inspired us to plan a vegan feast for the spring ...

Spring did finally, eventually arrive although some days it is still very hard to believe. Early in the season we, sadly, participated in the Interfaith Vigil and Prayer for Peace at Medford City Hall in response to the massacre in Christchurch, New Zealand. Later in the season the Coming of Age group participated in an event organized by an older teen from the church; Antonia Collins organized a letter-

writing campaign for LGBTQ+ prisoners and the COA youth answered her call. Shortly after that event we had our Coming of Age Vegan feast; Caelee supplied the recipe and directed Oriana and Sophia in preparing a vegan feast for their mentors; Alex Daum, Avalon Owens, and Karen Johnston, along with co-teachers Mimi and Dal. Even with all this partying the teens have found time to meet with their mentors and write their Credos, which are being completed now. They will be presented to the congregation on May 19th.

The older teens have been preparing to run the world (thank goodness!). Rada is planning to lead a service on May 26th. Our church has six high school seniors who are about to graduate: Maya, Willa, Liz, Antonia, Rada, and Luc. Sad as we are to see them go, we can't wait to see where life takes them next.

Lastly, many Times For All Ages were presented throughout the year. Some of the more memorable ones included the Umbrella Story, the Poetry Service, the Thanksgiving puppets, Kinstsugi: the Japanese Art of Pottery Repair with Cheryl Harwood Bell, Andey and Lars, the Warm Fuzzies and Cold Pricklies, and Moussa and Jahib: a Story About Forgiveness. We hope you enjoyed them!

We welcomed Cheryl Harwood Bell onto the RE Committee. Current members Jeanne Feeley, Dan McKanan, and Ann Heinz are thinking about their tenure and once decisions have been made we will see if we need to recruit additional members. We are looking forward to Coming of Age Sunday on May 19, and RE Sunday on June 2 which will include a Bridging Ceremony for our graduating Seniors.

Looking forward, we plan to work over the summer on Family Outreach, catch our breath, and have an RE Committee Retreat in August.

We would like to extend a special thank you to Alex Cumming for making our amazing Family Dances possible!!!!

Thank you for your attention and support during the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Mimi Olivier, Director of Religious Education

Report from the Music Committee

I am excited to share with you some highlights from a fantastic year of music making both in the services and with the wider community.

Choir

It has been a true delight to work with the choir this past year, numbers have been healthy for most of the year which has made choosing and singing fun and varied material possible.

We started the Choir year off at the end of September by singing We Bid You Welcome by Jason Shelton. We had Russell Trip accompany us on piano so that I could conduct the choir and it sounded fabulous, a true triumphant start to the year. Members of the Choir attended a day long workshop with Shelton in the spring last year, which included purchase and permission to perform works from his Cycle of Song collection. We plan to perform another in June, Primavera.

The choir truly excelled themselves during the Christmas period. The choir performed on December 23rd for the Pageant and 24th for Christmas Eve and performed three soprano-alto-tenor-base choral arrangements of Christmas songs, Coventry Carol and two special English village carols, Lo! The Shepherds and Awake, Arise, Rejoice & Sing. We performed two of the three of these songs unaccompanied and it sounded great and perfectly festive. We had a lot to learn in a short space of time but each member of the choir stepped up and did a great job.

Other choir highlights include performing What is This Church by Sanders/Sibelius, Danos Paz for Thanksgiving, Peace Salaam Shalom by Pat Humphries and Sandy Opatow, Your Life Is Now by John Mellencamp and George M. Green, Lo! The Earth Awakes Again from the grey hymnal, and Give Yourself to Love by Kate Wolf.

Away from the fun of music making, we set up a new choir group email (uucm-choir@googlegroups.com) which has made communication much easier, as well as making it easier to add new members to the list.

This past year we have been working more on a drop in model meaning that we meet at 9.30 a.m. on the day of the service and rehearse the piece the same day as we perform. I send out the sheet music and relevant recordings during the week building up to the choir date so people may review the piece before rehearsal. I feel this format has being really beneficial to many members as you can miss a rehearsal or two but not miss out on any other prep. With this format we have seen the regular turnout for choir increase and most times have double figure attendance.

Other Music in Services

This year has also seen a great amount of solo and group performances both whilst I am not in attendance and some when I am. We were honored to have Jacqueline Schwab come to play a service in the Fall whilst I was away and heard she performed some beautiful music for the service as well as accompany the choir. Other performance highlights from the year include Hank Driscoll's awesome testimony set to music about his experience of the church, hearing Molly Ruggles and Alex Daum perform together, and the fabulous small group performance of Geodes by Carrie Newcomer at the Easter service.

