



Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship of  
Central Michigan

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*Open Arms • Open Minds • Open Hearts*

## **2023 Annual Meeting**

**A Summary of accomplishments  
for the period of July 1, 2022  
through the present**

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## UUFCM Board of Trustees

President: Stacey Pattison

President Elect: Cynthia Damer

Past-President: Norma Bailey

Treasurer: Terrie Robbie

Secretary: Elaine Emerick

Trustees: Victoria Sladek, Penny Swart, Mary Alsager

## Candidates for the UUFCM Board of Trustees for 2023-2024:

President Elect: Aaron Jones

Secretary: Laurie Meadows

Trustee (2 year): Monica Jean

Trustee (1 year): Kevin Daum

## UUFCM Staff

Minister: Andrew Frantz

Director of Religious Education: Jakobe Neal      Administrative Assistant: Kirsten Keeton

Nursery Teacher: Katherine Stillson      Technical Assistant: Claire Lester

Youth RE Assistant: Jolie Damer-Daigle

## Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Central Michigan Annual Meeting Agenda – May 21, 2023, immediately following the service

1. Motion from Board to hold electronic balloting on the individual candidates on the slate put forward by the Nominating Committee as follows:

President elect: Aaron Jones (2 year: leads to president)

Secretary: Laurie Meadows

Trustee (2 year): Monica Jean

Trustee (1 year): Kevin Daum

2. Motion from Board to hold electronic balloting on budget as presented.

3. Motion from Board to hold electronic balloting on the individual bylaw modification proposals as presented.

4. Annual report

5. Volunteer recognition for 2022-2023

6. Delegates for GA

## Proposed UUFCM Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Expense Category	2022-2023	2023-2024
Accounting & Bank Fees	\$900	\$2,150
Building Costs	\$14,500	\$17,000
Child Care	\$1,700	\$2,100
Communications	\$515	\$550
Copies & Postage	\$1,500	\$1,700
Fair Share Payments	\$5,357	\$5,500
Insurance	\$3,000	\$3,000
Minister Base Salary	\$62,278.95	\$63,525
• In Lieu of FICA	\$4,764.34	\$4,860
• Health Care Plan (In Lieu of Medical)**	\$10,788.77	\$6,000
• Retirement	\$6,227.90	\$6,352
• Disability/Group Term Life Insurance	\$1,332.77	\$1,360
• Professional Expenses Allowance	\$6,227.90	\$6,352
Music	\$300	\$300
Religious Education Expenses	\$900	\$900
Religious Education Director	\$6,300	\$6,300
Secretarial	\$7,500	\$7,500
Technical Assistant	\$0	\$2,500
Supplies & Miscellaneous	\$3,000	\$3,000
Leadership Development	\$200	\$200
Minister's Discretionary Expense	\$500	\$500
Endowment Contribution	\$1,000	\$1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$138,793</b>	<b>\$142,649</b>

## Key

- **Accounting & Bank Fees:** Pays for checks, bank fees, Vanco fees (online), and accountant services.
- **Building Costs:** Pays for utilities, repairs, maintenance, improvements, cleaning, snow removal, lawn mowing, etc.
- **Child Care:** Pays for weekly services and special events.
- **Communications:** Cost of website, Zoom services, Vimeo, MailChimp, and web domain.
- **Copies & Postage:** Pays for stamps, post office box rental, copying of orders of service, directories, annual reports, music, and other documents.
- **Fair Share Payments:** Payments to the UUA and Mid-America Region.
- **Insurance:** Pays for building, liability, and workman's compensation.
- **Minister:** Pays for salary, benefits, and ministerial expenses. \*\*(2023-24 in lieu of Medical = \$500/month)
- **Music:** Pays for substitute pianists, hymnals, music purchases, and piano tuning.
- **Religious Education Expenses:** Pays for fees and expenses for OWL training, education materials, snacks for special occasions, decorations, and craft items.
- **Religious Education Director:** Pays for a 1/4 time RE Director.
- **Secretarial:** Pays for contracted administrative assistant.
- **Supplies & Miscellaneous:** Pays for food and drink items; kitchen, building, and bathroom supplies; worship supplies; office supplies; etc.
- **Technical Assistant:** In-service technical assistant expenses for OWL and Zoom.
- **Leadership Development:** Pays for expenses at UUA and Mid-America Region Conferences.
- **Minister's Discretionary Expense:** Provides seed money for the minister to provide monetary aid for those who ask for help.
- **Endowment Contribution:** Our yearly contribution to our Endowment Fund.

