

FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY
OF MILWAUKEE

ANNUAL REPORT

2009-2010



A Unitarian Universalist Congregation • Est. 1842

**A strong and
thriving
community**

FIRST UNITARIAN
SOCIETY
OF MILWAUKEE

1342 N. Astor Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202
414 273-5257

www.uumilwaukee.org
office@uumilwaukee.org

The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Established 1842

ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010

CHURCH STAFF:

SENIOR MINISTER

The Rev. Andrew C. Kennedy, D. Min.

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

The Rev. Dena McPhetres

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

Jean Johnson

DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT

Kathy Porter

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Beryl Aschenberg

LEAD MUSIC DIRECTOR

Alissa Rhode

MUSIC DIRECTOR

C. Christian Rich

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Jack Forbes Wilson

CHURCH SECRETARY

Sharon R. Murphy

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Bonnie Poquette

R.E. ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Elizabeth Miller

ACTING R.E. PROGRAM ASSISTANT

Lori Hlaban

R.E. PROGRAM ASSISTANT (Beginning in April)

Julie Thompson

SENIOR FACILITIES COORDINATOR

Jim Klingbiel

FACILITIES COORDINATORS

Tony Brandl/Eric Beaumont

STATISTICAL INFORMATION:

2008-2009 Operating Budget: \$ 794,611

Adult Members: 768

Church School Enrollment: 230

Contributing Households: 524

MEMBER:

Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)

Central Midwest District, UUA (CMwD)

Southeastern Wisconsin Unitarian

Universalist Council (SEWUUC)

Interchange, Inc.

Interfaith Council of Greater Milwaukee

Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations

Allied for Hope (MICAH)

The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee
1342 North Astor Street Milwaukee, WI 53202
Telephone: 414 273-5257 Fax: 414 273-5254 E-Mail: office@uumilwaukee.org
Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.uumilwaukee.org

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As I look back on the past year at First Church I can not help but be optimistic, proud and very humbled.

The first big exciting event of the church year was the installation of our new Associate Minister Dena McPhetres. I remember as I sat waiting for the ceremony to begin I read through the list of past ministers of our congregation. I realized that Dena was our first female minister and I, a female president, had the privilege to play a role in installing her. What a proud and humbling experience.

An early meeting of the Sustain Our Society program was held last summer in my dining room with a group of very motivated and concerned congregants and staff members. I remember wondering if this could ever come to fruition ... solar panels on the Common Room roof, insulation of our 1892 building, a grass roots movement to educate people about the raft of environmental issues facing our society; it all seemed very ambitious and expensive. However, with the help of two very generous donations from church members, Tom Brandstetter and Lu Krug, to start us off, this congregation again humbled me with its generosity, its energy and its thoughtfulness on this very important issue. I find myself speaking up about peak oil and 350ppm frequently these days and I am so very proud when I can tell people ... "Oh, I learned about that at church." First Church is walking the walk about being a Green Sanctuary and that is something we should all be proud of ... and it should

make us all a bit more optimistic about the future of this planet.

The other meeting from last summer that stays in my mind was with the co-chairs of the

the likelihood of success ... especially in the midst of a financial recession. I was again humbled at the outpouring of support and generosity in response to the "Give us Five" campaign.

First Church is walking the walk about being a Green Sanctuary and that is something we should all be proud of ... and it should make us all a bit more optimistic about the future of this planet.

Stewardship Committee. They explained that they were going to try to change the culture of giving at First Church. They were going to make the congregants think like stake holders. They were going to remind people that "...we drink from the well that those before us dug ... and we have a responsibility to those who will follow us to leave things strong and thriving." I have to admit that while I loved their approach I doubted

These are just a few of the times this year that I was amazed by the energy and dedication of the people of this church. Your willingness to step up and get the job done, in whatever capacity is asked, is something that makes me optimistic for the future of our church, so very proud to be a member here and humbled that I cannot do more.

Thank you for allowing me to fill this role for the past year; it has been a true honor.

— Betty Schroeder, President

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

ANNUAL MEETING

May 17, 2009

Congregation President Mary Jo Mueller called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. after a congregational quorum was confirmed. Judy Anderson served as Parliamentarian.

Adrian Langhus moved, and Betty Schroeder seconded, to approve the minutes from May 20, 2007. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee Report

Elizabeth Lentini presented the candidates for the Board of Trustees. The church membership approved Noreen Gilbertson, Diane Reynolds, and Kathy Rivera for 3 year terms on the Board of Trustees.

Elizabeth Lentini presented the candidates for the Nominating Committee. The membership approved Russ Drewry and Lorraine Jacobs for 3-year terms on the Nominating Committee to expire in 2012.

The names of the 2009-10 Committee Chairs were distributed to the membership.

Mary Jo Mueller thanked the outgoing Board (Mary Jo Mueller, Patricia Witt, Adrian Langhus) and Nominating Committee members (Elizabeth Lentini, T.J. Jensen).

Gordon Mueller, Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee, presented the Financial Report. Gordie presented the financial results of last fiscal year and discussed the financial challenges facing us in the coming year. He pointed out that the great response to the canvas this year will help alleviate some of our financial stress. Thank you to all members and friends who have so generously pledged their support. Full details of the financials are included in the Annual Report.

Drew Kennedy's Remarks

The highlights 2008-9 included: 1) The vote on whether to call Craig Schwalenberg tested our strength as a congregation. We rose to the challenge and walked together in love. There will be two services instead of three on July 26, 2009 to celebrate Craig's three years as Assistant Minister at First Church. 2) There has been both progress and challenges to *Vision 2010* this year. Attendance has increased 10%, Social Justice has the Green Sanctuary Program, and the growth of YANKs has shown the increase in young adult activity. 3) First Church does make a difference as we serve people of all generations. 4) Dena McPhetres is our new Associate Minister and will bring new energy and skills to us in the Fall. The challenges are mostly financial in nature with austere cuts in the budget and limited programs.

Green Sanctuary Program

Pat Schroeder presented the application for First church to be recognized by the UUA as a "Green Sanctuary" congregation. The resolution, moved by Betty Schroeder and seconded by Mark Gill, is as follows:

1. The congregation determines that it has accomplished all requirements for accreditation as a Green Sanctuary, and approves the application of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee for Green Sanctuary accreditation from the UU Ministry for Earth.
2. The congregation recognizes that the work completed is a strong beginning for integrating environmental awareness, sustainable practices, and environmental justice into our community, and commits to continue efforts in this regard.

The motion was carried.

Christian Becker moved, and Janet Fitch seconded, that Craig Schwalenberg be acknowledged for his character, compassion and dedication during the three years of his ministry to this congregation. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Sincerely
Judith C. Anderson
Secretary

Financial Reports

Finance Committee Report

Overview

The Finance Committee is responsible for overseeing the financial condition of the church. Its primary areas of responsibility are:

- monitoring the current year's financial performance to determine if actual performance is in compliance with the budgeted performance;
- analyzing financial data and developing alternatives and strategies when necessary;
- preparing the budget for each new fiscal year;
- serving as a resource for the various committees and the Board concerning financial matters.

The Finance Committee closely monitors the financial results of our church throughout the course of the year and attempts to keep the Board of Trustees and the congregation informed of any noteworthy developments. We generate projections to help forecast the financial capabilities of the church over the near and long term and to assist with the formation of a balanced budget for the next fiscal year and developing strategies to help improve the financial status of the church. The Finance Committee is committed to fulfilling the diverse goals established for the church while attempting to meet the needs of the various committees, groups and members of the congregation.

I would like to personally thank the committee members Josh Blakely, Mike Hogan, Jean Lufburrow, Carole Montgomery, Dave Poquette, Russ Sherman and the staff liaisons, Jean Johnson and Kathy Porter for their many hours of hard work and valued input. Without their much appreciated involvement, this committee could not accomplish its important responsibilities.

Financial Report: 2008-2009 Operating Results

First Church finished the fiscal year with a surplus of \$6,500 compared to an expected shortfall of \$39,100. This positive variance of \$45,600 was due to the following:

Pledge income was greater than budget by	\$18,200
Transfers were less than budget by	(12,300)
Other income was less than budget by	<u>(1,700)</u>
Total income greater than budget by	<u>\$ 4,200</u>
Human Resource expenses were less than budget by	\$ 4,300
Building expenses were less than budget by	7,400
Basic Operations were less than budget by	11,400
Committees expenses were less than budget by	7,200
Capital Maintenance were less than budget by	11,000
Miscellaneous expenses were less than budget by	<u>100</u>
Total expenses were less than budget by	<u>\$41,400</u>
Total	<u>\$45,600</u>
	=====

The [pledge income variance was a pleasant surprise. The congregation really came together as a result of the congregational meeting that was held in December, 2008. At that meeting it was explained that drastic cuts were going to be necessary even with a modest increase in pledges. At the time we were expecting a small decline in pledge income. We instead realized a small increase in pledge income for the fiscal year.

The other part of the positive news is that expenses were well managed. Gas expenses were considerably under budget as a result of the energy efficiency of the new boilers. We also experienced positive vari-

ances due to lower than anticipated health insurance costs and no installation costs. The rest of the surplus resulted from various expenses being closely monitored and controlled such as mailing, office supplies, printing, sheet music, musicians, accounting fees and committee expenses to name several where actual expense was considerably less than budget.

June 30, 2009 Balance Sheet

First Church experienced an increase in Unrestricted Fund from 22.6% to 31.3% of our budgeted expenses. The Unrestricted Fund account is referred to as our "safety net." It is to be utilized for unexpected expenses. Our policy guideline targets this fund to be at 15% of budgeted expenses at a minimum. Our balance sheet continues to be sound with considerable liquid assets, minimal debt and an Unrestricted Fund balance that exceeds our policy guideline.

2010-2011 Budget

At the time of this article, the budget for the next fiscal year is still being finalized. The Board of Trustees has not had an opportunity to evaluate it. As it currently stands, we are projecting a budget with many of the austere cuts that were implemented during the 2009-10 fiscal year. Despite an encouraging increase in pledge income, cost-cutting measures continue to be required. The cuts consist of a reduced musical guests budget, the elimination of the accrual for the sabbatical and the payment to ourselves on the building renovation loan, a 50% cut of the marketing budget and a continuation of the reduction in the percentage paid by First Church for employee health benefits. All of these cost-cutting measures are necessary in order to realize a budget that still results in a small deficit.

The Transfer from Vision 2010 is being reduced by \$30,000. This requires a 5% increase in pledge income in order to break even. Additionally, each 1% increase in expenses results in an \$8,000 increase in overall expenses requiring another 1.5% increase in pledge income. Other sources of income have remained fairly flat from one year to the next resulting in a minimal impact on covering increases in our budget requirements.

I want to especially thank those that found it in their hearts to significantly increase their pledge this next fiscal year and those who volunteer their valuable time and talents. Those services are immensely helpful in accomplishing the important work of this church. First Church is able to meet its very challenging financial requirements and wide-ranging spiritual goals only through the pledges of its members, the extra efforts of its volunteers and the dedication of its hard-working staff. Thanks again!

— Gordon C. Mueller,
Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair

First Church is able to meet its very
challenging financial requirements and
wide-ranging spiritual goals only
through the pledges of its members, the extra
efforts of its volunteers and the dedication of
its hard-working staff. Thanks again!

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

Balance Sheet

June 30, 2009

ASSETS

Current Assets

10000	Cash in Bank - M&I	85,915.04
10400	Money Market	647,457.25
10500	Oikocredit USA	10,000.00
10600	Apartment Working Capital	1,000.00
10800	Accounts Receivable	4,819.26
10900	Prepaid Expenses	19,539.05

Total Current Assets

768,730.60

Other Assets

19000	Memorial Trust Fund Investment	258,199.05
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Total Other Assets

258,199.05

Total Assets

1,026,929.65

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

Current Liabilities

22000	Deferred Pledges	8,358.00
22500	Apartment Security Deposit	3,969.00
22600	Energy Initiative	24,000.00
22700	YRUU Account	8,812.43
22750	YRUU Mission Trip Savings	4,450.00
23400	Federal Payroll Taxes Payable	2,483.93
23800	State Payroll Taxes Payable	1,213.86
24050	Prepaid RE Fees	6,180.00
24300	Accounts Payable	6,164.55
24400	Note Payable - Boiler	16,000.00
24600	Sabbatical Accrual	8,000.00

Total Current Liabilities

89,631.77

Total Liabilities

89,631.77

Restricted Funds

37800	Estate Designated-Morter Fund	94,392.92
37900	Fund Balance - Capital Fund	(56,507.42)
38000	Restr. Donation-Vision 2010	371,629.33
38100	Capital Maintenance Reserve	75,482.52
38200	Memorial Trust Fund	258,199.05

Total Restricted Funds

743,196.40

Unrestricted Funds

39005	Unrestricted Fund Balance	194,101.48
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Total Unrestricted Funds

194,101.48

Total Fund Balance

937,297.88

Total Liabilities & Fund Balance

1,026,929.65

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee
Notes to the Balance Sheet
June 30, 2009

DESIGNATED (BY BOARD) FUNDS:

Vision 2010: This fund was established in 2005 to fund the Vision 2010 goals until the church is financially able to fund them through normal operating income. As the church grows, it is anticipated that contributions will increase sufficiently to pay for the additional costs to fund the various goals of Vision 2010.

Capital Maintenance Reserve: This fund contains unrestricted bequest and donations that the Board designated for capital improvements.

RESTRICTED (BY DONOR) FUNDS:

Morter Fund: This fund was established in accordance with a bequest of a former member. The funds are designated to sponsor seminars on individual responsibility.

Capital Fund: The balance in this fund represents a loan from the Morter Fund to pay for the remaining costs of the Vision 2000 capital improvements not covered by the original fund drive.

Memorial Trust Fund:

This fund contains unspecified bequests. Money placed in the fund can be expended or borrowed against only by a super majority of the congregation. The Investment Committee manages it. A fixed percentage of the fund's assets provide quarterly income to the church's operations.