This year I have also made it a mission to make the Parting Music something fun, upbeat and danceable which has regularly had people dancing along. I also bring sheet music every week for the Parting Music so anyone who wishes too can join in and jam along. I have also started putting out percussion instruments so that people who may not want to dance can join in with the music making. It has been a joy to have such a wonderful, uplifting community feel to the end of the service. One highlight is the memory of one service where we had lots of dancers, Molly jamming on piano, and Rev. Marta playing percussion.

Hymns

During the year we have introduced a music tab to the Worship calendar which, as well as including information on special music, lead musician and music coordinator, includes the hymns that were sung for both Morning Song and during the services. This has being a really helpful tool in planning services that are well balanced with hymns that are both familiar and not. Another fun element is that we can provide a UUCM Top Hit Hymns list. Here are the top hymns courtesy of the Music Committee:

Sung 5 times:

#188 Come, Come, Whoever You Are

Sung 4 times:

#1007 There's a River Flowin' in My Soul

#1017 Building a New Way

#86 Blessed Spirit of My Life

#95 There is More Love Somewhere

I have been mostly accompanying hymns on the piano but a few hymns have sounded so good on accordion that I have also played some on this. I have also on a few occasions played the final hymn in the service with Molly Ruggles on piano and myself on accordion. This has worked particularly well for spirituals and upbeat hymns. I am hoping we can continue in this spirit in the future with more musicians from the congregation to create some exciting live band accompaniment to some hymns.

Music in the Community

I have really enjoyed the amount of music that we have been able to provide to the wider community this year.

We started up some family dances in collaboration with the RE department. We have had three this year – one in the fall, winter and spring – all of which were very well attended not only from the church but from the wider community. These events feature fun folk dances for all ages to dance, live music with an open band (meaning anyone can join in, sheet music and chords provided) as well as some light refreshments. I would like to thank Mimi and the Religious Education committee for helping put on these fun events.

Concerts have been a big focus this year. In my opinion our Sanctuary is one of the most wonderful music venues in the area. It has amazing acoustics and beautiful architecture which makes it the perfect location for more community music events and concerts. The first concert of the year was a fundraising concert featuring Didi Stewart and Joe Mulholland. This concert was mainly organized by the fundraising committee but I helped out with some of the preparations.

The Music Committee and I have worked on a new concert series focusing on Folk and World music. The first concert in this series was with myself presenting a show on a historic Medford resident, Olive Dame Campbell. The concert took place on Easter Sunday and despite this we had over 40 people attend, a great achievement in my mind. The next two concerts will be in May with Rhode Island traditional music stars, The Vox Hunters, and in June with piano playing legend Jacqueline Schwab performing her Building Bridges show featuring vintage music of Latin America. We are very excited to host these incredible artists, and for the next two concerts we are also planning to hold a fundraising raffle featuring some themed baskets. Publicity is out for the coming concerts, but there are always more places to post flyers and more people to talk too. We would like to extend a huge thanks to Brendan Shea for his help with the publicity and online listings.

It has being a fabulous, varied, busy and exciting year for music at UUCM and I look forward to seeing where the future takes us.

I would like to extend a huge thanks to the Music Committee – Nancy Kurtz, Joe Walters and Marsha Lawson – for being great collaborators and for helping me through a rough patch of health at the start of the year. Thanks also extend to Russell Tripp and Molly Ruggles who regularly play piano for services whilst I am not in attendance and to Mimi, Rev. Marta, and Brenda for being a wonderful team of staff to work with.

Regards,

Alex Cumming, Music Director

From the Music Committee (Nancy Kurtz, Marsha Lawson, and Joe Walters):

Thank you to Alex for his energetic and generous leadership to help us make beautiful music throughout the year. Also thanks to all those who contributed preludes, offertories and theme music when Alex was not with us:

Brian Wolf, piano

Russell Tripp, piano and organ

Brendan Shea, guitar, vocal

Sayida Rivers Farmer, vocals

Carole Bundy, vocal

Joe Walters, clarinet

Nancy Kurtz, vocal

Betty Hauck, violin, viola

Molly Ruggles, piano, vocals

Hank Driscoll, piano

Oriana McKanan, piano

Marsha Lawson, flute

Joi Wolf, vocal

Andey Amata-Kynvi, guitar, vocal

Shaina Sawyer and Random Chants, vocals

Alex Daum, Vocals

Review of Fiscal Year 2018-19 Finances

In fiscal year 2018-19 our projected actual deficit came in some \$2,500 over what had been budgeted and planned at this time last year. Details of note:

