



Annual Meeting

June 3, 2018

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury

24 Clapboard Ridge Road

Danbury, CT 06811

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**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury
Annual Meeting June 3, 2018
Agenda**

Chalice Lighting

Welcome and Quorum Call

Minutes of the June 2017 Annual Meeting

President's Remarks – Brad Greene

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Election of Officers and Board – Nominating Team

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Recognizing Outgoing Board of Trustees Members and others – Brad Greene

Spirit of Life Awards – Transition Team



**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury
Annual Meeting Minutes
June 4, 2017**

Welcome and Quorum Call

The Annual Meeting was called to order at 12:30 PM. There were 57 counted members present. Michelle Cousens was designated as the moderator; a quorum was determined to be reached.

Minutes of the June 2016 Meeting

Michelle asked for additions or corrections to the 2016 Annual Meeting Minutes

- Suggestion by Susan Shaner to publish meeting minutes shortly after Annual Meeting so that we can remember what was said. Motion by Charlie Schott to approve, seconded by Holly Murtha. *Not officially voted upon.*
- Small typos - please correct them (Judy Lacker).
- Holly Murtha made motion to accept 2016 minutes as amended, Charlie Schott seconded; there was unanimous acceptance of 2016 amended minutes, passed.

President's Remarks – Walt Sizemore's report is in the booklet. Walt was unable to be present due to knee surgery.

Minister's Remarks – Rev. Nancy O. Arnold

- Working on making many improvements with communication/efficiency within the administration - it is key to improving infrastructure and communications. Too many balls get dropped.
- Small/midsize congregation behaves like a large church - probably 60% involved in social action.
- Very proud that we installed solar panels; first congregation in this area to do so.
- Maintained a Capital Campaign in midst of ministerial search, visual evidence of moving forward with the projects (parking lots, repairs, lower build-out, new website).
- 2/3 participated in listening circles - co-chairs of committees will be emphasized going forward.
- UU Danbury Members really need to pick up the slack when paid staff is not available.
- LOOK FOR AREAS WHERE WE CAN STEP UP - helps to prevent volunteer burnout.

Religious Education – Darlene Anderson-Alexander, Director of RE

- Recommend reading the report by Darlene and Sam McCoy for details about the past RE year.
- Challenges - consistency in RE attendance, getting new volunteers each year.
- Awaiting the basement build-out space for next year's RE.
- Thankful for the vast support from congregation - 1/3 of members and friends do volunteer.

Election of Officers and Board – Nominating Team - Melody Levy

The Nominating Committee, offer the following slate of Officers and new Trustees for the Board of Trustees, to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting on June 4, 2017. Persons to be elected are in **bold** type.

To Be Elected to The Board of Trustees SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION 2017-18

The following slate will be presented for election at the Annual Meeting on June 4, 2017.

To Be Elected to the Board of Trustees		
President	Brad Greene	1 year term until June 30, 2018
Vice President	Robert Lowe	1 year term until June 30, 2018
Treasurer	Marie Dupree	1 year term until June 30, 2018
Trustee	Michael Zacchea	2 year term until June 30, 2019
Trustee	Michele Cousens	1 year term until June 30, 2018
Trustee	Lisa Austin-Smith	3 year term until June 30, 2020

Charlie proposed to approve the entire slate, Holly seconded, and none opposed, one abstention.

- Susan Shaner asked if there was ever any opportunity for secret ballot for the Board vote. Also when there are abstentions, what is the opportunity for discussion?
- Michele Cousens – majority rules with a Yay or Nay vote.
- Reverend Nancy O. Arnold stated that only time for secret ballot is ministerial vote, this will require a majority vote.
- MaryAnn Kulla – online votes, is this possible?
- Marcia Brooker – responded that any discussion about a vote should take place before final vote – **Charlie S. confirmed the opportunity is after the seconded motion, motion to close discussion, then final vote.**

To Be Elected to the Nominating Team **Judy Lacker** 2 year term until June 20, 2019

Remaining on the Team is: Melody Levy, Chair; and Charlie Schott.

Michelle C. made motion to accept nominating team slate, Jackie Alexander seconded, unanimously approved, no opposed and no abstentions.

- Warren Fentress had a question about why it's called a vote when it's really a "yay or nay". Discussion about the membership of nominating team and why there is sometimes not more than one candidate for a slated position on the BOT or Nominating Team.

Budget Presentation, Discussion and Vote – Alex Makai

- Explanation about how the overall budget is put together and who is responsible for doing so.
- Review of items in the budget as shown in the booklet – what items are fixed and what are discretionary
 - "The figure of \$172,391 for Pledge Receipts shown on the income side is a "plug", i.e. a figure inserted arbitrarily to make the income and expense sides balance. In fact at the time of the Annual Meeting only \$146,000 in pledges have been received. That leaves a gap of over \$27,000. If that gap cannot be closed by additional pledges some very painful decisions will have to be faced by the incoming Board. Roughly \$10,000-15,000 of the overall \$230,000 of expenses are truly discretionary. Cutting them significantly would cause severe impact to the quality of UU Danbury facilities and programs and would still not close the financial gap."

- Budgeted expenses are about 3% lower than for 2016-17. Utility costs are 30% lower thanks to the solar power implementation and many energy conservation efforts by Team Green. The Board also made some cuts to the draft budget due to the concern about pledge income."
- Share the Plate and other contribution expenses - considered "discretionary" (some discussion/questions from various congregants— **most, if not all, present are opposed to eliminating this line item**)
- Discussion about some of the committees (Teams and Ministries)
- Warren suggested that we put certain of our fixed expenses out to bid. Alex stated that we periodically do put certain costs out to bid, but overall impact is small compared to the volunteer time and effort to put forth this effort.
- Staff expense – minister is taking no raise this year, and DRE and Office Manager are getting 1.5% increase.
- Childcare/nursery – is this something that can be cut? Melody Levy suggested instituted a parent co-op instead of having paid staff. Jackie Alexander suggested that consistency of staff is better with very young children.
- Because of the current difficult financial situation and because it's a large, one-time item, the Board decided that the expense of the Ministerial Search, estimated to be about \$9,000 in 2017-18, should be paid from operating reserves. It is therefore not part of this budget."
- **Gap of pledges is currently about \$27k.** 86 family units have pledged, but this is just 55% of our members and friends list. 24 families who have pledged in the past have not yet pledged and represent a projected \$30K.
- Alex discussed why we did not do a full-fledged appeal this year and why we went to SimpleGive. (See report in booklet) The BOT advocates for multi-year commitments from all members as opposed to those who would just put money in the plate whenever they come to church. How would a town run if only 55% of the residents committed to pay taxes and even then, those residents didn't pay their taxes consistently?
- Alex asked: Can you afford the cost a few cups of coffee a week as a pledge?
- Rev. Nancy - minister's discretion fund –why is this part of the budget, funds mostly come in at Christmastime? **BOT to follow up on that.**
- Discussion - Gary Mummert very opposed to cutting music. Also, the GA line item. How is this money distributed, who decides who represents us? Charlie C.confirmed that this line item, while not listed as a separate GA line item as income, it does come from the interest from the **Endowment Fund.** Question about who will be going to GA from our congregation this year by Jackie – separate discussion with Charlie and Rev. Nancy
- Charlie S. also confirmed due to budget issues, we did stop search for paid music staff and have been relying on congregants. He hopes we can expand our music program this year.
- UUA dues no longer in the budget, this is billed separately as voted in last year's annual meeting. Alex reported that about 2/3 of the members have paid their UUA dues.
- Nancy Tramontana – QuickBooks online – why is it more this year? Robert Lowe states this is because of additional services, SimpleGive, text notifications, and other services that will be implemented this year.
- Janet Cory would like a detailed explanation for the benefit of the congregation of assurances that SimpleGive is really a safe way of fulfilling pledges. Some discussion. Alex reinforced that **conventional pledge cards will still be accepted** from those who would prefer not to use SimpleGive.
- Susan Shaner – reflection question/thought – there is an immediate need to close the pledge gap, but she believes we still need to have more dialog about the culture of discussing money in this congregation.
- Michele C. asked for motion to adopt budget. Charlie S. moved to accept, Jackie Alexander seconded. Jane Leff moved to vote on budget after much discussion. No opposed, no abstentions, unanimously passed.

Update on execution of Capital Project - Alex Makai

- The parking area expansion is on track with paving likely to be completed in the next seven to ten days. The cost of this part of the project is higher than initially estimated since the City of Danbury required extensive underground drainage arrangements.
- Architectural design for two structural elements for the Fellowship Hall lower level project, an internal stairway and the shaft for an access lift, is in progress. When those designs are complete they will go to the general contractor candidates to enable them to prepare their complete bids. Only then will we know whether the cost for the basic build-out work, plus the added items of the lift, stairway and a heat pump HVAC system, is affordable, while still leaving money to replenish our capital reserves."
- Need congregants to continue meeting their capital pledges to minimize the need for bridge loans. Christine Creter asked for a way for the congregation to know what's been fulfilled so far and are we sure we're not going to need more money? Progress: Over \$200K has already been paid, and we project that we will have enough to pay for everything as well as reserves.
- Discussion about how to accommodate more people – question by Melody Levy - was balcony ever considered?– Alex responded that a balcony was not ever considered. Carl Tramantona states that during some services we do exceed fire code limits, but we have procedures about how to accommodate for this. Suggestion by Alex that we could go back to two services if our numbers increase significantly.