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS:

This fund is the amount that is retained after payment of expenses or the allocation to designated funds. It increases during fiscal years in which there is an operating surplus and decreases during years in which there is an operating deficit. For fiscal security, the Board has adopted a policy of maintaining a balance in this fund that is equal to or greater than 15% of the operating expenses for the most recent fiscal year. If the balance drops below this 15% level, the restoration of the fund becomes a fiscal priority.

Investment Committee Report

The Investment Committee monitors and makes recommendations regarding the Memorial Trust Fund (MTF) of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee. This year they also assisted the Finance Committee in setting up a ladder CD program to improve income from the reserve cash account.

The MTF was established in 1925 by a congregational resolution. Contributions are from bequests or donations which are specifically designated by the donor for the MTF. Since mid 2007, the MTF has been invested through the Unitarian Universalist Association in the Common Endowment Fund (CEF). CEF follows a strategic asset allocation model with qualified investment managers implementing each component of the asset allocation. Over a full market cycle the fund's return objective, net of fees, is 5% after inflation. Actual performance for calendar year 2009 was 27.1% and annualized for five years was 3%.

Our contract with the UUA specifies six percent distribution annually, calculated on a rolling thirteen quarter average. \$19,220 was distributed to the First Church operating budget in 2009. The value of the account as of December 31, 2009, was \$295,564.63.

Another ten thousand dollars of the unrestricted account is in the Oiko World Partnership Investment Note, a UUA investment through the Calvert Foundation. This note pays 1% per year. First Church's \$10,000 was matched with an additional \$10,000 from UUA and used to provide microcredit loans in more than 50 countries.

Investment Committee Members: Dave Becker; Tony LoBue; Russ Sherman; and Carole Montgomery, Chair.

— Carole Montgomery

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee
Income Statement
For the twelve months ending June 30, 2009

<u>Description</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>'07-'08</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>08-'09</u>	<u>Budget</u> <u>'08-'09</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
<u>Contributions</u>				
Pledge income	533,787	543,202	529,000	63.58%
Other contributions	19,137	21,967	18,000	2.16%
	<u>552,924</u>	<u>565,169</u>	<u>547,000</u>	<u>65.74%</u>
Transfers	<u>150,000</u>	<u>213,411</u>	<u>225,675</u>	<u>27.12%</u>
<u>Activity income</u>	<u>29,948</u>	<u>27,733</u>	<u>31,100</u>	<u>3.74%</u>
<u>Investment Income</u>	<u>15,379</u>	<u>14,401</u>	<u>15,500</u>	<u>1.86%</u>
<u>Apartment Income - Net</u>				
Rent	43,575	43,591	42,000	5.05%
Expenses	(33,289)	(28,042)	(29,190)	-3.51%
	<u>10,286</u>	<u>15,549</u>	<u>12,810</u>	<u>1.54%</u>
Total Income	<u>758,537</u>	<u>836,263</u>	<u>832,085</u>	<u>100.00%</u>
<u>Human Resources</u>				
Salaries & Wages	360,290	366,007	364,669	41.86%
Ministers Housing Allowance	73,089	75,531	73,952	8.49%
Ministers Professional Exp	12,496	12,531	13,031	1.50%
Health Insurance	42,492	46,117	48,000	5.51%
Pension (incl. Ministers)	35,840	37,486	38,111	4.37%
Payroll Taxes	20,434	21,377	21,704	2.49%
Other expenses	16,540	16,194	20,063	2.30%
	<u>561,181</u>	<u>575,244</u>	<u>579,530</u>	<u>66.53%</u>
<u>Contributions</u>	<u>16,000</u>	<u>16,000</u>	<u>16,000</u>	<u>1.84%</u>
<u>Building</u>				
Gas	18,209	11,018	20,000	2.30%
Electric	10,879	11,200	10,300	1.18%
Insurance	11,121	11,263	11,000	1.26%
Maintenance	5,810	7,409	7,500	0.86%
Cleaning fees	14,520	16,120	14,830	1.70%
Others	12,102	10,960	11,750	1.35%
	<u>72,640</u>	<u>67,970</u>	<u>75,380</u>	<u>8.65%</u>

	Actual	Actual	Budget	
	<u>'07-'08</u>	<u>08-'09</u>	<u>'08-'09</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
<u>Basic Operations</u>				
Telephone	2,714	3,172	3,500	0.40%
Mailing	12,708	12,651	14,000	1.61%
Office Supplies	8,676	3,966	6,500	0.75%
Printing	5,843	4,683	6,500	0.75%
Computers	4,146	6,009	6,000	0.69%
Musicians + Music Dir Subs	5,818	19,295	21,296	2.44%
Sunday Speakers	1,288	2,706	3,050	0.35%
Accounting Fees	9,649	8,839	10,000	1.15%
Others incl. \$8.0K for search	4,803	13,979	15,860	1.82%
	55,645	75,299	86,706	9.95%
<u>Religious Education</u>				
	6,425	7,391	7,500	0.86%
<u>Committees</u>				
Canvass	4,409	6,532	6,500	0.75%
Marketing	18,414	13,390	15,000	1.72%
Others	5,650	4,008	9,645	1.11%
	28,473	23,930	31,145	3.58%
<u>Extra Operations</u>				
Audio	464	487	500	0.06%
Capital Maintenance	33,701	63,411	74,375	8.54%
	34,165	63,898	74,875	8.60%
<u>Total Expenses</u>				
	774,529	829,732	871,136	100.00%
<u>Net Income</u>				
	(15,992)	6,531	(39,051)	

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	Betty Schroeder
VICE PRESIDENT	Russ Sherman
SECRETARY	Judy Anderson
TREASURER	Gordy Mueller

MEMBERS

Noreen Gilbertsen	Mike Newman	Diane Reynolds
Kathy Rivera	Shelley Schaffer	Jim Startt

COMMITTEES, COORDINATORS, AND GROUPS

AUDIO Eric Berndt	FINANCE Gordie Mueller	PASTORAL CARE PROVIDERS COORDINATOR Mary Vigdor
BOOK TABLE Nancy Pajewski Lynn Tolcott	FLOWERS Paula Anderson	PLAYTIME GROUP Lois Wesener
BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP Kate Marrs	FORUM Mark Gill	SACRED POETRY GROUP Bob Wallace
BUDDHIST STUDY GROUP Steve & Jeanne Lowry	GALLERY Sue Haislmaier Ken Vondenberg	SILENT RETREAT COMMITTEE Dave Macherey Christina Plum
BUILDING & GROUNDS Joe Schuller	GARDEN Pat McFarland Morlean Peacock	STAGE LEFT Randy Kreger
CHALICE CIRCLE STEERING COMMITTEE Byron Bloemer	HISTORY/ARCHIVES Bonnie Withers	STEWARDSHIP Sally Lewis Dale Skaggs
CHILD CARE Jenny Moss	INVESTMENTS Carole Montgomery	SUNDAY SERVICES Faith Danneil
CIRCLE SUPPERS Michael Karl	I.T. COMMITTEE Steven Culver	USHERS 8:45 Jane Peterson T.J. Jensen
COFFEE, SPECIAL Mary Ann Fisher	LIBRARY Linda Presto	11:00 Bruce Klemann Terry Hansen Nina Davis
COFFEE, SUNDAY Larry & Mary Jo Wellenstein David Macherey Sally & Al Ferguson	MARKETING Ben LeFort Ruth Vonderberg	5:00 Lorraine Jacobs Jill Maher
CRAFTY UU's Jenice Godley	MEMBERSHIP Louis Bruner	WOMANSPRIT Janet Nortrom Jude Bringe
DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS Chad Larget	PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE Jeanne Lowry Melinda Vernon	Y.A.N.K.S (Young Adults Need Kindred Spirits) Emily & Matt Bell
DESIGN Claudia Francis	PASTORAL CARE ASSOCIATES COORDINATOR Michelle Boehm	
ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR Steven Culver		

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
COUNCIL**

Deb Solis

ADULT EDUCATION

Kevin Gibson

**CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION**

Craig Gebauer

FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Colleen Wilkinson

YOUTH STEERING COMMITTEE

John Fitak

Kyle Solis

**SOCIAL JUSTICE
COUNCIL**

Ean Behr

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Joel Boyd

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Judy Dubrosky

Gretchen Mead

RACIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Rollie Hanson

(Currently inactive)

SOCIAL JUSTICE TREASURER

Dave Becker

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY—
SENIOR MINISTER**

Jeri Pearcy

**COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY —
ASSOCIATE MINISTER**

Lisa Koneazny

MORTER LECTURE FUND

Jo Schmidt

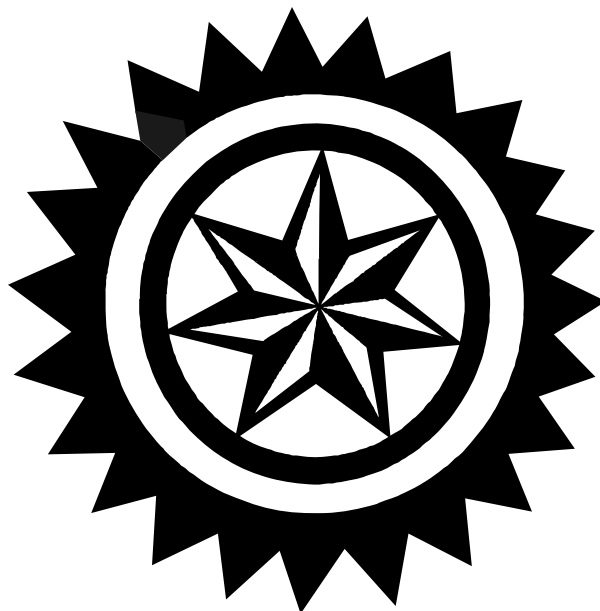
Will Fellows

NOMINATING

Cathy Ansay

PERSONNEL

Trish Taylor-Berg





**May 12, 2009 —
May 10, 2010**

NEW MEMBERS

Penny Adrian
Kristine Alaniz
Natalie Anniuk
JoAnn Appleyard
Anna Armstrong
Jessica Barr
Jordan Beck
Kyle Beck
Courtney Becks
Emily Bell
Matt Bell
Melissa Benson
Ben Campbell
John Cebar-Stano
Nick DaVia
Darren Davis
Brian Dieleman
Marcus Dimick
Vicki Dotson
Elizabeth Durkin
Jon Etter
Nicole Etter
Tammy Fleischman
Sarah Fowles
James Galasinski

Ulrike Galasinski
Laura Glawe
Jean Groshek
Jesse Hagen
Jean Henning
Kaye Hernon
John Herrmann
Amy Horst
Jessica Jacob
Manya Kaczowski
Jeanne Kaminski
Theresa Koch
Jennifer Kotas
Jason LaCorte
Kathleen Lengyel
Thomas Lengyel
Louis Mercer
Sara Mercer
Donna Moberg
Jessie Moffat
Dana Neiswander
Nate Norfolk
Tea Norfolk
Jean Northway
Matt O'Neill

Shannon O'Neill
Janice Orcutt
Birger Pahl
Michael Paiser
Abbie Pickett
Kathryn Podmokly
Deborah Potter
Matt Poulson
Cyrus Quinton
Larry Salsbury
Chris Schmit
Joyce Skinner
Sarah Spagnoli
Tony Spagnoli
Joseph Spence
Laura Straus
Tristan Strelitzer
Jessica Watkins
Bruce Wiggins
Terry Wiggins
John Yanasak
Adam Zaiger
Jackie Zandi

WEDDINGS AND UNION CEREMONIES

Scott Belanger & Elziabeth Setterfield
Kate Burkart-Paulson & Charles (Doug) Lovejoy
Chad Norman Rosentreter & Amelia Jeanne Kirby
Christopher James Larson & Jessica Lynn Leanna Brumm
John Michael Maier & Jane Andrea Lewis
Daniel Lee Vieaux & Stephannie Chistine Cooke
Robert Green Doherty & Mary Ellen Russell
Kurt Francis Servais & Adam Russell Stehly
Nathaniel Richard Spransy & Tasha Lynn Quaterman
Jason Andrew De Swarte & Jessica Ruth Lovely
Michael Thomas Paiser & Corrina Jo Herr

DEDICATIONS

of Children and Parents

Aya Kathryn Alaniz
Child of Kristine and Javer Alaniz

Harper Kylie Beck
Child of Jordan and Kyle Beck

Cassidy Ann Blakely
Child of Ann and Josh Blakely

Koda James Bruner
Child of Louis and Nicole Bruner

Aiden Goeckner Davis
Child of Bryna Goeckner and Darren Davis

Evelyn Rose Etter
Child of Nicole and Jon Etter

Justice Godley
Child of Jenice and Andrew Godley

Sophie Elizabeth Lewellen
Child of Darcy Hamlin and David Lewellen

Desmond Rocky Robert Rich
Child of Michelle Burr and Gus Rich

Sarah Isabelle Rich
Child of Michelle Burr and Gus Rich

Oscar Harrington Rich
Child of Michelle Burr and Gus Rich

Ciney Maximillian Rich
Child of Michelle Burr and Gus Rich

Nolan James Watters
Child of Geoffrey and Thea Watters

FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL SERVICES

Caspian Charles Clark
Marcel Louis Charles Collignon
Thomas Lengyel
William K. Thomas
Michael Wisniewski

HERITAGE SOCIETY

Judy Anderson	Kate Marrs
Paula and Keith Anderson	Patricia McFarland
Cheri and Tom Briscoe	Mike & Ellyn Newman
Susanne & Paul Carter	Janet & Marlowe Nortrom
Susan Comstock	Mimi Notestein
Jerry Fredrickson & Jill Erickson	Bob & Kathy Porter
Linda & Ed Farkas	Michael & Lisa Radtke
James M. Ford	Andre & Meredith Ryland
Joyce Harms	Pat and Max Scharmach
Nelson Kading	Nancy & Dick Spransy
Loren Leys & Adele Kaferly	Robert Szymanski
Linda & Mike Katz	Ted and Barbara Wiley
Drew Kennedy and Lois Wesener	Bettie Zillman
Lu Krug	Roger Zimmer
Jeanne & Michael Lewis	