Income: (1) Increased pledged amounts are projected to be realized, continuing with the pattern of the past several years whereby the gap between amounts delivered vs. committed to is minimal. (2) The Janice Brenner Estate gift of \$70,000, detailed in the Board report above, as well as an approximately \$5,000 unrestricted donation by former church members Ron and Janice Dallas, are *not* included in the plate/gift totals. These extraordinary gifts were unexpected and, of course, welcome, but not deemed to be properly included as part of normal church financial reporting. (3) Fund raising, deriving in major part but by no means solely from the church rummage sale, will generate a projected \$5,700 in income – well over the budgeted amount and a significant total in its own right. Good work by all the folks who made this happen! Those people include, but are not limited to, Lourie August and her large team of helpers (rummage sale), Melissa Radzyminski and Cheryl Harwood Bell (Valentine’s Day card sale), Susan Jhirad (Didi Stewart concert), and Music Director Alex Cumming and the Music Committee (April-June concert series). (4) Building use fee totals benefited from a new major user last summer, who apparently will not be returning. Ongoing inquiries, some of which would result in a sizable addition from that source of income, continue.

Expenses: (1) Heating costs are expected to come in \$1,700 over budget, due to cold weather and higher gas prices. (The former tends to begat the latter.) Snow removal expenses, however, came in almost precisely as budgeted, i.e., guessed. This may be a first. (2) The property & liability insurance premiums total returned to a more typical level after last year’s favorable experience. (3) From the Brenner Estate gift an extra contribution of \$1,750 beyond the \$250 amount budgeted was made to the UUA. This extra payment was not included in the incomes and expenses summary because, as with the gifts, it is considered an extraordinary (voluntarily assumed) expense.

Our church – providing as it does a source of community, connection, and meaning in Medford center – continues to function on a lean budget. It is a budget we continue to regard as having at most a marginal amount of “fat.” Costs in various categories, including but not limited to energy, are largely beyond our control. In this year’s proposed budget we continue to recommend that we assume permanently higher ongoing building maintenance costs until experience indicates otherwise.

There is a quote to the effect that you can fold, spindle, and mutilate statistics to a fare-thee-well and get them to prove anything you want; but the data all derive from the village watchman who writes down whatever he darn well pleases. Fortunately we have people who track and follow transactions, and enter data for our day-in, day-out financial operations who do *not* follow such a dictum! The Finance Committee acknowledges the following people: Collector Russell Tripp, who assiduously tracks received pledges and deposits them and other remitted incomes; church administrator Brenda Bonetti, who presides over the start of the invoice payment process, calls in payroll numbers, and also started working with the accounting system this year; Michael Glenn, who pays most church invoices online as well as serves on this committee; and Assistant Treasurer Emily Hanna, who no longer has to sign many checks, but who stands ready as a backup as needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff Ward, Michael Glenn, and Brendan Shea,

UUCM Finance Committee

Fiscal Year 2018-19 Income & Expenditures, Projected* vs. Budgeted

	FY 2018-19 Estimated Income & Spending*	FY 2018-19 Budgeted	Actual vs. Budgeted
Income			
Pledges	71,500	71,359	\$141
Plate and Other Gifts	6,650	6,000	\$650
Fund-raising	5,700	4,200	\$1,500
Flower Sponsorship (net)	240	50	\$190
Building Use	14,450	14,000	\$450
Investment Income from NPO Fund	2,100	2,000	\$100
Lawrence Fund Distributions	4,450	5,000	-\$550
Investment Income from Ministerial Fund	6,000	6,000	\$0
Music Program Fund Drawdown	771	771	\$0
Membership/Welcoming Fund Drawdown	420	420	\$0
Income Total	111,861	109,380	\$2,481
Expenses			
Minister	39,270	39,270	\$0
DRE	15,245	15,245	\$0
Sexton	9,800	9,600	-\$200
Administrator	4,600	4,456	-\$144
Music Director	7,500	7,525	\$25
Payroll Service	1,807	1,200	-\$607
Workers Compensation Insurance	2,727	2,310	-\$417
Misc. Employer Taxes (new category)	64		-\$64
Staff-Related	80,949	79,606	-\$1,343
Utilities & Heat	15,100	13,400	-\$1,700
Snow Removal	5,602	5,700	\$98
Property & Liability Insurance	7,034	6,000	-\$1,034
Buildings & Grounds Maintenance, Repairs, Upkeep	11,539	10,000	-\$1,539
Sunday Service	3,555	3,560	\$5
Religious Ed Supplies & Programming	1,362	1,100	-\$262
Music Program	1,000	1,000	\$0
General & Administrative Supplies, Services, Equipment	3,700	3,450	-\$250
Membership & Welcoming	420	420	\$0
Affiliations	250	250	\$0
Expenses Total	130,511	124,486	-\$6,025
Deficit	-18,650	-15,106	

* Full fiscal year projections based off of realized incomes and expenses through May 15.

Report on Church Assets

Principal church assets are comprised of our properties and their contents, four major church financial fund accounts, and our checking account at Citizen's Bank. Those funds are: (1) the NPO Fund (the name derives from "Non-Profit Organization"); (2) the Ministerial Fund, (3) the Charity Fund, and (4) the Lawrence Fund. LPL Financial of Winchester serves as custodian and manager of the first three funds, while PNC Bank of Pittsburgh serves as trustee of the Lawrence Fund.