Recognizing outgoing Board of Trustee Members – Michele Cousens

- Tony DiFabbio
- Donna Lawrence
- Walt Sizemore
- Pete Simon

Spirit of Life Awards – Transition Team – Judy Lacker

Tradition started in 2012 to recognize outstanding congregation members. So far 21 people have been recognized.

- Ann Krieg presented **Donna Lawrence**, member since 1979. Outgoing BOT members, Team Green, Dorothy Day, Caring Committee, choir, and on current ministerial search team.
- Christine Creter presented **Samantha McCoy** – in support of RE and Racial Justice forum. Trained OWL educator.
- Michael Stengel presented **David Doyle** – outgoing chair of the Finance Team.
- Judy Lacker presented **Charlie Schott** – many, many roles over many years. Notably the Morris Street School initiative and music ministry
- Carol Huckabee presented **Ross Fenster** (accepted by Jane Leff) – racial injustice initiatives, COA mentoring.

There being no other business or discussion, Janet Alexander made motion to adjourn meeting, seconded by Cheryl Edelen.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen Papucci, Secretary

2017-2018 Annual Report from the President

Our 2017-2018 church year was a busy one. The Board of Trustees was an active and hard-working group, tackling a number of issues and initiatives. In addition to the regular, monthly Board meeting, we held a number of special meetings to deal with critical issues as they surfaced. With the departure of two Board members, we operated for much of the year with a seven-person Board....a preview of a by-law recommendation to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting.

We held a very productive Board Retreat at which we decided to focus our work on Communications, Governance, Human Resources & Employment topics, Finance and Engagement. We had a number of accomplishments in each of these areas and championed some novel and innovative approaches. Some specific activities and accomplishments this year:

- Significant progress has been made on realizing the fruits of our Capital Campaign. The parking lot is in and work is commencing on the lower level build out, which will be complete in the near future. We secured a bridge loan to manage cash flow during the project.
- While the outcome was disappointing, our Ministerial Search Team did a fantastic job and represented us well, including staying with the search through a second round. The Board will be working to identify an interim for the coming year and re-convening a new search team for a settled minister.
- An unanticipated and significant activity was our congregational vote to provide sanctuary to an individual facing deportation. Our Immigrant Justice Team championed this effort, and I am proud of our approach to share information and hear all opinions. While we have not yet had anyone in sanctuary, we have a good process and are ready to go when the need arises!
- The Board and Finance Team led an innovative approach to our pledge campaign this year with a focus on sustained giving and a single “ask” for money. Although the campaign is still underway, early results are promising.
- The Board also supported a new approach to the annual Auction with an event at the Palace Theater. It was a fun and profitable evening.
- We made some progress on improving communication with the implementation of text alerts, email format changes and a single intranet site. This will be an area of continued focus next year as we work to keep everyone informed and connected.
- We focused on our employment responsibilities and human resources topics and have created revised employment contracts and covenants for use next year.
- Among other things we completed the logistics and agreements regarding our solar panel payments, finalized an Adult Education policy and agreed on the construction of a storage shed on the property. Revisions to the by-laws and the creation of a facility use policy are scheduled to be finished before this church year is done.

Thanks to the Board for their hard work and flexibility as we dealt with a busy and evolving agenda that sometimes required extra time and meetings. As Michele and Robert complete their time on the Board I would like to thank both for their dedication and commitment and willingness to think outside the box.

As we also say goodbye to Rev. Nancy after two years as our Interim Minister, I would like to thank her for her wisdom, willingness to 'tell it like it is' and her sense of humor. Her insights will continue to benefit our congregation after she departs and I appreciate the opportunity to partner with her this past year.

Thanks to all of you for all of your support during my first year as President. I learned a lot and am looking forward to continuing to serve our congregation in the coming year. There is unfinished business and much to do to move us forward during our continued transition.

Enjoy the summer!

Respectfully Submitted,
Brad Greene,
President, Board of Trustees

2017-2018 Annual Report from the Treasurer

Coming on as Treasurer for 2017-18 had a déjà vu of being Treasurer for 6 years before Carl Tichler and Pete Simon took on the daunting job as Treasurer. So much is the same and so much has changed. Also, I was the Treasurer in 1971 for a couple of years. Our budget was \$16,000 and we did not have a computer. Such a change!!!

Here is an update on our Finances as of 5/31/18:

Operating Income and Expense 2017-18:

Income	\$219,127
Expense	<u>207,150</u>
YTD Inc-Exp	11,977

Pledge for Operating 2017-18

Pledged	\$165,594
Received	<u>154,773</u>
Still due	10,821

Sustained Giving Campaign 2018-19

Per Proposed Budget	\$172,000
Pledged	<u>136,603</u>
Needed	35,397

Capital Campaign Pledge to be completed 4/1/19

Pledged	\$423,153
Received	<u>342,042</u>
Needed	81,110

This year the income received has been strong and the expenses have been kept in line, therefore we have a surplus to date of \$11,977. The Hindu group rental has brought in \$8,751 which has helped with our net income.

The Finance Team has been active this year. The Team consists of Matt McPartin and John Miglietta as Co-Chairs and myself and we have collaborated with the President and the Minister regularly. This Team has been very involved with and supportive of the Treasurer. We have had several meetings and many discussions.

This year's Board of Directors as well as the Finance Team has been constructively involved in overseeing the UUCD finances and preparation of the 2018-19 budget.

The Capital Campaign project is running smoothly with the oversight of Alex Makai and Gary Mummert. Alex has been my back-up person to make sure that the allocations of the expenses are in the correct categories as well as monitoring the CC budget. Gary is a very active in working as the General Contractor! Sherry has keep the CC donation spreadsheet up to date and Matt has been involved with reviewing the Pledges.

Matt took on the task of the Sustained Giving Campaign, John composed the letter and Sherry kept tally of the numbers. As of this time, we are still short of our goal, but Matt will continue to emphasize to folks the importance of making a commitment.

The office manager, Sherry and I work well together. She is a gem and is an asset to any Treasurer and UUCD. Her knowledge of the bookkeeping functions of UUCD make the job of the Treasurer easier. Among her other tasks as Office Manager, she keeps the books in order. She writes the checks, posts the receipts and expenses, tally's the Collection: checks received, SimpleGive and other credit card payments and is always up to date. Besides all of this, she tracks the operating pledge account and Capital Campaign spreadsheets and make sure they are up to date Anytime I have a question or have missed an email, she has been very quick in sending me what I need.

As Treasurer, I am fortunate to have all the support folks to call upon. I look forward to continuing as Treasurer for UUCD for another 2 years.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie M Dupree, Treasurer

Proposed Budget 2018-19

	Projected Actuals 2017-18	Proposed Budget 2018-19
Income		
		\$
Pledge Receipts		180,000
Hair Cut 5%		
	\$	
Net Pledge Receipts	173,171	\$ 171,000
	\$	\$
Building Use	11,602	12,000
	\$	\$
Collections	8,669	8,500
	\$	\$
Donations Other	2,020	2,300
	\$	\$
Special Collections-Share the Plate	3,172	3,000
Fund Raising		
	\$	\$
Auction	20,717	25,000
	\$	\$
Winter Boutique	978	1,500
Spring Fundraiser		
	\$	\$
Adult Program fees	286	400
	\$	
Total Fund Raising	21,981	\$ 26,900
	\$	\$
Interest & Dividends	6,230	5,500
	\$	\$
Jeremiah Smith Trust	8,000	8,000
	\$	
RE Registration Fees	2,498	
	\$	
Total Non-Pledge Income	64,172	\$ 66,200
	\$	
Total Income	237,343	\$ 237,200

Expenses			
Contribution			
Minister's Discretionary		\$	\$
Other Contributions			
	ARC Dues	625	650
		\$	\$
	Share the Plate	3,262	3,000
			\$
	UUA & District Dues		6,000
	Special Contributions		
		\$	
	Total Other Contributions	3,006	\$ 9,650
		\$	
	Total Contribution Expense	3,006	\$ 9,650
Administration			
		\$	\$
	Admin - other	498	400
		\$	\$
	Bank fee Merchant	2,705	2,880
		\$	
	Bank Fee Other	-	
		\$	\$
	Coffee Supplies	289	300
		\$	\$
	IT Expense	502	500
		\$	
	Quick Books On-Line	-	
		\$	\$
	Quick Books Payroll Service	1,176	1,200
		\$	\$
	Postage, Printing, Supplies	1,826	2,000
		\$	\$
	Copier Lease	2,554	2,554
		\$	\$
	Telephone	1,772	1,900
		\$	\$
	Workmen's Comp Ins	1,148	1,200
		\$	
	Total Administration	12,470	\$ 12,934
Bldg & Grounds			
Mortgage & Insurance			
		\$	\$
	Insurance	4,270	4,700
		\$	\$
	Mortgage	37,961	37,961
		\$	
	Total Mortgage & Insurance	42,231	\$ 42,661