2009-2010 Sermon Schedule

September 13
Ingathering Sunday!
**"An Ageless, Varied, Wondrous
and Elusive Quest"**
The Rev. Drew Kennedy
Family Sunday*

September 20
"Beginnings"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

September 27
Some Questions About Capitalism: I.
**"What Are We Doing
To Our Children?"**
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

October 4
**Some Questions About Capitalism:
II.**
**"Are We Just
Going To Tinker?"**
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

October 11
**"Hankering For
A Higher Quality of Life"**
The Rev. Michael Schuler,
Pulpit Exchange Guest
Family Sunday

October 18
**"The Seen and the Unseen:
Sustaining Our Society"**
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

October 25
**"Being There For
One Another and the
Blessings of Loving Kindness"**
The Rev. Drew Kennedy
PCA Commissioning

November 1
**"The Story Of
The Flaming Chalice"**
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

November 8
**INSTALLATION
OF THE REV. DENA MCPHETRES**
at St Paul's Episcopal Church
3:30 p.m. **ONE SERVICE ONLY**
Intergenerational Sunday

November 15
**"Redemption in the Season
of Thanksgiving"**
Wendy Cooper, Pulpit Guest

November 22
**INTERGENERATIONAL
THANKSGIVING SERVICE**
The Rev. Drew Kennedy
Dedication of Parents & Children
Intergenerational Sunday

November 29
"Ode To Joy"
The Rev. Linda Hansen,
Pulpit Guest

December 6
**"Hidden Epiphanies
And Unexpected Blessings"**
The Rev. Drew Kennedy
Recognition & Welcoming
of New Members

December 13
"Who Made the Holy Child?"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres
Mitten Tree in Common Room
Family Sunday

December 20
"The Poetry of Winter"
Beryl Aschenberg
and Jack Forbes Wilson
Intergenerational Service

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
The Rev. Drew Kennedy
and The Rev. Dena McPhetres
Intergenerational Services
3:00, 4:30, 6:30 and 8:00 p.m.

December 27
**"Speaking From
the Decades"**
The Rev. Dena McPhetres
with Lori Hlaban
Intergenerational Services

January 3
**What Do You Believe?
"What Is the Nature
of the Universe?"**
Exploring Cosmology"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

January 10
What Do You Believe?
**II. "How Do We Know What
We Know?"**
Exploring Epistemology"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

January 17
**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
SUNDAY**
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

January 24
What Do You Believe?
**III. "Why Do Bad Things
Happen To Good People?"**
Exploring Theodicy"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres
OWL Recognition
Family Sunday

January 31
What Do You Believe?
**IV. "What Are the Ways
To Wholeness?"**
Exploring Soteriology"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

February 7
What Do You Believe?
**V. "Teleology and the Purposes
of Our Lives"**
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

February 14
What Do You Believe?
**VI. "Eschatology
and the Meaning
of Death"**
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

February 21
**"Is Money Really a Danger To
My Soul?"**
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

February 28
"Frontline Spirituality"
Starhawk, Pulpit Guest
CMwD Women & Religion
Conference Weekend
Family Sunday

March 7
Annual Poetry Sunday:
"In Celebration
of W. S. Merwin"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

March 14
"Divine Intervention
at a Red Traffic Light"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy
Recognition & Welcoming
of New Members

March 21
"The Things That Sustain
Us Are Slow"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

March 28
9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Annual Youth Service:
"Come Dream With Us!"
Family Sunday

5:00 p.m.
"Grieving A Death,
Celebrating a Life:
A Tenebrae Service"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres
with Stage Left
Intergenerational Service

April 4
EASTER SUNDAY!
"Life, And Life More Abundant!"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy
Family Sunday

April 11
"Mysticism"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

April 18
EARTH DAY:
"Wisconsin Water"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres

April 25
MORTER LECTURE:
"Most Good, Least Harm"
Special Pulpit Guest Zoe Weil

May 2
"Saying the Things
We Need To Say"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

May 9
MOTHER'S DAY
"Parenting As a Spiritual Practice"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres
Dedication of Parents & Children

May 16
"Margaret Fuller"
The Rev. Dena McPhetres
Annual Meeting

May 23
9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
SUNDAY
"And We Are Embraced
By Our Church"
Intergenerational Service

5:00 p.m.
"Question Box Sermon"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy
Family Sunday*

May 30
MEMORIAL DAY SUNDAY
"America's Long War
and the Hurting Locker"
The Rev. Drew Kennedy

June 6
FLOWER COMMUNION
SUNDAY
The Rev. Drew Kennedy
Recognition & Welcoming
of New Members
Intergenerational Sunday

2009 Summer Services

June 14
"Our Little Secret"
The Rev. Craig Schwalenberg

June 21
"Twenty Questions"
The Rev. Craig Schwalenberg

June 28
"Behind Wisconsin's Wildlife
Story:
A Remarkable Migration
of the Human Heart"
Eric Hansen

July 5
"Do You Hear?"
The Rev. Craig Schwalenberg

July 12
"On Equality"
Joel Boyd, Lay Leader

July 19
"Name of the Game"
The Rev. Craig Schwalenberg

July 26
"Leave Taking"
The Revs. Craig Schwalenberg
& Drew Kennedy
Intergenerational Services:
TWO SERVICES AT 9:00 & 11:00!

August 2
"The Line on a Gravestone"
Andy Agacki, Lay Leader

August 9
"Critical Mass"
Ean Behr, Seminarian

August 16
"Whole Stories, Whole Lives"
Rev. Elizabeth Harding,
Pulpit Guest

August 23
"Good Enough"
Rev. Linda Hansen, Pulpit Guest

August 30
"The Moral Imagination"
India McCanse, Seminarian

September 6
"The Transformative Power
of Music"
Lawrence Dale Harper,
Lay Leader

SPECIAL SERVICES:

Saturday, July 18
10:30 a.m.
The Animal Blessing Service
with Juliet Hills
and Christian Becker,
at St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Garden

Sunday, August 2
11:45 a.m.
8th Annual River Service
at Villa Grove Park in Mequon,
led by our Green Sanctuary Team



Senior Minister's Report

Once again, it has been another rich and stimulating year here at First Church. We continue to be a remarkably energetic and vital downtown church, offering a wide array of excellent programs and services.

In brief, let me share a few highlights of the year and then review with you my own ministerial tasks and priorities of the past year.

HIGHLIGHTS

Our New Associate Minister

Clearly, one of the highlights of the 2009-2010 church year has been "calling" (with a 96% vote) the Reverend Dena McPhetres to be our first-ever Associate Minister last May 3, 2009. Dena is also the first woman minister in our 168 year history. That was in May. Then July 26, in grand style, we said goodbye to the Reverend Craig Schwalenberg, our first-ever Assistant Minister, who, together with his wife Cheryl, were the next day off to Oneonta, New York, where Craig was called to be the minister of the UU Society of Oneonta.

A week later, on August 1, Dena started with us.

Welcoming and integrating Dena into our church culture and organization has been both a joy and an exercise in care and intentionality, not only on my part, but on the part of the Board, the rest of the staff, the committees and coordinators, and the larger congregation. Dena and I meet weekly and often have a weekly lunch, as well. Serious time and attention was devoted to our relationship and respective responsibilities at both the staff and Board retreats held last August. Throughout the year, we have been doing some good reading on how to foster good collegial relationships. We've developed and signed a covenant. We have consulted with another successful team of UU minis-

ters. We have consulted with the UUA's staff person to large congregations (Stefan Jonasson), and have recently started working with a consultant from the North Central Career Center in Minneapolis — all in the service of being careful and intentional.

I'm delighted to tell you that, thus far, it has been a *joy* to work with Dena. I believe we are all significantly enriched by her presence among us. And I thank *all* of you who have been helpful in our navigating so successfully the multiple transitions from Craig as Assistant to

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Dena as Associate Minister. And please remember that if you have comments or concerns about either of our ministries, you can always speak to either of us directly or to one of the members of our respective Committees on Ministry.

Sustain Our Society

What were we *thinking*, many must have wondered, last fall when, in the face of a significant economic recession and a challenging, but successful pledge drive the previous spring, we announced an \$85,000 "Sustain Our Society" (SOS) initiative of energy conservation, generation and education?

As we now know, with significant inspiration from Tom Brandstetter who provided a lead gift of \$25,000, later generously matched by Lu Krug's \$25,000, we indeed raised a total of about \$92,000, including many inspiring gifts at all levels. Together with \$70,000 in grants, we

raised a combined total of about \$162,000!

As a consequence, through our SOS initiative, we are currently in the midst of installing an impressive system of solar photovoltaic panels on the top of the Leenhouts Common Room. (The pioneering architects, Lillian and Willis Leenhouts, by the way, would *love* this!) The system costs about \$90,000. It will produce about 11,700 kilowatts a year or \$1,400 of electrical energy, and eliminate 20,500 lb. of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere per year.

At the same time, lately we have had a significant number of volunteers and professionals crawling all over our drafty 1892 facility with an array of insulating tools and products. This is the conservation piece. And, too, we have been doing a wonderful job of educating ourselves, our children, and the wider community about the environmental needs and demands of our times.

So, hats off to our SOS team and all of you who have supported this ambitious SOS initiative! Together clearly we *can* and *do* make a difference!

Vision 2010 and its Tune Up

As many of you know, our current strategic plan is called *Vision 2010*. *Vision 2010* contains within it a platform for growing our church and Unitarian Universalism. As *Vision 2010* articulates it, the underlying purposes for growing our church are three-fold:

1. to enable us to reach out to those in need of a spiritual home;
2. to provide more opportunities for programs of personal, social, and spiritual growth, since the larger we become, the more able we are to add more quality programs; and

3. to increasingly serve the wider community.

Overarching all three of these purposes, *Vision 2010* affirms that our UU voice and our UU values of freedom, tolerance, acceptance of diversity, and respect for the interdependent web of all existence are sorely needed in this world. And the more of us there are, the more of a difference we can make.

Clearly, we have achieved *many* of our *Vision 2010* goals. We've added a second minister, a third service, re-vamped our visitor and new member processes, attracted more young adults, given some staff attention to social justice, and added more depth in services and programs, but one important goal has, unfortunately, eluded us: our providing adequate financial support for the programs and services we want, especially in light of the national economic recession.

Fortunately, this year we have seen two significant responses to these financial challenges. One is our Vision 2010 Tune Up Task Force initiative. The other is our renewed sense of the importance of stewardship.

One of the Board of Trustees's initiatives this year was the creation of the Vision 2010 Tune Up Task Force, chaired by board member Diane Reynolds. While affirming the goals and the thrust of *Vision 2010*, the Vision 2010 Tune Up Task Force concluded we needed to address an impending structural deficit by concentrating on three areas: Membership Growth and Retention, Income Growth, and Expense Management. Following an energetic Board-sponsored "Breaking Bread, Building Community" evening on April 6, three Task Forces, corresponding to the three identified areas, were formed. They will feed input into the staff and board retreats in June.

A Renewed Era
of Stewardship

Thankfully, in light of our financial challenges, a renewed era of steward-

ship is beginning to take place, as well. Inspired by energetic leadership from Sally Lewis and Dale Skaggs, our "Canvass" Committee has been renamed the "Stewardship" Committee. Last year, even in the face of the recession, we saw an impressive increase of about 7% in our pledge drive. This year, with our "Give Us Five" concept, it's looking like it might be slightly north of an 8% increase. Thanks, folks. We need it. We have a great gift here in the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee, which we need to wisely steward. We'll earnestly seek to use your dollars wisely and prudently.

MINISTERIAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF THE PAST YEAR

Having reviewed several of the highlights of the church year, let me briefly review my own ministerial priorities for the past year. The following are the main tasks to which I devote myself:

- Sunday Services
- Staff Team Leader
- Pastoral Care
- Rites of Passage
- Administration and Committees
- Teaching
- Public Ministry
- Denominational Concerns

My top priority continues to be the research, planning, writing, and delivery of sermons for our Sunday morning services. Studies show that the larger the church, the longer the minister needs for sermon preparation, and I have found this to be true. It takes more than half of every work week — between 25-35 hours per week, not including the considerable planning time I devote to this in the summer — to complete and deliver my sermons. Of particular note this year was the well received third year of a special service series in January and February under the rubric of "What Do You Believe?"

All of the *other* things I do are juggled between and among sermons. These *other* things include:

acting as staff team leader, providing pastoral care (especially to our leaders and to the more critically ill), officiating at dedications, weddings, and memorial services, playing a lead role with the Board and staff in the administration of the church and its committees, regularly teaching "Introduction to UUism" and "Journey to Membership," engaging in the larger community issues under the rubric of "public ministry," such as gay marriage and abortion rights (including a vigil last June which we hosted in response to the tragic murder of Dr. George Tiller in Wichita, Kansas), and participating in various UUA denominational activities, including serving as "Good Offices Minister" to other UU ministers throughout the district.

Like a lot of *your* jobs, it is an impossible, but wonderful job!

CONCLUSION

It's been another rich and extraordinary year. Not without our flaws and missteps, we continue to move ahead, gradually becoming an ever stronger and more active congregation. I am deeply grateful to the wonderful First Church staff, to the extraordinary volunteers, and to the many talented and dedicated people who make up this great congregation!

This completes my twenty-fourth year among you, and I thank you for the privilege of being your minister. I *love* this congregation and the work in which we are engaged together, and I look forward to another extraordinary year at First Church!

Affectionately yours,
The Reverend
Andrew C. Kennedy

Associate Minister's Report

Already it is one year since we first met, and, after a rigorous and delightful candidate week, you voted to call me as your first ever Associate Minister. What a wild and wonderful ride my first year here has been! Just as I was honored and excited to accept your call, I continue to feel honored and excited to minister here. Let me share just a few of the many highlights of my year.