Portfolio Management Philosophy: In December 2015 the then members of the Finance Committee – Geoff Ward and Michael Glenn – met with Mark Shepherd of LPL to discuss investment strategies for the church accounts. We noted that having the church run a balanced budget was in sight (in retrospect that was optimistic). The result would be a reduction in anticipated major withdrawals from the accounts over the coming years. Given this scenario, Mark suggested that we start investing the fund assets with an eye towards earning higher returns, without abandoning our fundamentally low-risk approach. The Committee members ultimately agreed to accept Mark's proposal.

The new notional benchmark portfolio allocation is as follows: Cash: 30%; Fixed Income (short- and intermediate-term bond funds): 40%; Equities: 30% (large-cap 25%, mid-cap 3%, small-cap 2%; the large-cap figure includes 3% international).

The Committee's general predilection is to be extremely conservative – aimed at limiting any risk of capital loss which we can ill afford. Historically, current stock market valuation levels have been associated with low total expected returns and substantial risk of what Benjamin Graham and Warren Buffett call "permanent capital loss" – that is, a situation wherein if valuations subsequently fell to historical norms (a) the resulting loss would be substantial and (b) the chance of a subsequent recovery back to the starting level any time soon thereafter would be slim. The Federal Reserve seems determined to prevent – indeed seems deathly afraid of – valuations from declining to historical and relatively sane norms. But we cannot know whether efforts the Fed undertakes to forestall such a stay of execution will succeed over the time-frame that we operate within. Thus we have chosen not to gamble on eking out a few extra percentage points of return while incurring that risk – "picking up nickels in front of a moving steam roller" in the colorful words and wisdom of some financial pundits. Should stock markets return to valuations whereby the prospective returns adequately compensate us for the risks undertaken we will consider recommending a more aggressive asset allocation for the main church funds.

Below is a listing of the funds' net asset values (NAVs) as of May 13 for the LPL managed funds and March 31 for the Lawrence Fund, and their respective influence on our finances. NAVs change due to income generated and reinvested, fluctuations in market values of fund assets, investment management fees, and contributions or withdrawals from the funds.

NPO Fund. NAV: \$117,089. This fund's covenant contains no restrictions on withdrawal of principal or income. For many years this fund was drawn down to fund church operating deficits. This still happens at times, to a far lesser degree. Income from interest and dividends is accounted for as investment income in the budget report. Income from the NPO fund is treated as income in the church financial statement, whether or not the income is withdrawn from the fund.

Ministerial Fund. NAV: \$236,274. Income from the fund has been accounted for as income upon distribution. The use of distributions of this fund is limited to funding compensation paid to UUCM's minister. Due to the size of this church operating budget category the Ministerial Fund in practice functions as a reserve fund similar to the NPO Fund.

Lawrence Fund. NAV: \$176,937. Distributions from the funds are determined by the Trustee (PNC) and according to the fund's indenture are limited to the income earned by the fund. Distributions are accounted for as income upon receipt, and are expected to total approximately \$4,550 this fiscal year. There is no

restriction on the use of the distributed incomes, *once received*. The Trustee effectively exercises near absolute discretion on the fund's investment policy. They have listened to our requests or suggestions, while resisting any fund portfolio allocation that would deviate from their comfort zone, that is, within the range of conventional industry practice. The current fund allocations of 35% equity and 61% fixed income – the average duration of the fixed income portfolio being unclear – is, in practice, not so far from that advocated and put into place by the LPL people that we have raised objections of late.

Charity Fund. NAV: \$54,438. Fund income, liberally defined in the fund's covenant to include realized capital gains, may be paid out at the minister's discretion to causes and church members in need. While the Fund's terms do not preclude the financing of certain church expenditures, this has not been the practice to date. Thus the Charity Fund does not effectively enter into normal church operating budget-related considerations.

Russell Fund. This one remaining small fund is an account held by the UUA as custodian which is managed by their asset management arm. Current NAV is about \$1,428. At today's low interest rates the fund generates virtually no income. The fund's terms prevent it from being cleanly liquidated. Ergo, it is little more than a curiosity at this point.

Checking Account. Balance: \$52,923.

Special Purpose Funds

There are several active, as well as other once-active, "funds" which have no accompanying asset account (such as with LPL or a bank), but rather are accounts set up in the church accounting system which are used to track special donations and grants made to the church for specific purposes. In the double-entry bookkeeping framework these appear on the liabilities side of the church balance sheet. These funds can be and are spent down, so to speak, in order to finance specific types of expenditures, but cannot just be considered there for the using on any old thing.