Service and Maint Agreements		
	\$	\$
Cleaning Service	3,534	4,500
	\$	\$
Facility Fees for Rentals	400	450
	\$	\$
Snow Plowing	4,600	5,000
Security System	\$	\$
Monitoring	770	480
	\$	\$
Service Contracts	390	390
	\$	\$
Garbage	779	780
	\$	\$
Service & Maint	1,313	2,000
	\$	\$
Lawn Care	1,700	1,900
	\$	\$
Total Service/Maint	13,486	\$ 15,500
	\$	\$
Supplies (inside & Outside)	1,344	1,400
		\$
Minor Repairs		1,200
		\$
Contingency		2,500
Major Repairs		
	\$	\$
Total	14,830	\$ 20,600
Utilities		
	\$	\$
Electric	2,965	3,500
	\$	\$
Gas	766	800
	\$	\$
Heating Oil	1,575	2,000
	\$	\$
Water/Sewer/Fire	1,387	1,500
	\$	\$
Total Utilities	6,693	\$ 7,800
	\$	\$
Total Bldg & Grounds	63,754	\$ 71,061
Committees		
A-Team		
Adult R.E./Programs		
Board Leadership/Training		
Board Discretionary Expense		
	\$	\$
Caring Committee	(200)	100
Celebrations		
Denominational Affairs		
Endowment Committee		
Events Committee		

Finance		
General Assembly		
	\$	\$
Membership	134	200
	\$	\$
Miscellaneous	78	200
	\$	\$
Total Music	25	100
Nominating		
Planning for Growth		
Publicity		
Religious Education		
	\$	\$
Supplies	1,866	1,500
		\$
OWL Leader Training		200
Youth		\$
Conference/Anderson		120
SHYG Coming of Age		
	\$	\$
Background Checks	375	300
	\$	
Total Religious Education	2,241	\$ 2,120
	\$	\$
Social Act/Community Imp	138	200
Annual Budget Drive		
	\$	
Stewardship	37	
Sunday Services		
		\$
Sunday Services		400
Multi-generational		
Supplies		\$
		800
Special Events/Speakers		
	\$	\$
'Total Sunday Services	1,189	1,200
	\$	\$
	3,642	\$ 4,120
Total Committees		
Staff Expense		
Minister Comp		
	\$	\$
Min FICA Tax-7.65%	4,772	4,750
	\$	\$
Min Pension	6,240	6,240
	\$	\$
Min Health Insur	3,600	3,600
	\$	\$
Min Housing	20,000	20,000
Min Life Insur	\$	\$

		359	480
		\$	\$
	Min Prof Expense	3,708	5,700
		\$	\$
	Min Salary	42,400	42,400
		\$	\$
	Disability Income Ins.	624	624
	Moving Exp for Int Minister		
	Min. Dental Insurance		
		\$	\$
	Total Minister Comp	81,703	\$ 83,794
		\$	\$
	FICA Tax - Employer-7.65%	3,785	4,379
	RE Director Comp		
	RE Dir. Medical Ins		
		\$	\$
	RE Pension	2,112	2,165
		\$	\$
	RE Dir. Professional Exp	1,224	1,500
		\$	\$
	Total RE Director Comp	21,124	21,651
		\$	\$
		24,601	\$ 25,316
	Office Manager		
	Office Manger Medical Ins		
		\$	\$
	Office Manager Pension	2,643	2,710
		\$	\$
	Office Manager Salary	26,435	27,095
		\$	\$
	Total Office Manager	29,078	\$ 29,805
	Other staff Expense		
	Music Accompanist Musician for Choir Practice		\$ 6,500
		\$	\$
	Nursery/Childcare	1,895	2,000
	Membership Coordinator		
		\$	\$
	Total Other	1,895	\$ 8,500
		\$	\$
		141,062	\$ 151,794
		\$	\$
	Total Staff Expense	223,934	\$ 249,559
		\$	\$
	Total Expense	13,409	(12,359)
	Net Ordinary Income		

2017-2018 Annual Report from the Interim Minister

The second year of our interim ministry allowed UU Danbury to implement some of the recommendations the Transition Team developed in our first year together.

- Co-Chairs for Teams and Ministries provided some breathing room for those who had been in leadership positions longer than they wanted.

Two people working together – one “in training” to take the lead the next year – encouraged others to step forward. Coupled with stated term limits, this was a big step toward alleviating volunteer fatigue and addressing leadership succession planning.

- Communication was improved with the completion of the new web-site, the addition of a text messaging system, and multiple efforts to utilize the Sunday morning announcements more effectively while retaining the integrity of the worship service.

Robert Lowe put in an inordinate amount of time to integrate the different facets of UU Danbury’s technology with an eye toward easier access for lay leaders to maintain, update, and report on their team’s efforts. A short-lived Tech Team that included **Charlie Schott** was intended to expand communication possibilities without burdening any one person. However, lack of availability reduced it to two members (Robert and Charlie), so Charlie assumed responsibility for completing some of the work initiated by Robert.

The **Transition Team** was diminished by two as Ali Haffner and Carl Tichler joined the Search Committee. But the efforts of **Chris Creter**, **Anne Krieg**, **Judy Lacker**, and **Michael Stengle** tended to needed transitional work while injecting some fun into the process. In addition to promoting the recommendations developed in year one, the Team hosted a very well-attended – and fun – potluck in March and encouraged other teams to do the same.

The search for a new minister was a primary focus this year, as was work to complete the build-out for additional RE space. Both required many volunteer hours and attention to detail. Although the results of the search were disappointing, the process was very thorough and professional thanks to the Search Committee – **Donna Lawrence** and **Meredith Spector**, Co-Chairs, with **Gale Alexander**, **Bruni Edwards**, **Luchina Fisher**, **Ali Haffner**, and **Carl Tichler**.

And despite multiple hurdles, **Alex Makai** and **Gary Mummert** persisted in working to resolve issues for the build-out as they arose.

The level of commitment and energy at UU Danbury remains high, as evidenced by your response to the call to become a congregation that offers sanctuary to undocumented immigrants facing deportation. Your work in the community in the name of social action continued unabated which is to be commended.

While it was disappointing not to call a new minister this year, an additional year of interim work may be to your advantage. There are areas in need of attention that there simply wasn’t time to address with everything else going on here.

My hope is that in the year ahead, you will tackle the ever-present financial challenges facing you. You have a lot to offer as a congregation, but I fear that your financial constraints may be a barrier to attracting the quality of minister you deserve, and to growing into the congregation you envision.

UU Danbury is a do-it-yourself congregation. There is rarely enough money to pay for what you want. So corners get cut, you become accustomed to settling for something less than you really want, and you defer meeting some needs that might actually alleviate pressure on volunteers and staff.

One casualty of the financial crunch is a professional musician for the Sunday service, necessitating the organization and performance by numerous members. **Charlie Schott** has been coordinating the music program and recruiting volunteer musicians from within the congregation. With Charlie's departure in June, there will be a huge vacuum to fill if there continues to be a zero line item for Music.

With the Board and Transition Team, I have evaluated and addressed the need to strengthen your "infrastructure." Things are often much more complicated than they need to be for a congregation of this size.

- With **Gale Alexander**, the Bylaws were revised to make the organization of the Congregation more manageable given your current membership; the recommended Bylaw revisions will be voted on at the Annual Meeting.

You have been very fortunate to have such dedicated staff as Office Administrator, **Sherry Kyriacou**, and Director of Religious Education, **Darlene Anderson-Alexander**, both of whom work more hours than they are paid. I'm very grateful to them for providing the continuity and support necessary for the Congregation to thrive. Their loyalty and professional presence sustains the Congregation and this minister.

- In order to make the workload more manageable, members were recruited to provide coverage and support in the office, particularly when Sherry is away; and working with Board President **Brad Greene**, staff job descriptions were reviewed and staff consulted to assess ways to better meet their workload.

It was also a privilege to work with **The Rev. Peggy S. Block** whose community ministry was an asset to UU Danbury for eighteen years. We recognized Peggy's ministry at a retirement celebration in May.

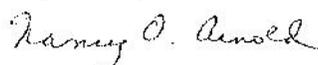
Outside the Congregation, I host the UU Ministers local Cluster and Chapter. I also participate in special events with ARC (Association of Religious Communities) such as the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, fundraising Breakfast, Keep the Faith fundraiser (honoring Charlie Schott's work with the Morris Street School this year), and hopefully a re-scheduled (due to the tornado) *Caravan of Faith* evening at UU Danbury.

Participating in monthly meetings with the Board of Trustees, Membership Team, Sunday Services Ministry, Caring Circle, and less frequently with the Immigrant Justice Team, Social Action Council, Safe Congregations Team, Search Committee, and Team Green, and facilitating the UU Newcomers group on the first Sunday of each month afforded me the opportunity to get to know many of you and experience your hearts and hands at work first-hand. Thank you to the leaders on the Board and Ministry Teams for holding fast to your commitment for the present and future of UU Danbury.

While the day-to-day "pastoral" work is wonderfully handled by the **Caring Circle**, I participated in the memorial services for **William Edelen**, **Brian Smith**, and **Jerry Renjilian**, and had more visits with members at Danbury Hospital than I care to count.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Interim Minister. May your ministry fulfill your vision and dreams for the future you will share together.