HIGHLIGHTS

Working with Drew and our remarkably talented and dedicated staff has been the top highlight of the year. They have all gone out of their way to welcome me and orient me to the congregation and the many details and layers of "how we do things here" that I need to know. The team spirit, cooperation, care and intentionality that infuse the work of your ministers and staff is a joy and an inspiration.

"Sustain Our Society" was the first committee meeting I attended my first day on the job in August. From the get go, they impressed me as go-getters! Building upon the foundation and accomplishments of the Green Sanctuary team, the SOS team carefully planned a comprehensive initiative for energy generation, conservation and education that would transform our congregation and reach out to other faith communities in Milwaukee. My work with the SOS team through writing, preaching, fund-raising, speech-making and cheer-leading was a privilege and a highlight of the year. As you know, the SOS campaign was a success — we raised awareness, money, and "greened" our community even further.

Pastoral Care Associates training this fall introduced me to our new team of eight PCAs, and our gifted trainers, Jeanne Lowry and Robert Szymanski. After thirty hours of training, we had bonded as a group and embarked on the caring ministry

of deep listening and compassionate presence to those church members who need care during difficult times in their lives. I continue to be in awe of the generosity and gentleness of our excellent group of PCAs, and would like to draw your attention to their quiet ministry as a highlight of the year. Please don't hesitate to call on them, they are ready to help.

Our service of installation held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on November 8, 2009 still shines in

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my heart as a highlight of the year, and probably the decade! Both the seriousness with which we made our promises, and the joy of a long journey ended stand out in my mind, as do the incredible music, the guest dancers, Victoria's sermon, and Drew's and my hand dance. (What a good sport he is, eh?) The new journey we began as ministers and congregation was consecrated that day, and glows in my mind's eye in the energy of your faces and the shapes of your hands dancing with each other in gentleness, joy and love.

OK, enough of waxing eloquent over the highlights. I should also report on the daily, weekly, monthly ongoing responsibilities of my role as your second minister.

I share with Drew the responsibilities of preaching, teaching, pas-

toral care, conducting rites of passage, community presence, and denominational involvement. Within these areas this year, I preached ten times, and led an additional four special services. I taught "Introduction to UUism," helped lead "Journey to Membership," taught the Adult RE class "Introduction to InterPlay," led sessions for YRUU youth, YBUU children, and shared a story at children's chapel. I officiated with Drew and Beryl at two child dedication services. I conducted one funeral, and am preparing four wedding ceremonies. I was involved in several stewardship meetings, and five stewardship lunches or dinners with congregation members. I attended meetings or events of community organizations including MICA, Interchange and Interfaith. I attended district minister retreats, SEWUUC clergy meetings, District Large Congregation meetings, UUMA Convocation, and will attend Ministry Day and General Assembly in June.

In addition, my focus areas of responsibility include pastoral care, small group ministry (including affinity groups and chalice circles), social justice, and summer services.

FOCUS AREAS

Pastoral Care

Our caring congregation is nurtured and supported by many people, both in official roles, and in unofficial and widespread ways. The staff helps keep an eye out for those in need and lets me and Drew know who might appreciate a call from a minister or a Pastoral Care Associate. Our group of PCAs is ably coordinated by Michelle Boehm, so ably I'm not sure how we'd function without her! Similarly, Mary Vigdor has efficiently coordinated our Pastoral Care Providers, who offer concrete forms of assistance, like rides and meals.

Melinda Vernon and Jeanne Lowry help me keep an eye on the bigger picture of our pastoral care program through their service on our Pastoral Care Committee.

Small Groups

Our congregation offers opportunities to make friends and find community in smaller groups of people gathered together around common interests. My role is to offer support and guidance to our current small groups and to help those who would like to start a new group.

Affinity Groups

We have eight active affinity groups, including the Book Club, Buddhist Study Group, Buddhist Meditation Practice Group, Crafty UUs, Job Seekers, Sacred Poetry, WomanSpirit and YANKS. Some draw as few as four people, and others as many as twenty-five to their events and meetings. The Young Adult group has burgeoned this year, with over a hundred people on their list-serve (or forum or google group — whatever it's called!) The WomanSpirit group hosted the District Women's Conference at our church this year, with special guest Starhawk, a grand event, which involved dozens of women planning and working the event, and over two hundred women attending.

Chalice Circles

We currently have nine active chalice circles. The Chalice Circle program is well-tended by its Steering Committee, with staff support from Kathy Porter. The Steering Committee experimented with a new form of training facilitators this year, called "circle starters." Bronze Quinton and Cathy Ansay started new circles while giving "on the job" training to new co-facilitators. The Steering Committee is also revisiting the "ultimacy" or service dimension of the chalice

circle experience. My role this year was to become familiar with the program by attending Steering Committee and facilitator meetings, and to provide guidance and support as needed.

Social Justice

Our Social Justice program is concluding a year of transition and transformation. We had two strong committees continue their good works — Economic Justice and Environmental. The Racial Justice Committee became inactive this year. The Social Justice Council, under Ean Behr's leadership, experimented with meeting quarterly to coordinate their activities. Ean and I worked closely with a SJ "Think Tank" to assess the strengths and address the challenges of our program. We will present a comprehensive restructuring proposal to the Board this summer. We are also currently in the midst of an exciting process to re-examine our involvement with Interfaith organizations in the community.

Summer Services

We are pleased to have received more member-led summer service proposals this year, so we look

forward to a rich and varied schedule of summer services.

Conclusion

My main priority this year was to enter well. Thanks to you and your warm welcome, Drew and his thoughtful help at every turn, the staff and their patience and orientation efforts, my Committee on Ministry and their support and wisdom, and my compulsive tendency to be aware and intentional about setting new patterns, I believe we have accomplished the goal of a good entry into our new relationship.

My "do everything once" campaign is off to a good start, but may have to extend into another year before I get to experience everything going on in this large congregation! You are indeed the vibrant, mature, active congregation I was looking for.

It was a year ago the last Sunday in April when I first preached here and had the overwhelming feeling that I had found my people. Thank you for being my people, and for welcoming me home. I hope and trust this is the first of many annual reports to come.

Yours,

The Reverend Dena McPhetres

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Church Administrator's Report

This twelfth year I've worked as your Church Administrator has been filled with both challenges and joyful successes. I continue to support our dynamic church as it buzzes with its burgeoning selection of programs and activities. In addition, this year we've seen several changes in our staff and taken on a new Sustain Our Society (SOS) initiative.

Reporting to Drew, I am responsible for administration of the church, including the areas of personnel, financial management, strategic assistance, and facilities management. I manage these areas with a combination of contracted services, a talented staff, and wonderful volunteers. My days continue to be filled with keeping things on track, fixing things as the need arises, and planning for improvements of the facilities and the services we provide our members. Here are some highlights of my work over the year.

In the area of facilities management, the most significant improvement was replacement of the boiler in the Astor Street apartment building with a very high efficiency hot water boiler system. Also, attached to this boiler is a new water heater which replaces the conventional gas water heaters. Now, all three of our boilers have been upgraded to current-technology, high-efficiency heating systems.

Please also see the report from Building & Grounds Committee Chair Joe Schuller for details about numerous facilities maintenance issues we've handled with a combination of staff, volunteers, and contractors. Thank you to the Building and Grounds Committee for their tireless help in maintaining our facilities—most especially Bill Frink who has volunteered more hours than anyone could ever count!

The other very significant project I've been involved in that impacts

our facilities is the Sustain Our Society (SOS) initiative. Working with our lead donor, I helped with early stages of visioning what an environmental sustainability initiative could accomplish. I helped develop the breadth of the SOS building upgrades we determined we should raise funds to execute. And I assisted with the strategy for fundraising and congregation involvement.

After a wonderfully successful special fund drive in the fall led by SOS team members and Kathy Porter, detailed planning of all stages

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of the improvements has been ongoing. I've been working with the Building & Grounds Committee and certain SOS members to secure quotes, prioritize our list of improvements based on cost and energy savings gained, and develop work schedules. I am currently managing and coordinating ongoing work with Full Spectrum Solar, our solar photo-voltaic contractor, and Insulation Specialists, the contractor who is focusing on insulating the historic 1892 building. See the SOS report for more details about this initiative.

In the past year there was quite a bit of turnover in the team of three facilities assistants who I supervise. Jim Klingbeil moved up to the half-time Senior Facilities Assistant position when Ean Behr resigned at the beginning of summer. I hired Tony Brandl to replace those 11 hours per week Jim vacated. Then in au-

turn, our facilities assistant of seven years, Bob Barsch, had emergency heart surgery and needed to retire. (I saw Bob just last week and he's doing pretty well.) In January, I hired Eric Beaumont to replace Bob's quarter-time position. So there has been lots of hiring, orientation, training and learning going on with this team of three that provides the cheery welcome at the front door as well as sets up for programs, washes all those coffee cups on Sunday mornings, along with a myriad of other tasks that keep our activities humming along. I'm sure you've been enjoying getting to know the new friendly crew. They've been doing a great job keeping up with our ever-increasing activity in the building.

The administrative office staff has also seen change over the year. Last June, halftime Office Assistant Winnie Butler moved on to a fulltime job in social services after finishing a masters degree. Our seasoned Church Secretary Sharon Murphy did yeoman's work as I conducted a search and hired Bonnie Poquette by late summer. With my training and Sharon's guidance, Bonnie has quickly learned the ropes of assisting the work of our very active office and congregation.

The most significant improvement we've implemented this year is the weekly "E-announcements," our electronic bulletin which supplements the monthly newsletter and links people to more detailed information on our website. Sharon did a wonderful job of developing the format and procedures which have become well-established now. We've received a lot of very positive feedback about this additional means of keeping you up to date with our myriad church activities.

In conjunction with the e-announcements, our website continues to grow into one of the primary means for communication and member services. Sharon executes weekly updates and small improvements which keep this most important tool vibrant and useful. Sharon, Kathy Porter and I worked this past year with volunteer Dale Konle to upgrade our website to the next program level, Drupal 6.0, cleaning up old "debris" that remained from its first development. This was a successful, but complex and laborious task.

Another exciting development this year is establishing an active IT Committee which currently consists of about six IT professional volunteers. With IT growing every more complex and ever more integral to daily operations, Steve Culver and I worked to develop specific volunteer job descriptions and recruited great volunteers to fill them.

In the area of personnel, I've already mentioned several changes in staff that I supervise. In addition, we have a brand new RE Program Coordinator, Julie Thompson (with Lori Hlaban serving in that interim position for a good portion of the past year). And, of course, it's been a joy to have Dena join us last fall. So about five positions have turned over this year! Much of my personnel time has been focused on start-up paperwork, orientation, security training, and helping new folks get settled in.

In addition, working with Board member attorney Mike Newman and a hired attorney, we've updated our retirements savings plan document to comply with new IRS regulations.

Again, the economy looms large in everyone's minds this church year. I continue to work closely with the Finance Committee who monitors and budgets our finances. Thanks to the "austere" budget cuts we adopted for this fiscal year, and

thanks to your continuing generous contributions, finances have been tracking well this year.

However, as the Vision 2010 Tune Up Task Force has told us, the sobering reality is that we need to increase income at a greater rate than we have been for our strategic plan to be successful. A consequence of this is that there is not funding for several additional staff positions which were recommended in Vision 2010 for its success. I've been pondering how we might continue to grow membership, funding, and programs without adding those staff positions; how I might do my job differently in this new situation; how we might need to ask you to help.

This church year has once again been full of change and growth and challenges. Reflecting back on it, from Dena's uplifting and moving installation service last autumn, to seeing our solar panels being raised last week, I am reminded of what a privilege it is to work in this community of talented and loving staff and volunteers. Thanks to you all for your generous support of the church and its vision.

Love to each of you
on your journey,
Jean Johnson

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Director of Membership & Development's Report

This past December marked my completion of five years as your Director of Membership and Development (DMD.) It has been another year full of activities and wonderful rewards. Broadly speaking, my role as the DMD is to promote church membership and financial growth. I report to Drew and collaborate with him and other staff as well as many church members from the various committees with which I work. Unfortunately, I had an unexpected physical challenge this year in the form of a badly broken knee cap, which slowed my work dramatically for a few months. After successful surgery and physical therapy, I was back up to speed. What follows are highlights from the year.

Development Services

In the fall, I worked closely with the Sustain Our Society (SOS) Fund Development Task Force, especially Bruce Wiggins and Nate Norfolk. The goal of the SOS initiative is to dramatically increase the sustainability of our historic building through conservation and energy production. A fund raising campaign kicked off on October 18. After a very generous lead gift of \$24,000 from First Church member Tom Brandstetter, which was matched by Lu Krug, we quickly surpassed our goal of \$84,000. The congregation can be very proud of the \$92,000 that was raised! The work to insulate our 1892 Sanctuary and to install solar panels on the Common Room roof has already begun!

The Annual Pledge Drive is always a major area of focus for me each year. The Stewardship (formerly Canvass) Committee had two very talented co-chairs, Sally Lewis and Dale Skaggs, and seven other dedicated and hard working members. This committee truly embraced the

definition of stewardship and understood that stewardship is about more than money and that the Stewardship Committee's work is broader than the fund drive. The committee set out to have conversations with numerous groups such as new members, young adults, Religious Education teachers and assistants, our Board of Trustees, and committee chairs and coordinators. Once the pledge drive began, they also met directly with 100 or so members to have one-on-one conversations about First Church.

new sources for income. The Board of Trustees and a Vision 2010 Tune-up Task Force have examined our Vision 2010 Strategic Plan and have formed three task forces to address our situation of a dwindling Vision 2010 fund and an insufficient pledge base to replace those funds when depleted. One of the new task forces will specifically brainstorm and suggest new revenue sources. This work has just begun their work and I look forward to collaborating with them.