## UUFCM Board President's Report

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time serving as president of the UUFCM Board of Trustees. I need to acknowledge the wonderful people on the board who made my job so enjoyable. A special thank you to Cynthia Damer-Daigle, Terrie Robbie, Norma Bailey, Penny Swart, Elaine Emerick, Victoria Sladek, and Drew Frantz for all of their hard work.

While still in the midst of the pandemic, we continued our hybrid services using the OWL technology. The worship team and Drew, together with volunteers, have made our worship time a continued success.

As a church, we continued planning events and activities in order to bring us together. We held our picnic in Rosebush in August which was a great success as well as the water in-gathering service in September. For the first time since the start of the pandemic, we celebrated our Harvest Feast together in November. The food was delicious, and the company was spectacular. Other activities that have resumed are Movie Night and the First Friday potluck.

As well, it was so nice to be in person (hybrid) for our annual January retreat which focused on Article II of the UUA bylaws, principles and purposes. Productive activities and conversations were had by all who attended.

As a church, the board has also worked to create new policies which help guide our functioning. One such policy created was for supervision of staff, keeping of personnel files, and hiring practices. The board also took on the challenge of learning how to use Google Workspace for all fellowship business.

Our Youth RE program is beginning to show some much-needed growth. We successfully hired two child care workers, Jolie and Katherine, in order to assist Jakobe. One of our board goals that we created in September was to rejuvenate the Youth RE program. I feel we are on our way to fulfilling this goal.

In the area of social justice, we have continued our efforts with anti-racism. Several people went to the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia in Big Rapids, followed by a reflective conversation on the experience. Drew led a well-attended book/workbook group for "Me and White Supremacy." The 1619 Project Docu-Series was shown in April, sponsored by the Adult RE Team, the Social Justice Coordinating Team, and the Anti-Racist Task Force. The Hulu video series examines how the legacy of slavery shaped different aspects of contemporary American life.

Most recently, we celebrated our 20 year anniversary with many elements coming together for the party and the Sunday sermon by Lisa Presley. The party was rocking

with talent provided by our own members and friends of the UUFCM. We saw some familiar faces that had been away for several years join us for this occasion. Another big part of this celebration was the choir singing the seven principle songs composed by David Wolfson on Sunday, March 12, and the premier of the "Celebration Anthem" on March 19.

We continue to grow and thrive as a church, in March adding eight new members to our UUFCM community! Thank you to all the committees and teams that keep working to enrich this church on many levels. Thank you to all those who give of their time to meet our volunteer needs. Let us continue to support the needs of one another, share in each other's joys and sorrows, and carry on in making the world a better place.

~ Stacey Pattison

## Treasurer's Report

### *Current Budget Status*

The budget status for the UUFCM as of April 15, 2023 is given in the table below.

### **Budget Status after 75% of the July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 Budget Year**

	<i>Amount</i>	<i>As % of 2022-2023 Budget</i>
Budget Year Spending	\$113,763.20	82%
Budget Year Income	\$95,374.98	

### *Status of Financial Accounts*

- Our most recent Mercantile Bank account statement (March 31, 2023) balance: \$28,734.49
- Our most recent Edward Jones account statement (March 31, 2023) balance: \$92,444.11
- Our UU Common Endowment Fund account (February 28, 2023) balance: \$17,845.94 (with a \$1000 deposit on 3/5/2023, which brings us to a total of \$18,845.94 without March totals).