Respectfully submitted,



2017-2018 Annual Report from the Director of Religious Education (DRE)

YEAR IN SUMMARY

This year in Religious Education, the theme was “**Jewish & Christian Teachings/Moral Development**” as viewed through a Unitarian Universalist lens. This included the signature Unitarian Universalist Association/United Church of Christ lifespan sexuality program “Our Whole Lives” which we were able to offer to youth in grades 4 through 12. We were blessed to have 28 volunteers provide quality faith formation guidance on Sunday mornings and an additional 28 volunteers who assisted the program in a myriad of ways throughout the year. Over *one-third* of our adult members continues to actively commit to the future of our congregation and of our denomination by getting involved in religious education.

I am grateful to have worked with Reverend Nancy Arnold in this second year of her ministry here as she has given me a true appreciation for the Interim Process. I wish her well in her future pursuits. I will greatly miss Reverend Peggy Block and wish her good health and happiness in her retirement. Of course, I continue to be blessed to work with Office Manager Sherry Kyriacou as she works tirelessly to keep us all organized and on track!

WHO ATTENDED R.E. THIS YEAR?

- There were 34 families registering 56 children this year (not including the nursery). Registrations were fairly consistent with 2016-17 (32 families; 55 children).
- Attendance was as follows (as of 5/13):

REGULAR RE SESSIONS	AVG	RANG E	COMMENTS
<i>RED GROUP (prek-kindergarten)</i>	2	(0-5)	There was an average Sunday attendance of 27 children and youth with at least 10 adults as well (not including nursery)
<i>YELLOW GROUP (1st and 2nd grade)</i>	6	(1-10)	
<i>GREEN GROUP (3rd – 5th grade)</i>	4	(1-7)	
<i>4th-6th OWL</i>	2	(2-3)	
<i>7th-9th OWL</i>	16	(12-20)	
<i>10th-12th OWL</i>	8	(6-9)	
<i>BLUE GROUP – Junior High Youth (6th – 8th grade)</i>	5	(2-10)	
<i>PURPLE GROUP – Senior High Youth (9th-12th grade)</i>	10	(6-12)	
RE WORSHIP CIRCLES	14	(4-22)	

- Nursery care for children through age three was provided during all services by our Lead Childcare and Nursery Assistant staff members or their substitutes. Attendance ranged from 0-1 child.
- The range of numbers of attendees is noteworthy. It is in line with some of the changes being noted and discussed in the broader UU Religious Education community regarding the future of faith formation.

WHAT HAPPENED IN R.E. THIS YEAR?

Class Content Summary

The instructional pillar this year was “**Jewish & Christian Teachings/Moral Development**”. The UUA-approved curricula were chosen by the Religious Education Ministry Team as follows:

- **RED** (prek-k) = “*Love Surrounds Us*”, UUA Tapestry of Faith Program by Lynn Kerr and Christy Olson, <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/lovesurrounds>
- **YELLOW** (1st-2nd) = “*Moral Tales*”, UUA Tapestry of Faith Program by Alice Anacheka-Nasemann & Elisa Davy Pearmain, <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales>
- **GREEN** (3rd-5th/6th) = “*Bibleodeon*”, A Green Timber Publications Curriculum (UU Congregation at Shelter Rock) by Richard S. Kimball and Tirrell H. Kimball
- “*Our Whole Lives*” (4th-6th, 7th-9th, and 10th-12th) = a comprehensive, lifespan sexuality education curricula, <https://www.uua.org/re/owl>

“R.E. Intersession” content summary

The RE Ministry Team coordinated a three week RE Intersession called “Kids Can Make a Difference” culminating in a multigenerational Service in February. Activities included a trip to Comida Food Pantry to deliver special donations and to pack rice & beans, painting of a “Buddy Bench” to enhance the UU Danbury property and community, a multigenerational gathering, a monetary collection for music in Danbury schools, and the formation of an instrumental ensemble which performed during the Service.

Multi-generational Services

There were five multigenerational services this year as well as a traditional Christian Christmas Eve Pageant. We typically have at least seven multigenerational services, but our schedule was changed due to the anticipated ministerial candidating activities. I greatly enjoyed collaborating with Reverend Arnold, the Sunday Services Ministry, the Music Team, and the RE Ministry Team to create these worship experiences.

REMT-Inclusion Ministry

The Inclusion Ministry was not active this year, but we hope to resurrect it in 2018-19.

WHO VOLUNTEERED IN R.E. THIS YEAR?

Volunteers continued to be screened through a web-based background check service called “First Advantage” through our insurance company, Church Mutual. We, of course, continued our policy of staffing each Religious Education class/group with at least two adults. These efforts are part of the much larger congregational effort to create a safer space for our children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

Teaching Team Members: Jackie Alexander, John Alvord, Gina Cassetta, Michele Cousens, Rik Cousens, Chris Creter, Ro D’Ostilio, Brad Greene, Lisa Greene, Rob Haffner, Jacqui Kaplan, Leah Kirshner, Jane Leff, Kristie Liotta, Holly Lynch, Sam McCoy, Nicole Paris, David Parr, Ben Roberts, Kim Roberts, Yvonne Ruddy-Stein, Johanna Schrader-Fentress, Suze Shaner, Heather Smith, Lola Strilowich, and Jim Wruck

Religious Education Ministry Team: Samantha McCoy (Chair), Alison DiPinto, Kathleen Granger, and Michele Cousens (BOT Liaison)

One-Time Event, Substitute, And Behind-The-Scenes Helpers: Bryce Alexander, Dean Alexander, Gale Alexander, Jordan Alexander, Madison Alexander, Lisa Austin-Smith, Marcia Brooker, Valerie Cochrane, Tony DiFabbio, Nancy Hershatter, Gerry Hinson, Adam Kyriacou, Elisabeth Levy, Melody Levy, Joni Lowe, Robert Lowe, Priscila McCann, Gary Mummert, Tim O'Donnell, Jim Russell, Charlie Schott, Walt Sizemore, Chris Smith, Carl Tichler, Lynn Taborsak, Carl Tramontana, and Gerrit Westenberg

DRE Relations Team: Karen Iannella (Chair), John Alvord, Marcia Brooker

WHERE IS R.E. GOING IN THE FUTURE?

Theme: “World Religions and Peace” is the curricular theme for 2018-19. Generally speaking, children and youth will spend two Sundays each month in similar-age groups using “traditional” UUA curricula. Junior High Youth will participate in “Neighboring Faiths/Bridging” where they will learn about and visit various faith communities. In a similar vein, the Senior High Youth will be “Traveling UUs” one Sunday each month by attending Services at a variety of UU congregations. We are incorporating two new multi-age initiatives next year. “UU Jedi Academy” will take place one Sunday per month for 1st through 8th graders and will focus on the development of mindfulness, peace, and justice using the spiritual/ethical lessons from “Star Wars”. “SUUndayFUUnday” will be structured, themed fun together in RE Community for prek-12th graders one Sunday each month. We are hoping the addition of these components will increase the enthusiasm for and participation in Sunday morning classes.

REMT – Inclusion Ministry: The goal is to re-energize this team to proactively consider and act on ways to effectively include all learners in Religious Education

RE Registration Fees: In an effort to create a more integrated ministry at UU Danbury, parents/guardians registering their children for Religious Education in 2018-19 *will not* be asked to pay a separate registration fee as has been done in recent years. Instead, all will be encouraged to make a personally-meaningful pledge that will help to sustain all of the core ministries of UU Danbury including Religious Education. This eliminates an “a la carte” type of congregational structure and combines everything into a “single ask” which is viewed by many to be more manageable and comprehensive.

OTHER

I continue to progress through the Unitarian Universalist Association’s Religious Education Credentialing Program with an anticipated completion date of April 2019. This professional development program ultimately benefits congregations as it produces religious educators who are instilled with the skills of building stronger, more vital religious education programs and multigenerational ministries.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share a summary of our year in Religious Education and for granting me the privilege of continuing to serve this Community. It is a pleasure to serve a congregation whose leadership and membership consistently show their commitment to the religious education of our children and youth.

Respectfully Submitted,
Darlene Anderson-Alexander,
Director of Religious Education

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS TEAM

Annual Report 2017-2018

Interim Chair: Gary Mummert

This year has been a busy time with many projects underway, including

Unusual wintertime conditions - significant challenge to enhance safety while trying to reduce use of salts which create environmental issues and limiting sanding which increases clogging of drainage systems and represents significant possible expenditures

Ongoing repairs of Fellowship Hall and Cottage House systems

Tree and landscaping care and parking/driveway maintenance

Ongoing work to maintain and improve drainage systems

Door replacements at the Cottage House

Extensive efforts for preparation of the Fellowship Hall build-out

Support and assistance from Sherry Kyriacou, Tony DiFabbio, Carl Tramontana, Barbara Myers, Jon Dupree, Lynn Taborsak, Walt Sizemore, Alex Makai, Melene Rose, Joe Gillotti, Rik Cousens and Jan Galloway have been very appreciated. Numerous other individuals have taken on important tasks and assisted in cleaning and painting - all these efforts are appreciated.

Thanks to Marie Dupree as Board Liaison who listened and responded.

During the upcoming renovations, B&G asks for patience with the construction work and for your comments if you see or question unsafe or hazardous conditions.