138 First Church households increase their pledge by \$5 per week or more! An additional 100 households increased their pledge by a lesser amount. To have 60% of the households increase their pledge in these difficult financial times is heartening and fantastic.

The simple "Give Us 5!" suggestion for the pledge drive was very successful. That is, the suggestion to increase your pledge by \$5 per week was done by an amazing number of members. 138 First Church households increase their pledge by \$5 per week or more! An additional 100 households increased their pledge by a lesser amount. To have 60% of the households increase their pledge in these difficult financial times is heartening and fantastic. We still are waiting for a response from about 85 more households, but our pledge total as of April 25 is \$607,562. Once the remaining pledges are in, we expect to realize a 7-8% increase in pledges over this year. Thank you all!

Finally in the area of development, I have begun to explore

Membership Services

I work closely with the Membership Committee, this year chaired by Louis Bruner, to ensure that our guests and members have a positive experience at First Church. On the newcomer end of the spectrum, over 160 Sunday Service guests have registered their presence with us so far this year by completing a Welcome Card. I send each of

them a letter of welcome along with any specific information they requested. The Membership Committee calls each of them on the phone, which has been a very pleasant surprise to many guests. I also work with the Membership Committee to train our greeters and ushers each year. And very recently, I met with a group of our head ushers and the Membership Committee to brainstorm how we can combine some of the usher and greeter positions, thus requiring fewer overall volunteers. As in previous years, I continued to lead the "Meaning and Community" session of the "Introduction to Unitarian Universalism" program for guests, periodically throughout the year.

The "Journey to Membership" series — a requirement for mem-

bership —continues to be offered three times per year. Drew, Dena, Beryl and I lead different segments of the series, with volunteers from some of our committees joining in for specific topics, such as stewardship and Chalice Circles. I also work to assist new members in finding meaningful ways to connect to their spiritual home. The Sunday services are the main attraction to new guests, but friendships and activities within the congregation are the things that keep members deeply, meaningfully engaged.

Membership Growth and Retention is another special task force formed this year as a result of the Vision 2010 Tune-up Task Force recommendations. This work is also just beginning and I look forward to collaboration with them and the Membership Committee. We know that we are very good at attracting guests and new members. We want to look at what we can do to better retain our members.

Chalice Circles

I continue to coordinate the Chalice Circle Program, which currently has nine groups. It has been a delight getting to know our new Associate Minister Dena McPhetres through this program. We both work closely with the Chalice Circles Steering Committee, chaired this year by Byron Bloemer. I work to match individuals seeking the deep spiritual growth of small group ministry with current groups. I also work with the Chalice Circle facilitators to form new circles. We have had a flurry of interest in the program, with two new groups recently formed. I have been impressed by the dedication, passion, and talents of the Steering Committee and facilitators. Experienced facilitator coaches have done a wonderful job of training and nurturing the leadership skills of new facilitators.

Marketing

I continue to work closely with the Marketing Committee, co-chaired by Ben LeFort and Ruth Vonderberg. It has been a joy working with this wonderfully creative group. Ben's annual report has the details of their great work. With input from the Marketing Committee, I continue to work with Church Administrator Jean Johnson and Secretary Sharon Murphy to maintain and improve our website.

In the Denomination

A growing number of UU congregations are hiring a membership professional for their staff. Our group is in the process of forming a professional organization with the UUA. Initially, we are under the umbrella of the church administrators. The membership professionals will have a day-long workshop prior to the beginning of the General Assembly. It is always a pleasure to learn from my colleagues and to share my ideas with them.

With General Assembly so close this June — in Minneapolis — I will attend the week-long gathering of several thousand UUs from across the country.

In Conclusion

I am grateful for our talented staff for support, collaboration and camaraderie — they are a great team! It's been a particular joy welcoming and working with our new Associate Minister Dena. I am equally grateful for the extraordinary volunteers and members of First Church. I say that every year, but this year when I needed so much time off to recover from knee surgery, I was deeply moved by the dedication, patience and extra work done to ease some of my load. I have loved being a member of First Church for 15 years and couldn't think of a better place to work. I look forward to another year with you.

With abiding affection,
Kathy Porter

I am grateful for our talented staff for support, collaboration and camaraderie — they are a great team! It's been a particular joy welcoming and working with our new Associate Minister Dena. I am equally grateful for the extraordinary volunteers and members of First Church.

Director of Religious Education's Report

"The great end in religious instruction is.... to awaken the soul, to excite and cherish spiritual life."

— William Ellery Channing, 1839

Beginnings

The 2009-2010 church year started with a Religious Education (RE) whirlwind when Jeannette Bree resigned from her position as Religious Education Program Coordinator (REPC) in June 2009. We wished her well and then immediately began the work of managing the Summer RE Program without her leadership, while determining how to go about our search for a replacement.

Our summer Children's RE program proceeded, facilitated by Eliza Melzer (elementary — "A World of New Friends"), Sarah Mueller (early childhood) and Myrla Hand (nursery). A Search Team consisting of Sarah Aumend, Tracy Buss, Deb Solis, and Trish Taylor Berg came together and ultimately hired Lori Hlaban as our Acting RE Program Coordinator. Lori would serve through April, bringing her love of children and ministerial training to our community.

Children and Youth RE

This year our RE program became top-heavy. While most Unitarian Universalist RE programs experience a dwindling population in the teen years, our adolescent and pre-adolescent programs are thriving!

From September-December, we offered the "Our Whole Lives" (OWL) Sexuality Education program for 7-8 grade youth. We had a record participation with twenty six youth — enough for the OWL Advisors (Jacquelyn Akert, Dianne Link, Bob Monohan, and Bob Porter) to determine that a group this size is just too unwieldy, and we need to rethink our structure. We are considering the viability of eighth grade only OWL beginning in fall 2011.

Our 9-12 grade program — Young Religious Unitarian Universalists ("YRUU")- also maxed out our space with forty-nine registered and frequently upwards of thirty teens in attendance on a Sunday morning. We were blessed to have a terrific team of youth advisors guiding this group: Lisa Gies, Kate Marrs, Gretchen Neuwald, Bizzy Schultz and Don Weimer. As always, it was a delight for me to work with the teenagers, especially those who

7his year our RE program became top-heavy. While most Unitarian Universalist RE programs experience a dwindling population in the teen years, our adolescent and pre-adolescent programs are thriving!

served on the Youth Steering Committee. This year's senior high graduates include Karl Akert; Adrian Baquero; J.T. Backes; Amy Claxton; Alex Gibson; Chelsea Kaiser; Mallory Manassa; and Rebecca Mueller.

Currently, we have 230 children and youth registered in our RE community. We offered six classes at 9:00 a.m., four at 11:00 a.m., and two classes at 5:00 p.m., plus nursery services at each session. Staffing the program took the energy of four paid Sunday coordinators, thirty-nine leader class leaders/advisors; and sixty-nine assistants. In addition, we had approximately twenty guests who shared their interests with the 5:00 p.m. "YBUU" (Why Be UU?) program. Wow — that's a huge percentage of our community providing direct Sunday support to our children and youth!

Our primary focus for Children's RE was "World Religions," viewed through the lens of our Unitarian Universalist values and Principles. For the first time, we used the UUA's "Tapestry of Faith" curriculum, offering "Amazing Grace" during two morning classes, and "Toolbox of Faith" as a foundation for the YBUU class. The YBUU class once again combined multiple age groups to form a "one room schoolhouse" RE experience (see

Lori Hlaban's report for more information) Woven into the whole of RE were special themes such as a UNICEF focus in October, and *Lessons of Loss* in January. We held "Family Services" approximately once per month, having the children join us in the sanctuary for the first part of the service. Full Intergenerational Services took place four times this year.

Moving Along

January brought us a new Search Team for the permanent RE Program Coordinator position. Many thanks to Sarah Aumend, Ann Buschhaus, Tracy Buss, Diane Reynolds, and Colleen Wilkinson for the good work they did to bring us Julie Thompson as our newest RE staff team member. I know that Julie's creativity, warmth, initiative, and musical gifts will serve First Church well in the weeks and years to come.

Adult Religious Education brought us a record forty-two classes this year! Kudos to the ARE Committee members, each of whom takes on the production of each class from beginning to end.

Highlights

In August 2009, we sent eight youth and four adults on our Annual Mis-

sion trip to work for Habitat for Humanity in Battle Creek, MI. The mission trip continues to be a profound experience for those who participate.

December's Intergenerational Holiday Service was an exciting departure from the norm. Jack Forbes Wilson and I collaborated to bring you "The Poetry of Winter," which was a true delight, combining the talents of many pens and voices, a Solstice Puppet Pageant under the innovative direction of Judy Dubrosky, and the musical contributions of Christian Rich and our chancel choir and several others. YuuleTime and Secret Friends are two of my very favorite church activities, bringing people of all ages together to celebrate in community. Many thanks to the members of the Families Committee for implementing these fabulous programs.

Our youth group teens are inspirational. During the annual Youth Service (March 28), they shared their dreams and fears for the future with us, evoking both tears and laughter. Just the week prior, they hosted 70 young people and advisors for the Milwaukee Area Youth Interfaith Café, bringing our values to the forefront as we discussed relations between multiple faith traditions. Fifteen youth will be participating in this year's Mission Trip in August — our largest contingent yet.

Elizabeth Miller continues to serve as our Religious Education Administrative Assistant. Her welcoming presence and organizational skills are a great part of what makes our RE program so successful. Thank you Elizabeth for all your efforts!

Plans for Next Year

Watch for our new eighth-ninth grade "Pillars" program at 9:00 a.m., offering junior youth more direct input into the content of their own religious education.

Summer RE programming will continue under the direction of Julie Thompson. We'll have a different theme each month starting with "Spirit of Adventure" in June, "Hogwart's Camp" (based on the Harry Potter novels) in July, and wrapping up the summer with "The Big Green and Blue" environmental themed unit.

YBUU in 2010-2011 will consist of a program that Julie and I are developing entitled "Singing the Journey"... needless to say it will involve lots of singing and other arts oriented activities to make our UU values come alive to children in first-seventh grade.

We will say goodbye to our Sunday morning Early Childhood Coordinator, Christina Copeland, who will be moving to Reno to pursue a career in Montessori education. Applications will be accepted for a new EC Coordinator beginning in June.

I invite each of you to consider how you might be involved with our Religious Education program next year. Working in an RE classroom is one of the best ways to get to know other members, spend time with amazing and

inquisitive children, and learn about Unitarian Universalism. Your time, energy, devotion and care are some of the most meaningful gifts you can give to the young people in our community.

CONCLUSION

I am especially grateful to the chairs and members of our hard working RE committees — these groups give form to our programs, providing both direction and structure for living out our values, rising to our highest selves, and exploring our religious paths.

There is a grace in being able to spend your time and energy where your passion is and with a community of people who share your values and who value you. First Unitarian Society provides that for me. I am so honored to be a part of this good work. I look forward to another year of the journey.

In the Faith,
Beryl Aschenberg, DRE

There is a grace in being able to spend your time and energy where your passion is and with a community of people who share your values and who value you. First Unitarian Society provides that for me. I am so honored to be a part of this good work.

Religious Education Program Coordinators' Reports

I came into this position in August of 2009 as an interim, allowing time and space to clarify the role of the next permanent RE Program Coordinator, as well as time to do a more extensive search.

Building on previous years, we structured YBUU (Why Be Unitarian Universalist) as a multi-age program focusing on five broad themes: UU Identity, Social Concerns, World Religions, Spiritual Practice, and Tools for Living. We also connected a number of lessons to the UUA Tapestry of Faith curriculum, "Toolbox for Faith." Seventeen different members of all ages of the congregation visited YBUU as guest specialists throughout the year, leading lessons on topics ranging from Buddhism to T'ai Chi, sharing their ideals and passions with the children. We also welcomed a number of guests from outside the congregation, including members of the Hindu Temple of Wisconsin and the Islamic Society of Milwaukee.

As an interim year, it was a time for experimentation. For example, to help children experience silence during chapel, we explored several different meditation techniques – following our breath, visualization through guided imagery, and pebble meditation.

Thank you to the classroom assistants – Emily DeLeo, Mike Danneil, and Donny and Lisa Marie Menefee – and to all the guest specialists who made the year exciting for First Church YBUU children! Thank you also to our 5:00 p.m. Nursery Coordinator, Mariah Groshek, and Early Childhood Coordinator, Sarah Mueller, as well as the assistants for their rooms. You all made this a great year for our children!

I also served as staff liaison to the Families Committee, which organizes such popular programs as Yuule Time and Secret Friends. It was a pleasure to work with Colleen Wilkinson and her committee on these events!

Blessings on the journey!
Lori Hlaban



I am thrilled to begin my time with First Church as your new Religious Education Program Coordinator. My first official day was Easter Sunday, April 11.

I am excited to be part of the growing and developing 5:00 p.m. YBUU program. With my background in music, expect singing to be an integral part of the classes, and a way to bring the learning of the UU Principles to life! I also look forward to my time with the Families Community, bringing opportunities for multigenerational community building to our congregation. Gratitude goes to Lori for her training, and for Beryl's continued guidance as I still am on the steep end of the learning curve!

Please come introduce yourself when our paths cross. I look forward to meeting you and your families.

Peace,
Julie Thompson

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL

The mission of the Religious Education Council is to allow the chairs of the individual RE committees to share information, offer support, and coordinate RE policies, in order to create an integrated program of life-span religious education at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee. The 2009-2010 RE Council chair was Deb Solis and the individual RE committee chairs were: Adult Education — Kevin Gibson; Children's RE — Craig Gebauer; Families Committee — Colleen Wilkinson; Youth Steering Committee — John Fitak and Kyle Solis. DRE Beryl Aschenberg is also a part of this committee. There were no significant issues that required the council's attention for the 2009-2010 year.