Some of these "funds" are ephemeral in nature, e.g., when the Christmas Eve service collection is taken on behalf of designated charities and shortly thereafter checks are cut to the chosen beneficiaries. We might think of these funds as "being held in" the checking account or NPO Fund, but this would merely be a linguistic convention. The basic truth being modeled is that – again – not all of the liquid assets held in the church's name can simply be spent as we please. These special-purpose funds include:

Music Fund: Endowed in late 2013 by a generous former members of the church Ron and Janice Dallas,, earmarked specifically for funding the UUCM music program. The fund was projected to be spent down to zero this year, but was then infused with an additional \$5,000 for the Dallahses this past fall. The Music Fund is projected to commence the coming fiscal year with a balance of this \$5,000.

Membership & Welcoming Program Fund: Originally funded in December 2016 by a Unitarian Universalist Woburn Grant, and then augmented this year by a partial rebate of asset manager fees by LPL. The fund is earmarked for church membership development, largely as chosen by the Membership Committee and Outreach Team. Current balance is \$1,858.

UU Tyngsboro/Malden Grant Fund: Originally funded in October 2017, with the source of the funds being from what amounts to the estate of the now closed Tyngsboro, Massachusetts UU church. The fund has the broad charter that it is to be used for congregation development. (Other area churches received a similar grant out of the Tyngsboro church closing proceeds.) Current balance is \$764.

OWL Program Fund: Reflects tuition collected from non-UUCM participants in RE's OWL program. Funds are used to defray expenses associated with the program, such as for program teacher training. Current balance is \$636.

Annual Report from the Worship Committee

Worship Committee Members: Hank Driscoll, Susan Jordan, Russell Tripp, and co-chairs Carolyn Cronin and Rev. Marta. Director of Religious Education, Mimi Olivier and Director of Music, Alex Cumming, participate in planning services and attend meetings as their schedules permit.

Rev. Marta's services: Through April, Rev Marta has preached 14 Sundays and is scheduled for 3 more Sundays before summer (May 19, June 3, June 10). She also preached Christmas Eve. Highlights of include Whole Church services on Home Coming Sunday, Thanksgiving Sunday, and Easter. On October 14, Rev. Marta put aside her planned sermon to read a letter by UUA president Susan Frederick-Gray in response to a racist incident within the UUA and to speak on her own experiences as a Latinx minister in a white dominated denomination. With assistance from Rev. Lilia Cuervo, Rev. Marta led a moving Dios De Muertos (Day of the Dead) service that we hope becomes a regular part of the UUCM schedule.

Christmas Pageant: Mimi Olivier led the ever joyful Christmas Pageant with a cast of many including new born baby Felix, big brother Ollie, and proud parents Alice and Alex Cumming.

Guest Leaders: Through April, we have had 9 guest leaders. Rev. Laura Randall, Rev. Ian White Maher, Matt Meyer, Will McMillan, Rev. Aisha Ansano, Rev. Natalie Malter, Betty Hauck, and Rev. Lilia Cuervo were excellent and received positive feedback from the congregation. Professional storyteller Sharon Kennedy was not up to UUCM standards on many levels. The Worship Committee appreciates all the feedback we received on this and all other services. Carolyn Cronin sent Ms. Kennedy an email summarizing the feedback we received. Our last two guest leaders were Music Director Alex Cumming May 5 and Will Williamson May 12.

Lay-Led Services: We are fortunate to have many talented lay leaders who have led 10 services through April. We had multi-voice services on Mystery, Possibility and Poetry. We thank our leaders Carol Schachet, Steve Schmidt, Susan Jhirad, Tammy McKanan, Carolyn Cronin, Susan Jordan, Ann Heinz, and Michael Glenn for leading the services and thank all others who participated in the multi-voice services. Rada Ruggles will lead on May 26.

Worship Associates: Worship Associates participated in most services providing the Welcome and other elements as requested by the Worship leader. We wish to thank Karen Johnston, Tom Phillips, Carolyn Cronin, Susan Jordan, Marsha Lawson, Melissa Radzminski, Brendan Shea, Carole Bundy, Rada Ruggles, Alex Daum, Susan Jhirad, Robert Heintz, and Oriana McKanan for their participation.

Thanks to others who contribute to the success of Sunday Morning Worship

- Mimi Olivier for outstanding quality and enthusiasm in doing Time For All Ages.
- Alex Cumming and the Music Committee (Nancy Kurtz, Marsha Lawson and Joe Walters) for coordinating great music and leading morning song. Russell Tripp, Molly Ruggles, the choir and all the musicians who contribute their gifts to our services.
- Russell Tripp and Steve Schmidt who open the church every Sunday morning.
- Hank Driscoll who has taken over counting attendance at services; and Russell Tripp who recently stepped down from this task.
- The Welcoming Team (greeters, Red Apron wearers) coordinated by Steve Schmidt.
- Everyone who contributes to coffee hour by bringing food, setting up, cleaning up or any combination thereof. Russell Tripp who makes coffee every Sunday.
- The Outreach Committee (Brendan Shea, Melissa Radzminski, Molly Ruggles) who post service information on church's website, Facebook, and beyond.