As the person leading the B&G charge since late 2014, I have indicated to the Board that the fiscal year of 2018-2019 will be my last year. My recommendation is that a paid manager be hired to manage the effort and to engage and manage contractors as needed. More focus is needed on potential capital projects and future costs to maintain the facilities and to care for the new improvements to the property.

Volunteers are an essential part of our program: please consider what time and talents you can lend to the care of our facilities. B&G will work hard to be flexible with your time. As always, we appreciate timely reporting of problems to the office.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gary Mummert, Interim Chair

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Annual Report 2017-2018

The parking area portion of the project was completed last year. It added 44 new all-weather paved spaces, with significant underground drainage arrangements and landscaping.

The project to complete the lower level of the Fellowship Hall is about to begin construction. Agreements are in place with the contractors and the general contractor's main permit from the City has been approved. Prior to starting the construction work we have had to arrange relocation of an exhaust flue and deal with some moisture entry issues at parts of the exterior wall.

This portion of the capital improvements will create four new rooms for RE and other meetings, one of which will be a large, flexible space. Also included is a bathroom, work sinks, internal stairway from the sanctuary to the lower level and an access lift for use by people with mobility limitations. In line with UU Danbury's Team Green initiatives a new heat pump system will provide heating and air conditioning, replacing the old AC compressor and gas fired furnace. In that way we can benefit even more from the electric power generated by the solar panels on the roof.

Once all the bills are paid we still expect to have enough money to meet the third objective of the Capital Campaign, replenishing UU Danbury's financial reserves.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Capital Campaign, which winds down this year. Although a bridging loan has been put in place to cover cash flow needs in advance of receiving the complete pledge payments, you can minimize UU Danbury's interest costs by fulfilling any remaining part of your capital campaign pledge as early as possible.

Great thanks must also be given to those who have contributed time and energy in many ways, especially Gary Mummert, whose expertise and attention to detail have been invaluable in moving the projects ahead.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alex Makai, Chair

DRE RELATIONS TEAM
Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Karen Iannella
Members: John Alvord, Marcia Brooker

The DRE Relations Team met regularly with the Director of Religious Education, Darlene Anderson-Alexander.

We meet on an as-needed basis which is approximately every other month.

Our main purpose has been to discuss with Darlene any issues that she needs to resolve and to listen to any concerns she has.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Iannella, Chair

FINANCE TEAM

Finance – Sustained Giving and Stewardship Team Annual Report 2017-2018

Synopsis: Sustained Giving Pledge packets were designed by Brad, John, Marie, and Matt and mailed by Sherry on Friday, April 20. Members were given two weeks to respond by either turning in a new pledge card and/or updating their pledge elections on the SimpleGive portal. Response rate was fair @ ~59% of members/friends.

110 Pledge Packets were mailed to existing members/friends with donation history ... 65 responses

10 Pledge Packets were mailed to new members with no donation history ... two responses

Based on 67 total responses to date ...

- The average operating budget pledge increase for existing donors was: **15%**
- The Sustained Budget target was \$60k ... **increases from existing donors covers ~\$19k of this amount.**
- Total pledges from 65 respondents for 2018/2019 Operating Budget are: **\$135,000**
- If those who have not responded pledge and donate at their current levels, additional income will be: **~\$37,000**
- This will bring total 2018/2019 pledges to: **\$172,000***

**Estimate does not include anticipated income from Auction event, endowments, or investments.*

Outreach will continue to members/friends who did not submit a pledge card nor a SimpleGive entry. 100% compliance is required to prepare draft budget for Board of Trustees.

The Finance & Stewardship Committee also reviewed the SimpleGive platform to identify accounting opportunities to track ongoing activity. We recommended and implemented the following actions:

- Distributed updated transparent summary of fees charged to UU Danbury
- Removed 2.3% fee checkbox from SimpleGive portal
- Identified means to notify donors of expiring credit cards on file

Respectfully Submitted,
Matt McPartlin, Chair

MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Annual Report 2017-2018

Co-Chairs: Virginia Cook, Nancy Tramontana

Members: Joan Campbell, Nancy Cullen, Anne Krieg, Jane Leff, Sequoia Lowe, and Michele Cousens (Board Liaison)

Mission: To provide for the welcome, orientation and stewardship of potential, new and current members and friends.

- Membership Team meetings were held once a month from August 2017 - June 2018.
- Membership Sunday was held on December 3, 2017. 10 new members signed the guest book and were welcomed by the congregation.
- Newcomers' Circles were held monthly as a two-part series focusing on: Unitarian Universalist heritage, an exploration of attendees' religious and spiritual backgrounds and information on the many ways to become involved in UU Danbury. Membership Team members took turns co-facilitating these meetings with Reverend Nancy Arnold. Childcare was provided for each meeting.
- A new Membership Board was placed in the Fellowship Hall. The board displays a "Steps to Membership" poster and new members' pictures and biographies.
- The Team hosted a Congregation wide Harvest-themed Potluck Dinner on October 20th.
- The Team continued to coordinate the Sunday Service Greeter schedule. Greeter Guidelines were updated to include ways to support an atmosphere of inclusion, welcome, and decorum and respect during services.
- The team continued to assist the UU Danbury Office Manager, Sherry Kyriacou, in updating the Congregation Directory.
- Outreach was initiated to WCSU so that UU Danbury events can be advertised at their Student Union.
- Brochures and other UU information were ordered for the welcome table in the foyer.
- New members and friends continue to be mentored by Membership Team members. The purpose of the mentor program is to help new members and friends integrate into the UU Danbury community.
- All guests have the opportunity to fill out a guest card. Guests are contacted via phone or email to provide more information on UU Danbury.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ginny Cook and Nancy Tramontana, Co-Chairs

MINISTERIAL SEARCH TEAM

Annual Report 2017-2018

Co-Chairs: Donna Lawrence, Meredith Spector

Members: Ali Haffner, Bruni Edwards, Luchina Fisher, Carl Tichler, Gale Alexander

Beginning with our retreat, facilitated by UUA consultant Kristen Leddy in June 2017, we began the year-long process of the search for a settled minister for UU Danbury.

Highlights of the Search process were:

- Congregational Survey
- Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop
- Cottage meetings – Beyond the Surveys
- Congregational Record completed and submitted to UUA Transitions Office
- Congregational Packet completed and attached to the Congregational Record.
- Zoom interviews of candidates who had indicated an interest in UU Danbury
- Weekend visits of 3 pre-candidates invited by Search Committee
- Unanimous Search Committee decision on candidate to call to our Congregation and call sent out
- That call being unsuccessful, decision made to continue our search by entering the second round.
- Zoom interview and pre-candidating weekend with 1 candidate
- Results of second round being unsuccessful, decision made to enter a search for an interim minister who would serve for one year.

A new Ministerial Search Committee will be selected to serve in 2018-2019.

Respectfully Submitted,
Donna Lawrence, Meredith Spector, Co-Chairs

MUSIC MINISTRY
Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Charlie Schott
Members: Cheryl Edelen, Marian DiFabbio

The primary mission of the Music Ministry is to provide music to enhance our Sunday services. This includes music for all services, performances by our choir once or twice a month, occasional performances by various other instrumental and vocal groups, and occasionally one of our popular music-oriented Sunday services.

This church year has been another successful year for our choir. The choir is comprised of a dedicated group of singers, who continue to grow musically, and we have tackled more challenging pieces this year. We make a concerted effort to provide excellent musical performances for our services.

Because of our congregation's financial challenges, we have continued this 2017-18 year without a church pianist with our own musicians providing music for our services. Many thanks to all those who played piano for a Sunday service and special thanks to Cheryl Edelen who has continued the challenging role of pianist for the choir.

Our expenses for the Music Ministry include piano tunings, sheet music for the choir, and miscellaneous expenses such as for our new piano cover.

Many thanks, on behalf of the congregation, to each of our volunteer instrumentalists, singers, Carl Tramontana with our audio systems, and others who help bring such a rich variety of music to our services.

Our aspirational goal in years to come is to hire a musical director who can play the piano and lead the choir.

Respectfully Submitted,
Charlie Schott, Chair

NOMINATING TEAM
Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Melody Levy
Members: Charlie Schott, Judy Lacker

Board of Trustees Outgoing Members are:

Vice President: Robert Lowe
Trustee: Michele Cousens
Trustee: Michael Zacchea
Trustee: Neil Failla

The following slate will be presented for election at the Annual Meeting on June 3, 2018.

To Be Elected to The Board of Trustees

President:	Brad Greene	1 year term until June 30, 2019
Vice President:	Alex Makai	1 year term until June 30, 2019
Secretary:	Lisa Austin-Smith	1 year term until June 30, 2019
Treasurer:	Marie Dupree	2 year term until June 30, 2020
Trustee:	Kristen Papucci	1 year remaining until June 30, 2019
Trustee:	Ali Haffner	3 year term until June 30, 2021
Trustee:	Christine Creter	3 year term until June 30, 2021

Nominating Team Outgoing Members:

Chair: Melody Levy
Member: Charlie Schott

The following slate will be presented for election at the annual meeting on June 3, 2018

To be Elected to the Nominating Team:

Chair	Judy Lacker	1 year remaining until June 30, 2019
Member	Maredith Spector	2 year term until June 30, 2020
Member	John Miglietta	2 year term until June 30, 2020

Respectfully Submitted,
Melody Levy, Chair

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM

Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Samantha McCoy

Members: Michele Cousens (Board Liaison), Alison DiPinto, Kathleen Granger

Though our Team was small in number this year, the Religious Education Ministry Team continued its attempts to innovate and meet the needs of families. In terms of a congregation-wide change, the move to 10:00 a.m. services this year was well received by many families. Our Team continued to meet approximately once per month at 8:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings. All meeting minutes are taken in a Google Document and immediately shared with the Team electronically; members can review and edit the minutes after the fact, at their leisure.