— Deb Solis

Adult Religious Education Committee

This year the Adult Religious Education Committee (Adult RE) offered over 30 successful classes on a wide variety of topics as a service to the congregation. The mission of the committee is to promote wisdom, understanding and tolerance; fellowship within the church community; and help members and friends to improve the quality of their lives according to UU principles. Accordingly, we aim to provide balanced programming that looks to intellectual growth, spiritual enhancement; body awareness and physical health, life enrichment, world religions, UU history as well as political, social and environmental concerns. Some typical classes included stress management, retirement planning, religion and usury, an introduction to Mormonism, understanding social networking, Martin Luther King, a guided visit to the art museum, a lecture on the origins of the Bible, and many others.

Members of the church or friends led the majority of our classes on a voluntary basis, showing the generosity of our community in sharing their gifts of skills and learning. Tuition is minimal, and we offer scholarships to ensure that cost is not a hurdle to church members. Our efforts are helped by Table Hosts who coordinate registration efforts. The work of our DRE Beryl Aschenberg has been vital to the smooth functioning of the program.

During the 2009-2010 church year committee members were: Paula Anderson, Leifa Butrick, Nina Davis, Kevin Gibson, Chris Linder, Mark Miller, Laura Nicolaison, Craig Ranger, Jane Stolz, and Kit Vernon. The achievements of the program echoes the dedication and energy of our dedicated team who put in many hours in crafting, producing and following up on our classes on behalf of our church.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Gibson, Chairperson

Children's Religious Education Committee

The year was full of challenges and fresh ideas for the Children's Religious Education (CRE) program. The RE staff — led by Beryl Aschenberg, Director of Religious Education, with Elizabeth Miller, RE Administrative Assistant, and Lori Hlaban, Acting RE Program Coordinator — again proved to be the critical factor in the success of the program. The exceptionally high quality RE programs at First Church are central to our community identity, and our dedicated RE staff provides the foundation on which they continue to thrive. The work of the CRE Committee also relies on the support of the First Church staff as a whole, the parents and their children, and scores of volunteers who give countless hours to complete the success of the RE programs.

This year's CRE Committee consisted of Kirsten Anglea, Ann Buschhaus, Emily DeLeo, Judy Dubrosky, Craig Gebauer, Kris and Alisha Koneazny, Ed Maher, John McNally, Shaun Navis, Angela Sorby, and Laura Williams. The committee organized favorite activities such as the UNICEF program, CRE Open House, Friendship Day, Kids for Kids, the Holiday Pageant, Easter Celebrations, Teacher Appreciation Day, Mitten Tree, and Religious Education (RE) Sunday. "Lessons of Loss" took place on two consecutive Sundays in January 2010. Two teacher chat sessions were held to provide a forum for dozens of teachers and assistants to compare notes and address challenges.

The main goals of CRE Committee this year were to maintain the visibility of the RE program with an emphasis on the unique character of the 5:00 program; improve communication with teachers, assistants, parents and CREC members; and increase volunteer investment in program resulting in decreased no shows and last minute cancellations. Toward these ends, we improved consistency of Common Room bulletin board updates, coordinated email communications to teachers, assistants and parents; included assistants in teacher chat sessions, and tried to address volunteer investment by communicating the multiple impacts of missed scheduled dates and teacher/assistant tardiness. However, the latter continues to be a challenge on a regular weekly basis. The committee will continue to address the issue of volunteer investment in 2010-11.

Some of these CRE Committee goals and achievements are clearly visible. Many of the deepest growth and changes will not be seen but will be felt in the actions of our young people.

Respectfully submitted,
Craig Gebauer
Chair, Children's Religious Education Committee

Families Committee

The First Church Families Committee advocates for and supports an intergenerational community within the larger life of the church. The scope of the committee's work includes five areas:

- Building intergenerational community within the church,
- Advocating for the inclusion of families, children, and youth in the larger life of the church,
- Developing social concerns activities for families, children, and youth,
- Building the foundation for child care for church events and activities, and
- Building connections between the larger church community and children's religious education.

This year our committee has expedited the several traditional annual programs that are geared specifically for families and that promote intergenerational community within the congregation. Additionally, the committee inducted four new members and dealt with organizational transitions due to loss of both long-standing members and staff. The committee held a first annual retreat in July in preparation for the upcoming year.

Annual Programs

The committee provides coordination, training and support for the child care providers who are available to assist with child care for various church events and activities. The committee organized the annual Yuulettime gathering in December. This event includes a potluck dinner, holiday games, dancing, stories and preparing bags of toiletry donations for the Open Door Café at St. John the Evangelist Church. The Secret Friends Program brought together 35 intergenerational pairs from our church community for five weeks of letter writing and friendship making.

We have begun planning for the annual church picnic in collaboration with other church committees.

New Projects

This year, the Parent GrUUup and its activities were suspended until membership could be revitalized. The committee continues to foster the relationships of the fifth and sixth grade children from all three services who will eventually be together in OWL and youth group by organizing social outings and service projects.

Respectfully Submitted,
Colleen Wilkinson
Families Committee Chair

Youth Steering Committee

It is difficult to describe what the Youth Steering Committee has done in the 2009-2010 church year without exceeding the 250-word limit, but we'll try our best.

The Youth Steering Committee is made up of a blend of adults and youth that oversees the senior high religious education classes and Youth Group. The committee consists of John Fitak and Kyle Solis as the co-chairs; Luci Mueller is the vice-chair (next year's youth co-chair); Director of Religious Education Beryl Aschenberg, adults Kate Marris, John McNally and Bizzy Schultz; youths Alex Gibson, Anya Race, Chelsea Kaiser, J. T. Backes, and Marc Hunter.

The YSC chooses the topics for the Sunday morning classes and our awesome advisors tailor the lessons and activities the keep the kids looking forward to the classes. We are extremely fortunate to have five great Sunday morning youth advisors: Bizzy Schultz, Bob Porter, Don Weimer, Gretchen Neuwald, Kate Marris and Lisa Gies.

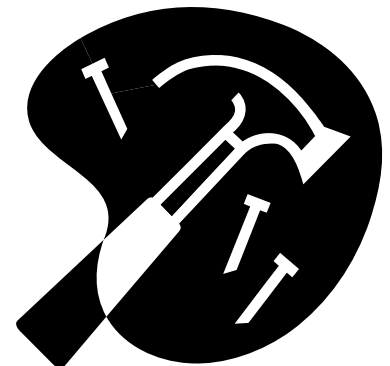
Due to the current economic climate, we decided that an International Mission Trip was not viable at this time. However, we will still be sending youth volunteers to the annual Habitat for Humanity mission trip in Battle Creek, Michigan.

One event we are particularly proud of is the Valentine's Day dessert and talent show called "Because We Love U," which was an opportunity to say thank you to the congregation and showcase the amazing talents of our youth.

Other noteworthy events: We hosted an Interfaith Café, had Penny Wars to help support Cass Street School, sent seven students to the district youth conference, had youth movie nights followed by group discussions, raised \$182 for UNICEF, had a couple of lock-ins, used Bagels sales to help Haiti Earthquake victims, discussed dreams in the annual Youth Service, and many other things.

Thank you to all the members of the YSC for their continued hard work and dedication. And thank you to all the high school youth as well. We're proud of these young men and women in our church and grateful for the support of the congregation has continued to provide.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Fitak and Kyle Solis
Youth Steering Committee co-chairs



SOCIAL JUSTICE COUNCIL

This has been a year of self examination for the Social Justice Council (SJC). On the up side, we witnessed the remarkable success of the Environmental Justice Committee's "Sustain Our Society" campaign and the continued thriving of our Economic Justice Committee. On the downside, we made the painful decision to recommend that the Board place the Racial Justice Committee on "inactive" status. With the active committees of the Social Justice Council reduced by half (the Human Rights Committee having been placed on inactive status last year), it was obvious that we needed to look at why our program is serving the needs of our congregation so unevenly.

To that end, Dena and a few other dedicated folks joined me last November to form a think tank. Since January, we have met on a regular basis to address some key issues affecting the strength and flexibility of our program. As of my writing this, we are still meeting, but I am already impressed with the ideas the group has generated and I am confident that First Church members will be pleased with the outcome.

In other news, we bid a fond and regrettable farewell to Joel Boyd, chair of the Economic Justice Committee, who has decided to step down in pursuit of other interests. We thank him for his inexhaustible inspiration and energy during his time with the Economic Justice Committee, we wish him the best of luck in his future ventures, but mostly, we are (selfishly) saddened to see him go.

Respectfully submitted,
Ean Behr
Chair, Social Justice Council

Economic Justice Committee

Members:

Joel K. Boyd, chair;
Nancy Pajewski,
Manya Kaczowski,
Dot Sherman,
Nicholas Davia,
John Eglsaer,
Gladys Derksen,
Rod DePue,
Judy Springer

The Economic Justice Committee (EJC) has grown its membership in the 2009/2010 church year to nine members. The committee works with local shelters and on projects that promote awareness of economic justice issues in the local and global community.

SERVICE

The Guest House

Volunteers prepared and served six Saturday evening meals for approximately 65 men. Meals were organized by Nancy Pajewski and John Eglsaer. Volunteers staffed the dispensary at the shelter on the second Saturday and fourth Thursday of each month. Over 100 volunteers participated.

Long Underwear Drive (The Guest House and Cathedral Center)

In November and December, the EJC organized a campaign to donate over 100 pairs of long underwear to Guest House and Cathedral Center. The drive was organized by Nancy Pajewski.

Cathedral Center

Volunteers prepared and served a light meal and packed bag lunches for about 60 women and children four times this year, twice in June and twice in December. Meals were organized by Judy Springer. Over 60 volunteers participated.

Autumn West

Volunteers prepared and served breakfast for about 20 individuals on the first Saturday of each month. Meals were organized by Nancy Pajewski. This was a new event for 2009-2010.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

On October 11, John Eglsaer organized a group to participate in the Interfaith Crop Walk for Hunger Task Force. Our Annual Fair Trade Holiday Bazaar was held on November 29 in Max Otto Hall. "Trails to Bridges" returned as vendor, offering a wide variety of handmade items from artisans in the developing world. The bazaar raised \$813 for *Growing Power Inc.*, a Milwaukee urban farm which offers both employment and educational opportunities for the city's youth.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE THROUGH THE ARTS

On March 6, the committee sponsored "Nature, the Gentlest Mother," a benefit classical voice recital which raised \$734 for *The Sojourner Truth Family Peace Center*, a shelter for victims of domestic abuse. There were 65 audience members in attendance. Performers included Heidi Boyd, Amanda Carnahan, Jeff Klatt, and Patrick Patterson. Musical selections were made from works by or about women, including three premieres by American composers.

The committee sponsored a free screening of "Buyer Be Fair" on January 8. Sixteen people were in attendance. Joel Boyd facilitated a discussion on the topic of fair trade following the screening.

The EJC held the third annual "Just Music" benefit concert, "Most Good," on April 24. This benefit concert for the UUA/UUSC Haiti Relief Fund featured 26 musicians (members and friends of First Church and Unitarian Universalist

Church West) and actors (from First Church's *Stage Left*) performing a wide variety of music all along the theme of living intentionally for the betterment of all. The concert was linked with Morter Fund speaker Zoe Weil, whose book/workshop *Most Good, Least Harm* served as inspiration for the event. Over 100 people attended the event, which raised over \$1100 for the UUA/UUSC Haiti Relief Fund. The exact donation was being tabulated at the time of this writing.

Fair Trade Forum:

A forum on the status of fair trade in Milwaukee is scheduled for May 2. Sachin Chheda, former executive director of the Wisconsin Fair Trade Coalition, is scheduled to speak.

EJC members plan on participating in The Guest House event *Walk a Mile in our shoes* on May 1 to raise awareness for homelessness in the Milwaukee area. A tour of *Growing Power Inc.* is scheduled for May 22.

— Joel Boyd, Chair

Environmental Committee

In September First Unitarian received its Green Sanctuary certification thanks to efforts of the chairs, members, ministers and staff during the previous year. Continuing to build on this work, the Environmental Committee (EC) created a varied and robust program with an environmental themed film and an average of two activities every month. Also, during this year the EC made a concerted effort to include children in as many activities as possible and created a Green Team which to increase the participation of children in EC activities. In addition to the EC activities, the EC participated in the Sustain Our Society (SOS) program.

— Judy Dubrosky, Chair

Sustain Our Society (SOS) Program

Building on the momentum of the earning the UUA Green Sanctuary certification, First Church's Sustainability Team of the Environmental Committee launched the Sustain Our Society (SOS) project in September of 2009. This initiative reflects our dedication to the Seventh Principle of Unitarian Universalism: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." The SOS project is in direct response to the challenges of climate change and peak oil. Working together the members of the congregation are able to have a measurable, significant and timely impact on these issues.

This SOS project has two major elements:

- Conserve energy by installing insulation and addressing other energy efficiencies in the historic sanctuary building.
- Create clean, renewable energy by installing a 10 Kilowatt solar photovoltaic system on the Common Room roof to produce electricity.

The project costs are based on an energy audit, estimates by professionals and extensive work by the SOS Team and the Building & Grounds Committee. The amount includes \$94,000 for the solar panels and \$68,000 for insulation and related expenses. With over \$70,000 in incentives, First Church is paying only 25% of the cost of the solar panels.

Through the SOS project, First Church will insulate the 1892 building to 21st century standards, install solar panels to generate electricity, and conduct programs to educate congregants about energy. By both conserving and generating energy, the building itself will embody the congregation's environmental, justice, and faith commitments to the community and world at large.

First Church was able to take advantage of a generous lead gift and incentives from We Energies and Focus on Energy available through the end of 2009. These financial assists allowed the congregation to take on a project that may not have otherwise been possible during the national financial downturn. With additional contributions from the congregation, First Church was able surpass the goal of \$151,000 that needed for this ambitious project.

The SOS project is in direct response to the challenges of climate change and peak oil. Working together the members of the congregation are able to have a measurable, significant and timely impact on these issues.