- Brenda Bonetti, the church office administrator who makes the Order of Service look professional.

Coming Up:

Continue efforts to recruit additional Worship Committee members, Worship Associates, and lay leaders. Summer Services planning is underway.

Summer Services start June 16 at 10:00 a.m. with the annual Blessing of the Animals service June 23, Melissa Radzinski and Brendan Shea will host a live-stream of Sunday Worship at General Assembly led by Rev. Marta. The stream starts at 1:00 p.m.

Dates of Worship Committee Summer retreat and all church retreat TBD.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Cronin, for the Worship Committee

Report on the Small Group Ministry Program

Small Group Ministry (SGM) is an important feature of our church life. Small groups promote meaningful connection between individuals “beyond coffee hour,” thereby strengthening the fabric of the whole church community. Small groups encourage congregants to focus on their spiritual growth and on exploring issues together. In addition, small groups help integrate newcomers into our church community, thus promoting membership growth. This year’s activities have included several successful small group experiences.

(1) Soul Matters groups: This year twenty-five people were involved in four Soul Matters groups. Attendance and participation was high, and most participants were positive about the groups. Group facilitators included Lourie August, Marsha Lawson, Rev. Marta (who took on most of the new people), and Ann Heintz and Susan Jhirad (co-leaders). In the main, participants valued the opportunity to reflect on the monthly Soul Matters theme and to share with others on a deeper level. The facilitators decided to again offer the Soul Matters small groups in the upcoming year.

(2) “Aging with Wisdom” groups: These groups began in September as a small-group option for congregants over 65 and are spiritually-oriented and focused on the later stage of life. Response was enough to warrant formation of two groups: Michael Glenn facilitated them both. Two people under sixty-five asked to be included and were accepted as well. By year’s end one group had eight members; the other had six. Plans are for these groups to continue into 2019-2020. Participants will have a chance to re-enroll or drop out, and new members will be accepted between now and September. The groups will end in June, 2020.

(3) UUCM Book Group: Our UUCM book group has two sections. Books fall along the spectrum of social justice, with a focus on books on race. The Sunday afternoon group has five to seven members, and will have met six times this year. The Monday evening group, with nine members, will have met nine times this year. Plans are for the Book Groups to continue, in its two sections, into 2019-2020. Members will choose next year’s books by voting on a list of suggestions this summer. Participants will have a chance to re-enroll or drop out, and new members will be accepted between now and September.

(4) Meditation Groups (UUCM Sangha): This year our meditation group expanded from meeting once a month to three times a month. We now have First and Third Thursday sittings in the Moore Room. In addition, Marsha Lawson hosts a meditation/study/discussion group at her home on the Second Thursday of each month. Attendance at these groups is between six and fourteen people. Our mailing

list has close to thirty names. For several people, the meditation group is their main UUCM activity. We also held two Days of Mindfulness this year. We are currently reaching out to co-ordinate sittings and Days of Mindfulness with meditators at other nearby UU churches.

(5) Adult Religious Education (RE): A monthly UU History study group was held this year based on excerpts selected by Dan McKanan from *A Documentary History of Unitarian Universalism*. Ann Heintz helped facilitate the group. Topics ranged from theological foundations of Unitarianism and Universalism, the merger of the two denominations, and early and contemporary social justice issues. The group was attended by between ten to twenty people and met on Sunday mornings before the worship service.

(6) Group For 20-to 40-Somethings: This group began meeting this year. It may be more of an activity group than a “small group,” but it is a welcome addition to our repertory of available small gatherings.

(7) Two one-time home dinners were held this year with a combination of new and more seasoned congregants. No Circle Dinners were held this year. Perhaps these can be organized again in 2019-20.

In the upcoming year, our plan is to again promote an array of Small Group Ministries – some of which are mentioned above and also some new offerings.

Submitted by Lourie August and Michael Glenn

Annual Report from the Buildings & Grounds Committee

There was only one truly major buildings or grounds related project this year. Its cost took up most of the B&G budget. In this same Committee report a year ago, our then stated foremost priority was to fix the water leakage that we had noted was occurring around the skylight over the pulpit area in the sanctuary, before the problem became more serious. It transpired that the source of the leakage was the caulk seals around the perimeter edges of the plexiglass window sheets in the church attic, which had deteriorated significantly. During times of heavy rains, especially when accompanied by strong winds, major quantities of water would enter through those sheet edges. Driscoll Contracting replaced those rather low-grade windows with a set of windows of much better grade construction. The new windows should provide long-lasting and effective protection. They are also substantially more aesthetic, although those merits are can only be appreciated from along a narrow length of sidewalk across Powder House Road. The cost of the repairs, including the replacement roof slates around the window area, totaled almost \$8,000.