This year's curricula focused on Judeo-Christian Heritage and Moral Development. Groups from preschool through 6th grade followed a variety of programs that explored the UU connection to Jewish and Christian traditions, including social action projects designed to make an impact on the wider community. Three different Our Whole Lives (OWL) classes also ran on certain Sundays this year: 4th – 6th grades, 7th – 9th grades, and 10th – 12th. Junior and Senior High Youth Groups met occasionally, on non-OWL weeks.

The 2018-19 programming the REMT is currently planning will put a new twist on our curricular pillar related to World Religions and Peace. Our traditional World Religions curricula will be supplemented by community-building events two Sundays each month. One Sunday will be for "Jedi Academy" lessons, which take philosophical and spiritual lessons from the Star Wars mythology and apply them to young people's lives. Another Sunday will be SUUnday FUUnday activities, bringing together youth of all ages in large-group settings meant to bring people together and allow them to just have some good, old-fashioned fun on a Sunday morning. Our theory is that when children and youth feel invested in and connected to others in their religious community, they will want to attend a variety of programming in that community.

Recruitment continues to be a major issue for the Team in the spring, both for the REMT itself and in getting teachers and assistants lined up for next fall. The current REMT members agree that the group would be well served by more diversity in its ranks, specifically for the group not to be composed entirely of women and to include some adults who don't have children in the RE program. We continue to reach out to a wide swath of the congregation, in an effort to help more people feel connected to the program. We also don't want to lean too heavily on any one segment of volunteers, in order to avoid burnout amongst those who have been leading groups for many years consecutively. Again, we are working on strategies to bring a more varied slice of the congregation into our classrooms, to share their gifts with the children and youth.

We still enthusiastically anticipate the start of work on the lower level of the Fellowship Hall! We look forward to being able to give our young congregants increased space to learn, play, and grow during this coming year.

Events from 2017-18:

- DRE hosted a Leader/Assistant Training session before the start of the RE year in September
- REMT hosted the annual Tree Trim event in mid-December
- REMT coordinated and facilitated the Mitten Tree donations to the Interfaith AIDS Ministry
- RE Family Potluck Dinner/Year-end Celebration scheduled for 1 June
- RE Volunteer Appreciation program planned for later June

Respectfully Submitted,
Samantha McCoy, Chair

SOCIAL JUSTICE COUNCIL

Annual Report 2017-2018

Co-Chairs: Yvonne Ruddy-Stein, Marian DiFabbio

Each Ministry that is working on social justice issues is reporting separately thus all are welcomed to read their detailed reports. The Council serves as a way to share plans and generate support for the many efforts of our members and friends and now meets four times each congregational year. All are welcome to attend meetings and to support the work of the numerous Ministries.

Thanks to continued support from the Board and from the Sunday service attendees, we coordinate a monthly Share-the-Plate offering for groups. A summary of this year's effort follows:

September	UUA – Hurricane Harvey Recovery Fund	621.00
	Visual Healing Arts	354.00
October	Center for Popular Democracy Hurricane Maria	456.50
December	Connecticut Against Gun Violence	236.50
January	Assoc. of Religious Communities – Danbury	172.00
February	Comida Food Pantry	275.13
March	CT Students for a Dream	308.50
April	Off the Streets	298.50
May	UU Church in Meriden – Chalice Sanctuary Team	
June	Church of the Larger Fellowship Prison Ministry Program	

Respectfully Submitted,
Yvonne Ruddy-Stein, Marion DiFabbio, Co-Chairs

ARC Comida Food Pantry: Led by Chris Halfar. For the eighth year volunteers from our congregation staffed the Comida Food Pantry distributing nonperishable food, baked goods, meat, produce, and, sometimes, flowers to local families. Volunteers also receive and sort food rescue donations from local supermarkets. Comida is the beneficiary of the UU Danbury weekly food donation as well as the summer vegetable garden. The pantry is open from 2:30 to 4 on the second and fourth Friday of each month. New volunteers are welcome!

Dorothy Day Hospitality House Overnight Shelter: Led by Chris Halfar. Volunteering at the Dorothy Day Shelter has been a commitment of UU Danbury for over 30 years. On the fourth Friday of each month a volunteer from our congregation helps provide a safe, warm place to sleep for neighbors with no other place to go. Guests can shower and have laundry done, adding to the personal dignity most of us take for granted. Volunteers are especially needed!

Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen: Led by Judy Lacker. There are currently 4 teams from UU Danbury that volunteer at Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen on the first Saturday of every month. Here are the number of new volunteers who signed up over the past year and the number already on teams: Team 1: 10 existing, 1 new; Team 2: 9 existing, 3 new; Team 3: 10 existing, 1 new; Team 4: 10 existing, 4 new. We also have an Alternate List of members/friends who occasionally fill in to help out regulars. Volunteers on the various teams spend anywhere from 4 to 6 hours at DD on the day that they are signed up to help out.

Gun Violence Prevention Team: Led by Yvonne Ruddy-Stein.

- April 2017: 2 members of the GVP group went to Hartford for the Mothers United Against Violence march.
- June 2017: Many members of the GVP and UUDanbury attended the Wear Orange march in Newtown.
- October 2017: a member of UU Danbury (Jeremy Stein) became the Executive Director of Connecticut Against Gun Violence.
- November 2017: 1 member of the GVP group attended a Southbury town hall meeting on a town ordinance to prohibit firearms at public events on town property and in town-owned buildings.
- December 2017: 2 members of the GVP group attended a press conference in Hartford regarding the Concealed Carry Reciprocity bill H.R. 38/S. 446
- December 2017: We held a Vigil as part of the Nationwide Events/Vigils to End Gun Violence.
- April 2018: the GVP group staffed the monthly Social Action Council table.
- April 2018: 3 members of the GVP group went to Hartford for the public hearings on the bill banning ghost guns and bump stocks.
- April 2018: many members of the GVP group and UU Danbury attended the "March for our Lives" in Washington DC, Hartford, Stamford, New York City, and other cities.

Interfaith AIDS Ministry: Led by Michael Stengle. IAM is a local non-profit agency offering unconditional critical support services to families facing the nutritional and physical challenges of living with HIV/AIDS.

Over the winter holiday season, UU Danbury supported IAM in their "Adopt a Family Program". UU Danbury children in our Religious Education program decorated mittens for our "mitten tree". These mittens listed wishes and requests from local families affected by HIV/AIDS. Our congregation selected mittens and delivered wrapped gifts for members of those families. Our congregation once again stepped up to the plate and delivered, leaving our tree bare of mittens in the first week of the program. Through our efforts and those of other faith groups, businesses, and groups, IAM achieved a 100% adoption rate and no one was left out.

Immigrant Justice Team: Led by Lynn Taborsak. The Immigrant Justice Team was formed in August of 2017 when a local man, Joel Colindrés, was ordered to be deported after 14 years of being allowed to live and work in the U.S. We quickly asked the Board of Trustees to approve an offer of physical sanctuary. It was determined by the Board that this topic should go to the full congregation for discussion and vote and we discussed how best to proceed. So for the next five months we ran a targeted campaign to raise awareness and answer questions.

After seven weeks we held an Immigrant Justice Service that included Franklin and Gioconda Ramos, a Meriden couple in deportation proceedings. That service was followed by two separate town hall meetings for additional discussion. Finally a congregational vote was held on January 7th and we are both delighted and exhausted with the positive result.

We have been able to outfit the Youth Room for sanctuary, refurbish the shower and bathtub and offer physical sanctuary to three individuals. We are still a “sanctuary in waiting” and invite members of this congregation to celebrate our courage, our values and our decision to meet a critical need in this era of mass deportations.

Morris Street & ARC KIDS Programs: Led by Charlie Schott. The Morris Street School program was started in 2011 by 16 members of our congregation. We current have a dozen UU Danbury volunteers at the Morris Street School and we are always looking for additional volunteers.

In 2013, Charlie Schott approached Rev. P.J. Leopold, Executive Director of ARC (Association of Religious Communities), and Dr. Bill Glass, Deputy Superintendent of Danbury Public Schools, to establish a program based on the Morris Street pilot to expand to other schools in the district. We formed the KIDS program (Kids In Danbury Schools) under ARC, and expanded into two additional schools in 2014.

Currently we have 76 adult volunteers in five schools, each serving from two to many hours a week, predominately in Kindergarten classrooms. They assist teachers and mentor students, individually and in small groups. In the 2017-18 school year, volunteers will have given over 5,000 hours of their time to serve over 450 students.

In the fall of 2016, St. Gregory the Great Girl Scout troop joined the KIDS program as ‘Kids for KIDS.’ In 2017 they collected funds to provide every kindergarten graduate in the five KIDS schools (385) with a backpack filled with school supplies. This June they are doing the same again with filled pencil boxes. Last year they also provided 13 Girl Scout volunteers to help in the after-school Extended Learning Programs (ELP) at four schools. They started their ELP volunteering again in March of this year.