Another goal of the project was to provide opportunities for education and dialogue about our society's energy future and our choices for tomorrow.

This has been done through special pages added to our website, and also our "Third Thursday Theater" film series, which has run on the third Thursday evening of each month throughout the church year, plus June. From 15 to 35 people have attended each screening, helped themselves to free snacks, and had robust discussions after each film.

Many elements went into the communication and fundraising aspects of this project. On October 18, Rev. Dena McPhetres gave a compelling sermon and Rev. Drew Kennedy made a special public ask for donations. In response mem-

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SOS (Continued from page 33)

bers donated to the SOS initiative at a special offering at all three services. The Board sponsored Breaking Bread / Building Community event and a smaller soiree held at the Bayview Ecovillage gave members the opportunity to enjoy local, sustainable foods and converse with the SOS Team.

The scope of the project was vast and could not be accomplished with the work of many people including:

Rev. Drew Kennedy
Rev. Dena McPhetres
Kathy Porter
Jean Johnson
Church Administrator
Joe Schuller
Judy Dubrosky
Tom Brandstetter
Pat Schroeder
Mark Mueller
Hank Kulesza
Terry Wiggins
Bruce Wiggins
Nate Norfolk
Tea Norfolk
Gretchen Mead
Vicki Dotson

Thank you to our major donors, Tom Brandstetter and Lu Krug, and to all the members of the congregation who donated both time and money to this project.

First Church can celebrate a great achievement in the SOS project. We are proud to be living our values and standing by the Seventh Principle, "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

— Judy Dubrosky



Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee was formed in August 2009 to replace the Canvass Committee, which had responsibility for the annual pledge drive in past years. The new committee's broad mission is to instill a culture of generous giving within the congregation and undertake work that nurtures, promotes and builds the resources which will enable First Church to fulfill its ministry. In addition to conducting the annual pledge drive, the Stewardship Committee initiates discussions of stewardship, raises awareness of First Church's need for increased financial support, and organizes activities to express appreciation for donors and strengthen ties among donors and the Church.

Strategy. We spent a great deal of time studying pledge drive giving history and recent trends, and we consulted with Bob Connolly of The James Company, a firm that specializes in assisting congregations with stewardship work. The Stewardship co-chairs met with the Ministers, the Board of Trustees, and the Finance Committee to understand the current financial situation at First Church so we could "make the case" to the congregation. The essential message was that over the next three years we must substantially grow our overall, baseline level of pledges to replace our dwindling Thrive Drive Fund. The themes of **Gratitude, Growth & Generosity** emerged as the context for the campaign; within that we asked everyone to **Give Us Five!**, i.e. to increase their pledge by five dollars a week

Activities. Beginning in January we launched a number of events and gatherings to encourage conversations among the congregation about what it means to be a financial steward of the church. About 108 households participated in these events to exchange ideas and suggestions with one of the ministers, members of Stewardship Committee, and with one another. Those suggestions and critiques will inform the future work of the Stewardship Committee and church leadership. During the 5-week Pledge Drive in February and March, Sunday services included "Stewardship Moments," where members spoke from the heart about why they value First Church and make financial support of the church a priority for their household.

Pledge Drive results to date. As of April 25, 2010, 448 households (80%) have pledged \$607,562. This represents an increase of \$54,624, or 10% compared to the 2009-2010 pledges of these 448 households. 60% of households increased their pledge, 29% pledged the same, and 11% reduced their pledges.

— Sally Lewis and Dale Skaggs

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Associate Minister's Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry (CoM) is responsible for maintaining close and confidential communication with our associate minister, Dena McPhetres. The committee consists of four members. As this was the committee's first year, we are in the process of staggering two-year terms. This year's committee consisted of Lisa Koneazny, Mark Gill, Liz Irwin-Moore and Steve Lowry.

The committee assists the Associate Minister in her efforts to carry out effective ministry by providing counsel and feed back. It advises the minister on conditions in the congregation which might affect relationships with members.

We met regularly, and frequently sought input from the congregation. We addressed sermons and Dena's focus areas — small groups, summer services, pastoral care and social justice. It was a pleasure to be with Dena as she began her ministerial relationship with First Church.

Church members are urged to contact one of the CoM members regarding any questions, concerns or suggestions they may have about our church and Dena's ministry.

Peace,
Lisa Koneazny, chair



Book Table

There was increased activity, both browsing and buying, at the Book Table this year. Committee members worked to stock books related to the work of other committees and affinity groups and to sermon topics, RE classes, and forums. Children's books and environmental titles were very popular. We also were able to earn additional money for the church by selling over 200 books by Starhawk during the WomanSpirit conference weekend in February, and over 100 books by Morter Lecture speaker Zoe Weil in April.

The annual Used Book Sale was held March 26-28 with sales totaling \$2375. For the first time there was a preview sale on Friday night for First Church members and friends only, which well over 100 people enjoyed.

The Book Table Committee was chaired by Nancy Pajewski and Lynn Tolcott. Faithful members include JoAnn Bachar, Gudrun Berger, Kathy Kruse, Sally Noonan, Janet Nortrom, Miriam Reading, Chris Rundblad, Bill Schendel, Jo Schmidt, Lois Wesener, Kitty Willkomm, and Bonnie Withers.

— Nancy Pajewski

Buddhist Study and Meditation Group

We've continued to meet twice monthly during the year. Our significant achievement was the nearly year long study of Jack Kornfield's book, *The Wise Heart*. It is a powerful, yet accessible, application of the abhidharma, Buddhist psychology, to people's lives. Before this we read Thich Nhat Han's *The*

Miracle of Mindfulness. We do group discussions and have a period of meditation at each meeting.

Because some had requested meetings for meditation, we supplemented our ordinary meeting, for those who were interested, with a meditation session on alternate Thursday's. This we will not continue during the summer. We also co-sponsored a day retreat led by Dr. Paul Norton on engaged Buddhism, and a potluck with showing of the movie "Enlightenment Guaranteed." Our group is open to all who are interested.

— Steve Lowry

Building and Grounds

This past year this committee has been busy with a number of capital projects, continuing maintenance requests, and working with the SOS group to help implement the sustainable initiatives.

The capital projects include:

- Masonry repair and tuck-pointing the apartment building, including the roof parapet.
- Replacement of apartment building boiler.

Items being managed for the SOS Group include:

- 1892 building ceiling and attic insulation.
- PV solar panels on Common Room roof.
- Three windows replaced in attic and apartment building.
- Three windows repaired in Max Otto hall and stairway to it.
- Change out roof top HVAC unit on Common Room roof.

Jean Johnson managed all of these projects and we thank her for those efforts.

(Continued on page 36)

Building & Grounds (Continued from page 35)
 We were also happy to establish a format with our neighbors to the east, Abbot Row, that allows us to access their driveway for short periods of time for building maintenance purposes.

Bill Frink continues to be instrumental in getting the day-to-day maintenance tasks completed on a continuous basis. He has recently been joined by Christian Becker in these endeavors. Among the more than 50 maintenance projects they completed in the last year were:

- Numerous carpentry repairs, patching, and painting.
- Installing light switch motion detectors.
- Replacing sump pump.
- Removing a sink in lower level.
- Cleaning out the boiler room and removing old boiler debris.

My goal for the upcoming fiscal year is to execute last years' plan of putting together two groups of volunteers. One would help with bi-yearly "Maintenance parties" and another would act as a skilled set of in-house consultants to help evaluate facility needs and document our maintenance plan.

Joseph Schuller, Chair

Chalice Circles

The Chalice Circles Steering Committee oversees the Chalice Circles program at First Church. This program's goal is to help individuals enhance their ability to discover intimacy and ultimacy within the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee. Our approach is a structured gathering that promotes deliberate listening and discussion, while examining spiritual and personal topics dealing with a wide range of issues related to Ultimacy: why are

we here? What is our purpose? Is there meaning? And Intimacy: here is myself, my foibles, my thoughts, my opinions, my experiences! Know me! Allow me to know you!

There are currently nine Chalice Circles, with six to ten individuals in each group. A major focus is to develop new facilitators, start new circles, maintain quality experiences for members of circles and

My goal for the upcoming fiscal year is to execute last years' plan of putting together two groups of volunteers. One would help with bi-yearly "Maintenance parties" and another would act as a skilled set of in-house consultants to help evaluate facility needs and document our maintenance plan.

help new members and pledging friends become involved in the life of the congregation. We strive to provide a strong, dynamic small group ministry for all congregants who are interested in spiritual growth.

Steering Committee members for the 2008-2009 church year were Byron Bloemer (chair), Ann Dee Allen, Chris Aiken, David Bancroft, Judy Tegge, Cathy Ryan, Margaret Frasier (members-at-large), as well as two staff members: Director of Membership and Development Kathy Porter and Associate Minister Dena McPhetres. The committee directs the program based on current information from national small group ministries leaders. The Chalice Circle Steering committee supports Circles that have life-spans as short as a year and those that continue indefinitely.

— Byron Bloemer, Chair

Leenhouts Gallery

This church year we featured seven shows displaying the work of local artists. The exhibits featured narrative acrylic and gouache paintings by Gloria Macoy; nature photography by Korbin Berg, abstract pastel landscapes from Joan Fagan, a combined show with abstract oil landscapes by Rebecca Crowell and multimedia calligraphy collage work by Audrey Sargeant, watercolor still life work from Priscilla Weissenfluh, hand colored photography from Jeanne Kollmeyer, and colorful playful collage by Megan Woodard Johnson.

We continue to strive to bring high quality work from local artists working in a variety of subject matter and media to our exhibits. Sales since the beginning of our season in September

total about \$2,220.00 contributing \$360.00 to the church budget. We anticipate further sales in the coming shows.

Thanks to our dedicated team: Jill Erickson, Allan Kurth, Robin Leenhouts, Russ Sherman, Lynn Tolcott, and Linn Woodard. A special thanks to Jeff Percy for the photography portraits of our artists.

Sue Haislmaier and
 Ken Vonderberg
 Co-Chairs

Library Cart

Volunteers staff the library cart following each of the three Sunday services. Book titles on the cart reflect the diverse interests of our members in the areas of spirituality, morality, UU history and principles, social justice, philosophy, and more. The collection includes titles about Islam, Buddhism, Humanism, Atheism, Christianity, Judaism, and

(Continued on page 37)

Library Cart (Continued from page 36)
other world religions. Authors represented on the cart include Jimmy Carter and Barack Obama; Karen Armstrong; Forrest Church, John Cyrus, and other UU ministers; Billy Collins, Robert Fulghum, Daniel Maguire, Mary Oliver, and Thich Nhat Hanh.

Some books were donated by readers who purchased them from the book sales table. Others were purchased from the annual spring sale and donated to the cart. Still others were donated by members of the social justice committee, forum speakers, or church members who are authors.

In 2009 we began a project to catalog the collection according to the Dewey Decimal System, which is familiar to users of the public library. That allows us to group books according to topic. It also allows us to print a list of books alphabetized by author and another list by title. This organization makes it easier for browsers to find a particular book. All library supplies are donated.

Church members who wish to read a book “check it out” the old fashioned way, by printing name and phone number on a card found in a pocket in the front of the book. These cards are filed in a small box kept on the cart. When the stack of overdue books catches someone’s attention, one of the volunteers phones borrowers with a gentle reminder.

Chair: Linda Presto
Committee:

Pam Aiken, Judy Dubrosky, Sally Ferguson, Scott Fraedrick, Tammy Gibbs, Amy Horst, Lorraine Jacobs, Kathy Kruse, Pat Lendved, Tony LoBue, Carrie O’Connor, Patrick and Barbara Patterson, and Jeri Pearcy

— Linda Presto

Marketing Committee

In Fiscal Year 2009-10, the committee worked to grow church membership through external outreach as well as by working with other church groups and committees to promote their activities. The committee had a budget of \$6,250.

The committee developed an outreach letter to other committees (going out this spring), brochure guidelines, and an internal process guide for working with other committees. We worked hands-on to develop brochures and other materials for various committees including Social Justice, Forum, Pastoral Care and the SOS Campaign.

A major focus for the committee was building the church’s online presence. To create greater online visibility and community among church members and friends, we created a church blog and established a Facebook page. As of this writing, the First Church Facebook page sends out weekly updates to over 220 fans. It has recently been opened up for postings by fans. The committee implemented a spring banner ad campaign on OnMilwaukee.com, focusing on evening services, summer services, children’s RE and the church in general. The committee helped implement tracking code on the church website to better gauge its use and effectiveness. We prepared a usability test for the website with implementation scheduled for early this summer.

Another focus was the Winter Sermon Series, which was promoted via a 3-mailing postcard series to 5,000 targeted area households, a press release to local media, posters for the ministers’ windows and a print ad in the *Shepherd Express*.

In addition, the committee developed outdoor banners promoting Summer Services and the church in general. Press releases regarding our new Associate Minister were sub-

mitted to local media outlets. Our photography team helped document a number of church events and prepared electronic files for use in various church publications. We began work on photography submission guidelines and a system for archiving photos.

We developed a tentative new committee structure for next year with a focus on three areas: Internal Support, Digital Media and External Marketing. The committee will refine this new structure once it has been given some time to work. Nate Norfolk was nominated to be Committee Chair starting next fiscal year.

This year’s committee members were Ruth Vonderberg, Holly Kaster, Sandy Siegrist, Ben LeFort, Phil Martin, Tamera Bourne, Nate Norfolk, Todd Grover (part of the year) and Kathy Porter.

— Ben LeFort & Ruth Vonderberg,
Marketing Committee Co-Chairs

Morter Lecture Committee

A bequest from the estate of Irma Peuser Morter-Rohlfing (1908–2000) provides funding for First Church’s Morter Lecture series. As specified by Ms. Morter, the series is intended to focus on topics related to the theme of individual responsibility.