The year’s other notable projects were setting up the sanctuary with a wireless microphone system at a cost of \$1,155, and some major maintenance work on the church boiler which cost \$1,333. The boiler repairs were of a type whose requirement random occurs, usually with fairly long intervals in between.

Over February-April the B&G Committee members and Board member Susan Jirhad devoted substantial time to gathering background information for and ultimately submitting a Community Preservation Act grant application to the City of Medford for the funding of major Osgood House renovations. Details on what the grant, if the application is successful, would go towards are provided in the report from the UUCM Board earlier in this annual report.

Committee and Board member Loren Bernardi continues to generously contribute his craftsmanship skills and time to many smaller projects around the church and Osgood House. This year those included installation of wall thermometers in the church to better monitor temperatures, fixing the church east entrance door deadlock, repairing the church front double-door wood astragal, installation of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) cabinet on the Benker Hall wall, and installation of AED and restroom directional signage at several locations in the church.

Church member Wendy Fearing has engaged in multiple grounds cleanup and planting projects, favoring native pollinator-friendly plants, on her own initiative. She also helped during the Medford CPA grant application process. We appreciate her contributions.

The ultra-energetic community garden group continues to work our church grounds to good effect – growing vegetables for the church Food Pantry clients while providing an appealing feel to the church east side grounds and Osgood back yard. Certain trees around the Osgood House have grown sufficiently in the few years since they started the gardens that they have moved some of the beds to sunnier spots. They have also started to remove invasive plants from some of the non-garden spots and replanted the areas with native perennials. We appreciate what the gardeners provide as partners in our mission to be good shepherds of our grounds – grounds which are highly visible in the community.

As usual, we would like to recognize the dedication of our sexton, Fred Humphries. His routine contributions go above and beyond the official charter of his position. Many times he alters his normal hours to meet with service providers or potential building renters. He is a community treasure.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff Ward,

Building & Grounds chairman

Annual Report from the Membership Committee

Membership reflects an intentional and free commitment to the Congregation of UUCM as expressed in the Covenant we say each Sunday as well as our affirmation and support of the Principles of the UUA. With the continued advice and work of former head of the Membership Team, Michael Glenn, the process of greeting, getting to know, and following up with newcomers has continued. This includes asking visitors to sign the visitors' log, giving a welcome bag to visitors who remain for social hour, follow up with notes or emails of welcome, and, when requested, name tags and inclusion on the Congregation's announcement list.

Welcoming visitors who may become members only begins with the greeters at the front and side doors and the Red Apron person who is the go-to person for visitors with questions. Michael Glenn, Susan Jhirad, Nick Sargent, Tammy McKanan, Hank Driscoll, Susan Jordan, Dana MacNamee, Bob Stockwell, and Steve Schmidt have filled those positions this past year. The process of membership continues each time a visitor or newcomer meets another member of the congregation and gets to know them, individually, and the congregation, at large, more deeply.

Before the New Year, Donna Pietropaulo and Joanne Nolan submitted letters of intent to the Board and signed the Roll of Members. On April 29, 2019, Rev. Marta offered a membership meeting to Naomi (Violet) Paisley-Flango, Robert Lublin, Amelia Whitaker, and Katherine Harvey, all of whom are expected to sign the Roll of Members during the May 19 service.

Steve Schmidt who served as head of the Membership Team will leave that position next year and we are looking for someone to take over as head for the next church year.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Schmidt

Annual Report from the Caring Team

The Caring Ministry has evolved from an intentional team-led effort to an unstructured Congregation-wide response. Steve Schmidt remained as the contact person to whom some requests for needs were addressed. The trend that began to emerge in the past few years has continued to grow: Much caring within the UUCM community is being provided “behind the scenes,” and Steve was not directly involved.

Most needs for Care were addressed directly to the Congregation via the UUCM announcement email list. One of the most common needs, that sometimes goes unmet, is members or friends who cannot attend service on Sunday because of transportation issues. The Caring Ministry team is working to set up a group of drivers who will be available on a regular, but revolving, basis to address this issue.

Steve Schmidt will continue to serve as the contact person for the shared Caring Ministry of UUCM.

The Caring Ministry, on behalf of the Congregation, would like to extend a heart-felt thank you to all those who helped provide care for fellow members and friends of UUCM.

Respectfully submitted by the Caring Ministry.