The KIDS program is a win-win-win – the teachers really need and appreciate the help, the volunteers find it most rewarding, and the students significantly benefit academically and from having another caring adult in their lives.

I am working with ARC and the school district to organize the program to continue and grow under ARC working with the school Liaisons.

SUNDAY SERVICE MINISTRY
Annual Report 2017-2018

Co-Chairs: Inge Hill, Michael Stengle

Members: Tony DiFabbio, Charlie Schott, Keith Dupree, Michael Stengle, and Sequoia Lowe
The Director of Religious Education, Darlene Anderson-Alexander attends and gives advice as to the Children's Focus and their part of the service. The Interim Minister attends contributing advice, ideas, and creation of consensus.

The UU Danbury By-Laws state that "Sunday Services Ministry shall plan and conduct effective and varied Sunday Services in cooperation with the Minister and other ministries/teams." To accomplish this mandate the SSM will work on the following objectives/goals.

1. Make sure every aspect runs smoothly on Sunday mornings so that the minister can concentrate on pastoral duties and not have to be concerned with the logistics of Sunday Services.
2. Adjust the OOS components and flow in conjunction/coordination with the minister and other Ministries/Teams. A food offering has been made a permanent part of the OOS with the Social Action Council distributing the food donations to local shelters and soup kitchens.
3. Develop and coordinate lay-led services each year using other Ministries/Teams, UU Danbury congregates, and outside speakers. With our minister in the pulpit three of four Sundays in a typical month or four of five Sundays in a five Sunday month this translates into the SSM being responsible for approximately 10 Sunday services a year.
4. Plan and coordinate summer UU Danbury lay-led Sunday services. Summer services run from the last Sunday in June to Ingathering which is usually the 2nd Sunday in September. 11 Services in all.

We are always looking for others to be a part of the Sunday Services Ministry.

Respectfully Submitted,
Inge Hill, Michael Stengle, Co-Chairs

TEAM GREEN
Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Donna Lawrence

Members: Rik Cousens, Cheryl Edelen, Gary Mummert, Barbara Myers

Meetings take place as needed (determined by Team members). Usually every other month or so.

Our mission statement is the following:

Team Green initiates and develops programs and activities which involve members of UU Danbury in inspiring and instilling positive environmental changes in three areas: personal and family choices, Congregational activities, and the greater Danbury area.

Activities and achievements for the past year include the following:

- UU Danbury received a Green House of Worship Award on Sunday, April 29, 2018.
- Together with Reverend Nancy, Team Green members Cheryl Edelen, Barb Myers, and Gary Mummert presented the Sunday Service in honor of Earth Day on Sunday, April 22, 2018.
- Gary Mummert continues to work with the Lower Level Build Out Team in ensuring the installation of energy efficient systems and environmentally sound materials.
- With the leadership of Barb Myers and Gary Mummert, volunteers continue to plant and harvest vegetables in the Cottage Garden. The produce is donated to the Comida Food Pantry and the Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen.
- As a result of improvements to our facilities, energy use continues to decrease each year from 2013 – 2018, thus resulting in lower energy costs. The installation of solar panels in 2017 has resulted not only in energy cost savings but also in expected revenue to UU Danbury in 2018.

Respectfully Submitted,
Donna Lawrence, Chair

TRANSITION TEAM
Annual Report 2017-2018

Members: Christine Creter, Anne Krieg, Judy Lacker, Michael Stengle, Rev. Nancy O. Arnold

In an effort to follow up on our recommendations to address concerns of volunteer burn-out and communication which were evident from last year's Listening Circles, the Transition Team advocated for co-leadership positions for 2-year periods on all teams/ministries. This format would free up more leadership opportunities and address burn-out of too many members staying in leadership positions for too long. In addition we recommended that membership of the board be reduced from nine to seven members for our size congregation.

In March the Transition Team sponsored a pot luck with the purpose of engaging as many members as possible to welcome our new minister as well to build community. We planned activities to create banners that show how we use our minds, hearts, and hands to live our UU principles. We encouraged members, friends, and children to write letters to introduce themselves and welcome the new minister. We had a phenomenal turn-out, good fun, and great conversations. The crafted heads, hearts, and minds with messages for the banners are in waiting as are our letters of introduction and welcome.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Creter, Anne Krieg, Judy Lacker, Michael Stengle, Rev. Nancy O. Arnold

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM MINISTRY

Annual Report 2017-2018

Objective – UU Danbury Adult Education Program

1. To establish a guide for anyone interested in providing “new” Adult Education Programs and/or other adult educational opportunities (i.e. conferences, guest speakers) within the congregation that are consistent with our UU Danbury Guiding Principles, and current Educational Programs.
2. The UU Danbury Adult Education Programs will allow adult members to share new ideas, opportunities, and enriching educational experiences for our congregation.
3. Adult Education Programs will consist of already available programs such as Yoga, Chalice Circles, Study/Book Groups, Social Group Meetings, and our Movie with a Message Night etc. New “approved” programs that may contain information and/or discussions that share issues of high social or ethical value, or new information for health and well-being are welcomed. Potential new programs may cover an array of social, and/or personal problem-solving issues such as stress reduction, meditation, alternative ways of thinking and processing information, and much more. Any and all suggestions will be considered.

The Adult Education Program now has in place a formal application for members to complete and forward for approval. This application covers dates and times, program outlines, program objectives and benefits, facilitator experience and sign-up sheet to determine number of people served throughout the year.

During this past year we have established strict age limits. All attendees must be 18 years of age and older, including members and friends of UU Danbury who attend all Adult Education Programs.

We also streamlined the process of scheduling facility use, times and dates, by requiring all facilitators to complete the Adult Education Program form and as the first step in the process this document must go directly through the office manager.

During the past year we have conducted six different programs and are working to improve and add programs for 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joe Gillotti, Chair

Adult Programming - Conversations
Annual Report 2017-2018

The Book Conversations group previously led by Bruce Buzby is now being managed by Mary Ann Kulla. A grateful thank you to Bruce for his many years of administering this group. The Conversations group is now meeting every other month and reads recent, non-fiction books on current topics of interest. Questions designed to stimulate conversation are emailed to all members. It is not mandatory to have read the book to participate and enjoy the gathering.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mary Ann Kulla, Chair

Adult Programming – Knitting Ministry
Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Karen Gillotti
Members: Janet Cory, Jan Galloway, Inge Hill, Donna Lawrence, Joanne Wells

The Knitting Ministry's mission is to provide knitted items for charity, shawls for members who are ill or recuperating from illness, and graduating seniors. In addition, we offer knitted items for sale in late fall to raise money for UU Danbury.

In November of 2017 we raised \$945.00, all of which was donated to the church. Items remaining after the sale were donated to La Comida.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Gillotti, Chair

Adult Programming – Movies with a Message **Annual Report 2017-2018**

Mission and Purpose: Our mission is to build community. Our objective is to present each month films of substance in a living room setting and to provide an opportunity to discuss with friends. Our films are selected to have a thoughtful and positive message. Nearly all of the films in our series are from our subscription with *Spiritual Cinema Circle*.

From the Record: Year 2017 marked the 11th year since the beginning of our film series in the spring of 2007. In calendar year 2017, we presented 11 evenings that included a short film plus a feature. An evening in August was devoted to short films entirely, during which eight shorts were shown.

Our audiences in 2017 have ranged from a low of five to a high of fifteen. In calendar year 2017, we had total attendance of 107 and contributions from our audiences have allowed us to donate a total of \$192 to the congregational coffers.

In Gratitude: We also thank those regular participants who help in many ways, from setting up, to bringing munchies, to helping with clean-up. And we offer a note of continuing appreciation to Reet Lubin and the singing group “4-Strings” for their donation of the flat-screen TV and DVD Player which enabled us to upgrade our hardware. The sponsors of this series take great pleasure in making these films available and hope they will continue to be an integral part of UUCD programs. The series is open to all members and friends of the UUCD. I hope that for more and more of us, the “Second Friday” will be a date to circle every month on your calendar.

Respectfully Submitted,
Keith Dupree

CARING CIRCLE MINISTRY
Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Karen Gillotti

Members: Rev. Nancy O. Arnold, Inge Hill, Meredith Spector, Joanne Wells, Donna Lawrence, and
Joan Campbell

The Caring Circle's mission is to provide various kinds of short term services for those members and friends who need help with medical or loss issues which require outside assistance. These needs might be rides to medical appointments, and rehab services, delivery of meals, errand running, assisting with memorial services, calls, cards, and contact via email, phone and in person.

Under the umbrella of the Caring Circle, Meredith Spector has led several Death Cafe meetings discussing end of life issues with good attendance, and these will continue for the foreseeable future. Right to Flourish is also included in the Caring Circle, and we are presently working on reinstating these programs.

We have provided between 250 and 300 different services throughout this past fiscal year, in the form of emails, calls, rides, meals, and cards. In addition, many, many visits to UU's at home or at rehab, too numerous to count.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Gillotti, Chair

Caring Circle Ministry – Right to Flourish
Annual Report 2017-2018

Coordinator: Meredith Spector

Presentation: February 28, 2018:

SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION GIVEN ALZHEIMER'S LOGIC

By Donna Fedus, Gerontologist

Sponsor funds were raised for the speaker honorarium of \$600. Thirty-five attendees.