The first Morter Lecture event took place on April 25, 2010. Zoe Weil, president and co-founder of the Institute for Humane Education, spoke about “A Better World, A Meaningful Life” at the three services. At the Forum, Weil and colleague Kim Korona discussed “What Is Humane Education?” The two presented a three-hour workshop that afternoon, “Most Good, Least Harm,” based on Weil’s book of that title.

Related events on April 24: Zoe Weil and Kim Korona appeared at

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Morter Lecture Committee (from page 37) the Urban Ecology Center's Earth Day Festival, and at a Just Music concert organized by First Church's Economic Justice Committee as a benefit for the UUSC/UUA Haiti Relief Fund.

Serving on this committee from September 2008 to May 2010 were Jo Schmidt and Will Fellows, co-chairs; Cathy Ansay, Judy Tegge, Todd Wellman, and Malcolm Woods. We are grateful for the generous and enthusiastic collaboration of other First Church groups and individuals, with special thanks to the Book Table Committee.

— Will Fellows and Jo Schmidt

Nominating Committee

The members of the Nominating Committee for the 2009-2010 church year were Cheri Briscoe, Lisa Koneazny, Lorraine Jacobs, Russ Drewry and Cathy Ansay. We worked closely with our staff liaison, Church Administrator Jean Johnson.

Together our group was able to identify and recruit about 60 church members to serve in leadership roles, including recommendations for new members of the Board of Trustees, chairs for our wide variety of church committees and coordinators for several activities. In April these suggested individuals were submitted to the Board for their approval. Then, in accordance with church bylaws, the new nominees for Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee were presented to the congregation during the Annual Meeting, in May, for final approval.

The Nominating Committee began our process in the fall by contacting current leadership to introduce ourselves, gather information about their group's status and to initiate a

discussion about ongoing leadership succession planning. In early January we again reached out to update ourselves related to each committee's need for assistance in establishing ongoing leadership for the 2010-2011 church year.

Through a process of brainstorming, networking and collaborative creative thinking the Nominating Committee identified church members whose background and skills made them a good fit for the open positions. Recruitment contacts were made and slowly our recommended leadership roster for coming year took shape.

The success of our church is largely based on the talents and hard work

such an inviting, interesting and stimulating place can continue to thrive. And it is only through your involvement that we can continue to grow the leadership we need to move First Church forward into a positive future.

The Nominating Committee would like to extend a sincere thank you to all who have served this year or have agreed to serve our congregation in the upcoming church year! And, I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all the members of the Nominating Committee who worked so hard to help assure the ongoing leadership of our church. It has been my privilege and pleasure to work with them.

— Cathy Ansay, Chair

It is only through your efforts that the many programs that make First Church such an inviting, interesting and stimulating place can continue to thrive. And it is only through your involvement that we can continue to grow the leadership we need to move First Church forward into a positive future.

Pastoral Care Program

The purpose of the Pastoral Care Program is to create and foster a caring culture within First Church.

The program consists of five components: the Ministers, the Pastoral Care Associates, the Pastoral Care Providers, the Pastoral Care Committee and the Congregation.

As the ministers of our church, Drew Kennedy and Dena McPhetres provide leadership and resources to the program as well as direct pastoral care when indicated. Dena serves as a member and advisor to the Pastoral Care Committee and attends regular monthly meetings of the Pastoral Care Associates. She is available for consultation and assistance to all involved.

The Pastoral Care Associates (PCAs) serve as extenders to the ministers within our large congregation. They are members whose talents, experience, and special training enable them to skillfully respond to fellow members in times of need. In fall 2009, eight new PCAs were trained and began service. Our current PCA team consists of: Ann Dee Allen, Jo Ann

of the volunteer efforts of our members. In order to make the need for volunteerism more visible, the Nominating Committee again assisted staff in a "Bee a volunteer" campaign, this May. The recruitment effort is aimed at encouraging all members to volunteer as a "Worker Bee" to help make our Sunday experience welcoming and enjoyable by filling roles such as Ushers, Greeters and Coffee Hosts.

The Nominating Committee urges all members, new and long established, to get involved in our First Church community by joining a committee or activity. It is only through your efforts that the many programs that make First Church

Salomone Bishop, Tess Burkart, Javier Dorantes, Dan Haislmaier, Lorraine Jacobs, Kathleen Collisson and Mary Spyers-Duran. Michelle Boehm is continuing for a second year in the important role as Coordinator of the PCAs. Special thanks are due to Jeanne Lowry and Robert Syzmanski for their efforts in again providing the extensive (28 hour) training which provides the platform for the PCAs to be comfortable and effective in their work. Since October, this team has provided caring outreach to 49 of our fellow church members.

The Pastoral Care Providers (PCPs) contribute concrete services to church members in need. Mary Vigdor continues to provide able leadership and coordination of this function. During this church year eighteen PCPs have provided meals and transportation to church and medical appointments to twenty of our fellow members. If you would like to volunteer your services as a PCP, please contact Mary at (414) 257-0914.

The Pastoral Care Committee serves to coordinate the functions of the program as well as look for new areas for expansion of our caring mission. This year the committee was co-chaired by Jeanne Lowry and Melinda Vernon. The committee is continuing to explore how the church can provide more effective outreach to the elderly of our congregation. We are currently collecting some informal data as to how our elderly members perceive their needs. Ideas and suggestions from the congregation are always gratefully received.

Ultimately it will be the members of our congregation who determine if we are truly able to fulfill our mission to be caring community. It is the responsibility of each of us to respond with sensitivity and caring to fellow members who may be going through a painful or stressful time in their lives. If you know of someone who may appreciate additional outreach or services, please

contact Drew, Dena or any member of the Pastoral Care Program.

— Melinda Vernon



Senior Minister's Committee on Ministry

As identified in the 2008 bylaws and constitution of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee and Drew's settlement agreement, the Senior Minister's Committee on Ministry (SM-COM) is responsible for maintaining close and confidential communication with Drew Kennedy, our Senior Minister. In light of that duty, the SM-COM serves as a feedback mechanism, provides counsel and support, and acts as a sounding board for Rev Kennedy.

The committee is comprised of four members from the congregation, and during 2009-2010 these were Jeri Percy, Chair, Sally Lewis (both rotating off the SM-COM), Mike Hogan, and Elizabeth Lentini. Meetings were held from 5:00-7:00 p.m. November 25, 2009 and on January 12 and on March 16, 2010; a final meeting has been scheduled for May 4. Notices of meetings were included in the *Chanticleer* and Orders of Service with a request for feedback, thoughts and concerns from any member of the congregation.

The committee reviewed and provided feedback regarding First Church Staff Planning and Review drawn up by Drew, Ean Behr's re-

quest for Congregational Sponsorship, and other various and confidential topics.

Respectfully,
Jeryllyn Percy, Chair

Silent Retreat Committee

The annual silent retreat was held for many years in Door County at St. Joseph's Retreat Center. In 2009, the committee set about finding a new facility after St. Joseph's was converted to other uses. In October 2009, we were delighted to hold our retreat at two adjacent Buddhist retreat centers: Bright Dawn Home Spread (a nonsectarian Buddhist Retreat Center featuring an historic home with numerous sleeping rooms, a dining room and a barn) and the Windhorse Retreat Center (the Milwaukee Shambhala Center's Midwest Retreat Center, featuring dorm-style housing), which are located about an hour from Milwaukee in a beautiful glacial area adjacent to the 15,000-acre Kettle Moraine State Forest.

The event started with a group meal on Friday night before the retreatants entered into silence for about thirty-six hours. The seventeen retreatants enjoyed group services, morning meditation and hiking a variety of nearby trails. They even had the opportunity to cook meals together—not an easy task when you're on a silent retreat! Unfortunately, because this location had limited space, we were not able to accommodate everyone who wanted to attend. Therefore, in the fall of 2010 we will be exploring a larger facility that is also located within an hour of Milwaukee. We continue to welcome first-timers and experienced retreaters to this annual event, which is funded entirely by payments from retreatants, with the church providing in-kind administrative services, such as assisting with depositing checks and paying fees to the retreat center.

— Christina Plum

Stage Left

Stage Left is a casual collection of amateurs who use their talents in theatre and drama (behind and in front of the stage) to communicate the messages in the service in a creative way. We embrace the philosophy of “showing,” instead of telling, to both inform and entertain.

In January, we helped our ministers kick off the “What Do You Believe?” series with an adaptation of the essay “Mr. Big” by Woody Allen. In this Sam Spade-like drama, a philosophy major looking to ace a course hires a private investigator to find the ultimate missing person: God, the creator, the first cause of things.

In February, we kicked off something else: the church’s Stewardship campaign. As members of an imaginary First Church Booster Club, we used good conversation, a little humor, and sticky granola bars as props to urge church members to GIVE US FIVE!—increase their pledge by five dollars a week.

The Tenebrae Drama, “Grieving a Death, Celebrating a Life” on March 28 (Palm Sunday) gave us a chance to show a more serious side of the dramatic arts. Tenebrae” is a Christian religious service celebrated around Easter. The distinctive ceremony of Tenebrae is the gradual extinguishing of candles while a series of readings and psalms are chanted or recited. In our version, we played people very close to the real-life Jesus mourning his death at a memorial service.

This year’s roles were played by Clarence Aumend, Jessie Barr, Alexis Fielek, Katie Grafelman, Randi Kreger, Dena McPhetres, Jessie Navis, and Shaun Navis. The chair is Randi Kreger.
— Randi Kreger

Sunday Services

The purpose of the Sunday Services Committee is to solicit pulpit guests to provide spiritually thought-provoking Sunday services when the ministers of the society will not be present to conduct a service, and a service has not been previously designated (such as a Pulpit Exchange or the Religious Education Service). Committee members coordinate with pulpit guests to assist

As members of an imaginary First Church Booster Club, we used good conversation, a little humor, and sticky granola bars as props to urge church members to **GIVE US FIVE! — increase their pledge by five dollars a week.**

with details such as the order of service, honorarium, and connecting with the Worship Associate.

The committee is active year-round. In addition to seeking pulpit guests, the committee is responsible for selecting and scheduling summer lay speakers.

Committee members for the 2009-2010 church year were Andrew Agacki, Eric Hansen, and Cynthia Larson, with Faith Danneil acting as Chairperson and Rev. Dena McPhetres acting as staff representative.

— Faith Danneil

Womanspirit

Womanspirit/Emerson Guild is one of our connections to the National Unitarian Universalist Women’s Federation organization; it also links us to the Central Midwest District Women’s Connections and to the CMD Woman and Religion Com-

mittee. Our Mission is to join together for mutual support, personal growth, and spiritual enrichment. We welcome UU women of all ages, straight or gay, to join our meetings that celebrate the meaning of our lives through music, ritual, social justice and social activities.

We encourage women to join in the fall for a nominal membership fee that supports our national and district offices. Our national dues help us advance justice for women through education and advocacy. Through UUWF this year, several of us took part in the International Convocation of UU women, weaving global partnerships to enrich Women’s lives. We met in Houston Texas, in February, where we studied the Millennium goals, CEDAW, met UU women from around the world, and worked hand-in-hand setting up a global sister’s network. A reunion and continuous work will take place at General Assembly in Minneapolis this June. At District Assembly Janet Nortrom provided a “Leadership” workshop with Women and Religion staff member Gretchen Ohmann.

Womanspirit helped to fund programs that made bold, innovative projects affecting positive social change and addressing the issue of gender equity. We help fund UUWF’s Equity and Justice and Margaret Fuller awards. Womanspirit joined up again with the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom and the American Association of University Women working on program ideas working together for CEDAW.

Janet Nortrom was named to the national UUWF Margaret Fuller Panel to give out awards this year, joining Elizabeth Fisher, author of the *Rise Up and Call Her Name* curriculum, and the Rev. Shirley Ranck, author of *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*.

Programs

The season started out with a water ceremony and a celebration of Eleanor Roosevelt's life.

In November "From Wall Street to Walnuts" was the title of a learning to cook story-telling program with First Church member Linda Mutschler.

In December, our annual Victorian Holiday Tea, with about 50-60 in attendance, brought wonderful gifts for Sojourner Truth House and Lizzy's Place

In March, for Women's History Month, we highlighted three UU member women gilmakers: Susan Borri, Cecelia Condit and Janet Fitch.

In May, we offered two collaborations with outside groups. On Saturday, May 8, Womanspirit hosted a meeting with the Milwaukee Chapter of United Nations on the topic of "Vulnerability of Women in the United States and other Countries" along with women from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the American Association of University Women and others working to set goals to work on the ratification by the United States of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women with new GEAR, Gender Equity Architecture Reform committees.

On May 15, Co-Chair Jude Bringe and Lorraine Jacobs provided a tour to Riveredge Nature Center and Wellspring Organic Farm calling attention to Earth Day activities.

February Conference

The Womanspirit Conference, held February 26-28, took lots of energy, many meetings, and much creative planning with the three main co-chairs: Julie Bock, Jackie Dzikiewicz, and Patricia Witt, with Janet Nortrom as liaison to the Central Midwest District Womanspirit Com-

mittee. This was worked on all year while the other monthly Womanspirit programs were held. Each chair was in charge of other committees. Over 75 women were involved to make 250 women from as far away as California and Canada comfortable. Starhawk was the keynote for the weekend.

One of the gifts to the church this year that Womanspirit provided was money for First Church's Sustainability initiative to make our church more energy efficient with new insulation and installation of Solar Panels. Many Womanspirit members work on the Environmental Committee also.

On March 20, two of our UUWF members, Julie Bock and Janet Nortrom, were honored by the CMwD's Women and Religion and UU Women Connection Committees at the "Women's Leadership Day as Agents of Change" service at the Third Unitarian Church in Chicago, Illinois.

We provided scholarship money for women to attend UU Women's conferences three times a year and bring program ideas back to our church. We also helped with the Margaret Fuller reception during the Womanspirit conference.

Womanspirit is looking for new leaders and program ideas and hope this next year brings forth both.

Womanspirit was chaired by Judith Bringe and Janet Nortrom.

With joy, Janet Nortrom