Annual Report from the Outreach Team

The outreach team was formed this year as a result of discussions on the Board at the end of the 2017-18 church year. The team, comprising Brendan Shea, Melissa Radzynski and Molly Ruggles, was inspired by talks from 2018 General Assembly around outreach and growth, and we have modeled some of the work that we undertook as part of that.

Our goals at the start of the year included:

- Improving our social media outreach and our website.
- Looking at our signage.
- Think about the experience a newcomer has as they visit and walk through our space.

We have made the most progress in our social media and website work. In particular, we have done the following:

- Published an easy to access online calendar that people can use to publish new events.
- Improved our website overall, including more images.
- Increased our regular Facebook postings, and experimented with Facebook advertising for events.
- Published events in other online local media sites, including Wicked Local and Medford Patch.

Regarding our signage, we have experimented with posters that are related to our Soul Matters theme of the month and that include information about our website. We are also proceeding with quotes for replacing our main church sign, which is deteriorating. We solicited feedback from the community about our signage; one of the main takeaways from that is that we want to convey that we are a welcoming congregation and that visitors are invited to join us. We are still thinking about ways to communicate this effectively.

We have worked with the Welcoming and Membership teams to align our goals, and we expect to continue to do that. We have also collaborated with our Director of Religious Education, Mimi Olivier, to think about ways to invite more families to our church through events such as the Family Dance.

The team thanks everyone for their support and contributions, and looks forward to continuing their work next year.

Brendan Shea, for the Outreach team

Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget Proposal

	FY 2019-20 Proposed	Explanation
Pledges	72,853	This year's canvass total
Plate and Other Gifts	6,700	No Brenner Estate drawdown this year
Fundraising	5,700	Level with FY 2018-19
Flower Sponsorship (net)	240	Level with FY 2018-19
Building Use	13,500	Loss of major user, partially offset
Investment Income from NPO Fund	2,300	Slightly higher principal amount
Lawrence & Other Restricted Fund Distributions	4,550	Level with FY 2018-19
Ministerial Fund Income Distributions	6,000	Anticipated income from Fund
Drawdown of Music Program Fund	1,000	Budgeted (below) program spending
Membership/Welcoming Fund Drawdown	1,250	Budgeted (below) program spending
Income	\$114,093	
Minister	40,370	2.8% Cost-of-Living increase
DRE	15,672	2.8% Cost-of-Living increase
Sexton	9,869	2.8% increase in hourly rate
Administrator	4,580	2.8% increase in hourly rate
Music Director	7,525	Level with FY 2018-19
Payroll Service	1,807	Level with FY 2018-19
Workers Compensation Insurance	2,727	Level with FY 2018-19
Miscellaneous Employer Taxes	70	
Staff-related	\$82,620	
Utilities & Heating Oil	15,100	Level with FY 2018-19
Snow Removal	5,700	FY 2018-19 experience
Property & Liability Insurance	6,000	Slight increase of FY 2018 assumed
Buildings & Grounds Maintenance, Repairs, Upkeep	10,000	Retain new annual baseline
Sunday Service-related expenses	3,560	Level Funding
Religious Ed Supplies & Programming	1,400	Level Funding
Music Program	1,000	Planned program spending
General & Administrative Supplies, Services, Equipment	3,700	Level with FY 2018-19
UUA/MBD contribution	250	Nominal contribution
Membership/Welcoming	1,250	Planned program spending
Expenses	\$130,580	
Deficit	-\$16,487	Planned drawdown of church financial accounts

Appendix: Brenner Fund Allocation and Vote

Funds received from Brenner Estate to date: \$70,000

Proposed Vote:

Moved: That the Congregation confirm prior Board decisions to use funds received from the Estate of Janice Brenner totaling \$19,000

1.) To repay the amounts withdrawn in the prior fiscal year to cover unexpected extraordinary building repairs from the NPO (unrestricted fund) in the amount of **\$10,000** and from the Ministerial Fund in the amount of **\$7,000** and;

2.) to make a contribution of **\$2,000** to the UUA for membership fees (in lieu of the budgeted amount of \$250)

And that the Congregation further authorize that the amount of **\$10,000** be used as follows:

3.) An amount not exceeding **\$5,000** be used to install new stoves and a kitchen floor in Benker Hall

4.) The one time amount of **\$1,000** be allocated to pay allowable professional expenses (such as educational expenses, professional dues and related travel expenses) for the Director of Religious Education.

5.) The amount of **\$4,000** be used to establish the Brenner Scholarship Fund to provide scholarships for educational and other enrichment activities for the youth of the church. Janice Brenner's mother, June Brenner, was a past director of the RE program at our church.

6.) Any balance remaining of this \$10,000 amount may be used for one or more special projects authorized by the Board of Trustees.

And that the Congregation further authorizes that

7.) The remaining balance of funds received from the Brenner Estate **over the amount \$29,000** be added to the NPO fund for investment.