Plan for the future: We are currently seeking congregant assistance for formulating a Plan of Action for including caregiver and affected person during worship services or an alternative.

Death with Dignity membership maintained by Meredith Spector and specific information is passed on to interested congregants: info@DeathwithDignity.org www.DeathwithDignity.org

Compassion and Choices support

March 20, 2018: Gave testimony in favor of H.B. 5417, which would authorize medical aid in dying: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?...Bill...HB05417...>

AN ACT CONCERNING END-OF-LIFE CARE. To allow a physician to dispense or prescribe medication at the request of a mentally competent patient that has a terminal illness that such patient may self-administer to bring about his or her death.

Video at UU Danbury: April 20, 2018:

LIVING AND DYING, A LOVE STORY

Was shown as part of SAC series/introduction and discussion by Meredith Spector/arrangements by Gary Mummert.

Planning for a summer Sunday service is underway:

DISRUPT AGING in coordination with AARP/CT at invitation of Meredith Spector

Respectfully Submitted,
Meredith Spector, Coordinator

EVENTS MINISTRY
Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Valerie Cochrane

Members: Christine Creter, Donna Lawrence, Leslie Miglietta, Joan Stapleton, Nicole Paris

Events has devolved at last. Our responsibilities had dwindled to Winter Boutique/Cookie Walk and potlucks. In its tenth year, it became apparent that the winter sale had run its course. The Knitting Ministry will return to a stand-alone sale this year

Our poll showed congregational enthusiasm for potlucks. It became redundant for Events to host them in addition to the frequent meals included in the plans of other standing teams. Recently, teams/ministries have formally taken on the task of hosting potluck suppers.

The original purpose of our Team was to ease the flow of UU Danbury events. Concern for overlapping or density of activity comes down to there being space on the calendar. Sherry handles rentals and prevents major conflicts.

With filing of this annual report, we respectfully disband as a Team.

Respectfully Submitted,
Val Cochrane, Chair

Events Ministry – Auction **Annual Report 2017-2018**

2017 brought new and exciting changes to the Auction and Auction event format.

The “Auction” was almost entirely online, prior to the event.

The Auction Event was an Improv Musical comedy show held offsite at the Palace Theater in Danbury, CT. The goal this year was to try to increase income from the event and to try to spark outside interest in UU Danbury via a fun and engaging event. We did auction 3 live items at the event, and sold tickets for raffle as well as the Heads and Tails game.

Event Results:

- All around, we are excited by the changes in our Auction event!
- 205 total tickets sold, which means we had almost double the number of attendees we could legally fit in the Fellowship Hall.
- We estimate more than 40% of the audience were non-UU members or friends.
- We tripled the event profit realized from any of the events we have held in the Fellowship Hall!

Auction Update:

- Overall, Auction donations and purchases were down from past years yet we brought in more than \$14,000 in Auction sales.
- Our matching donors reflected 24.5% matching. (Also down considerably from previous years)

Final total profit realized was just over \$22,000.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Creter, 2017 Chair

Events Ministry – Women’s Retreat Planning Team
Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Melody Levy

Members: Barbara Myers, Karen Gillotti, Elise Jaeger, Joanne Wells, Sharon Stram

The 19th annual Women's Retreat was held April 21st – 22nd at the Guest House Retreat and Conference Center located in Chester, CT.

This marked our 6th retreat at the site. A majority expressed interest in returning for the 20th Annual Retreat to be held in 2019. To honor the survey results at the commencement of the 2017 retreat, we had a one night stay instead of our customary two night stay. The preferred place and length of time will be surveyed again and the results will determine the place and length of time for next year. We also relieved the burden of solo commuters, and, as a result of the survey results from last year, we organized car pools for people who expressed a preference to ride share. In total, 38 women registered, 11 for Saturday only, and 27 for Saturday through Sunday. We were delighted that 3 former members who moved out of state joined us. Engaging and empowering workshops were led by congregants with particular skill sets. We also had a local masseuse, a bonfire, a sing along around the piano and a movie.

At the start of our planning, the Team was comprised of 6 members. Midway through planning, 2 members had unexpected personal obligations leaving a team of 4 to actualize the event. Monthly meetings began in September and ended with a "meet up to wrap up" in May. This was the fourth consecutive year the retreat was a self-sustaining event. We held 3 soup sales to fund tuition assistance. This enables anyone to attend if the cost is prohibitive. Assistance is self-determined and acknowledged without any questions asked. Many congregational members were enormously generous in answering our call for home-made soup while others graciously contributed by purchasing it.

The Women's Retreat builds community by offering opportunities to forge new friendships and rekindle older ones. It is a creative, intellectual and spiritual event that is a revered occasion in our congregational life together.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melody Levy, Chair

SAFE CONGREGATION MINISTRY TEAM

Annual Report 2017-2018

Chair: Carl Tramontana
Members: Rev. Nancy O. Arnold, Interim Minister, Darlene Anderson-Alexander, DRE,
Walt Sizemore, John Miglietta, Gary Mummert

MISSION

The Safe Congregation Team (SCT) serves to educate and be a source of general information concerning safety issues. The Team responds, as needed, to issues of safety within the community and UU Danbury in accordance with approved policies and procedures. These include, but are not limited to, raising awareness about abuse, (e.g., verbal, sexual, physical and/or mental), harassment of any form, working with the Social Justice Council to create policies and procedures related to UU Danbury's designation as a Sanctuary Congregation for immigrants who are under threat of imminent deportation, and any other real or perceived safety issues that may affect UU Danbury.

Additionally, the Team serves congregants by providing resources for safety and other related issues. The Members of this Team are also available to hear issues of concern or complaints by congregants.

ACTIVITIES and ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The SCT first priority is the safety of all members and especially our youth and children. To that end, there is in place the Safe Congregation Policy that outlines how adults and children interact at UU Danbury and how the congregation responds to concerns about those interactions.

As part of policy revisions adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2013, the SCT consistently reviews all policies and procedures based upon issues and situations that arise within UU Danbury. The policy was reviewed and approved by the Board in 2016 and reviewed yearly to respond to the ever evolving environment of emergency management and safety.

In 2017-2018 the following changes to SCT policy and procedures include:

- Updates to the current **Weapons on the Grounds of UU Danbury**, policy and procedures. This includes the posting of **NO Weapons Allowed** signs around UU Danbury grounds. These signs provide a visual opportunity to express UU Danbury's strictly enforced policy that **NO weapons of any kind** are allowed on our **private property**, which includes **all parking lots, and personal vehicles**.
- **Board approval** of a policy and procedure for offering new adult programs at UU Danbury. This policy and procedure will ensure that all adult programs offered to anyone 18 years or above follow the UUA 7 Guiding Principles, and all SCT and UU Danbury policies and procedures.
- Updates to the **Background Check** program that remain in place.

The SCT in cooperation and coordination with the RE program continue to conduct a yearly Fire/Evacuation Drill. Emergency procedures are an important part of the SCT activities and discussions, so every time we provide an opportunity to practice an emergency procedure such as a Fire/Evacuation Drill, we increase our emergency preparedness and response.

The UU Danbury First Aid Kit is updated and restocked yearly to ensure that any medications within the kit are not expired and all provided emergency equipment is functional. In 2017-2018, the RE Program has initiated a project to create an additional First Aid Kit for the Sanctuary basement area which will soon become our new RE space.

The SCT will continue to focus our activities on emergency preparedness for the coming years and continue to review and update all SCT policies and procedures, based upon actual use, and real world incidents or events, continually looking for opportunities for improvement.

The SCT charge remains to educate, prepare for and respond to reported health and safety incidents and to develop, review and update, as appropriate and necessary, Safety Protocols and, Policies and Procedures in accordance with all SCT policy guidelines. As some of the SCT's activities are confidential in nature, the SCT continues to take this confidentiality very seriously.

Finally, in accordance with SCT policy and procedure and for the record for 2017-18, the SCT reports that there is currently no congregant utilizing a Limited Access Agreement within UU Danbury.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carl Tramontana, Chair

SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION 2018-2019

The Nominating Team, Melody Levy, Charlie Schott and Judy Lacker, offer the following slate of Officers and new Trustees for the Board of Trustees, to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting on June 3, 2018. Persons to be elected are in **bold** type.

SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION 2018-19

To Be Elected to The Board of Trustees

President:	Brad Greene	1 year term until June 30, 2019
Vice President:	Alex Makai	1 year term until June 30, 2019
Secretary:	Lisa Austin-Smith	1 year term until June 30, 2019
Treasurer:	Marie Dupree	2 year term until June 30, 2020
Trustee:	Kristen Papucci	1 year term until June 30, 2019
Trustee:	Ali Haffner	3 year term until June 30, 2021
Trustee:	Christine Creter	3 year term until June 30, 2021

To Be Elected on the Nominating Team

Mareidith Spector	2 year term until June 30, 2020
John Miglietta	2 year term until June 30, 2020

Remaining on the Nominating Team

Judy Lacker	1 year term until June 30, 2019
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