### *Income Sources*

As of April 15, 2023, the following income information holds:

- Income from offerings is \$95,374.98
- Income for Leadership Training is \$55
- Income from rentals is \$695.00

- Income from Minister's Discretionary Fund collections is \$2,065.02 (Carry-over balance from previous year of \$1,019.02)
- Income from Building Fund is \$231 (Carry-over balance from previous year of \$682.01)
- Income from other sources is \$1,098.35. (*Church Mutual Dividend, Summit Fire Duplicate Payment; Donation for Don Rust Memorial; Janis Shinn Refund of Book*)

#### *Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer Duties*

The Treasurer,

- pays the bills of the UUFCM,
- prepares a quarterly report of income and spending for the UUFCM Board,
- together with the Board and Treasurer's Committee prepares a draft budget,
- oversees the UUFCM financial accounts,
- ensures 1099 and W-2 statements are sent to employee and contract workers,
- performs other duties as directed by the Board.
- monitors the Vanco account and transfers money weekly from Savings to Checking.

The Assistant Treasurer,

- records and deposits donation and other income collected from worship services,
- provides periodic donation reports to members, and
- serves in place of the Treasurer as needed.

~ Terrie Robbie, Treasurer

## **Minister's Report**

### *Professional Status*

This is the fourth year of my full-time ministry serving the UU fellowship of Central Michigan, which I began in September, 2019. This is the first ministry of my career.

My professional status remains "Minister in Preliminary Fellowship" at the time of this writing. I completed my Master of Divinity degree and seminary training in May 2019 and was hired to begin ministry here on September 1st of that year. Shortly after that I passed the requirements for Preliminary Fellowship with the credentialing body of the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. In Preliminary Fellowship, the requirement is that I pass three yearly renewals of my Fellowship. Each renewal consists of a self-evaluation, an evaluation by the Board of Trustees, and an evaluation by the Shared Ministry Team. I am grateful to those two groups for the hard work they put into the evaluation this year. I have passed the first two of the required three yearly renewals, in 2021 and 2022. The evaluations for the third and final renewal were submitted on February 1, 2023, and I expect to hear a reply from the Ministerial Fellowship Committee around May 1st. If the renewal is granted, my professional status will be "Minister in Full Fellowship," and I won't need to do the same renewal process any more.

To be clear, the ministerial fellowship process described above is separate from being ordained as a minister. The power to ordain ministers resides solely in the congregation, whereas the ministerial fellowship process involves a professional committee. This congregation, along with the Oberlin UU Fellowship of Oberlin, Ohio, ordained me as a UU minister in July 2020.

### *Professional and Spiritual Development*

This past year I was very active in pursuing professional development. Last summer I attended the Ministry Days conference which is the annual gathering and business meeting for the UU Ministers Association and takes place just before General Assembly. I was at Ministry Days and General Assembly in person in Portland, Oregon. I also attended the conference of the Association of UU Music Ministers in Ann Arbor, where I deepened my sense of song-leading and of integrating inspiring music into worship.

I serve as President of the regional chapter of the UU Ministers Association. This group includes ministers in the Heartland District: Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. We had our first in-person retreat since COVID this year, a three-day conference in Indiana that I attended and helped to plan.

### *Administration*

One of the areas of growth for me in my role here is in administration. As minister I am an ex-officio member of every team and committee, and I am the supervisor of the other paid employees which includes evaluations and hiring. The day to day routine of ministry involves paperwork and communication by email and phone. To improve my organizational, administrative, and supervisory skills, I attended a workshop in January. Appropriate administrative goals are part of my monthly and quarterly goals.

As a solo minister of a small congregation, contact with my fellow UU ministers is very important. I meet regularly with Rev. Eric Severson of the Midland UU Fellowship; he is the closest UU colleague and we are growing ways to collaborate between the two congregations. I meet monthly (online) with a group of UU ministers across Michigan. I meet almost every week with a specific group of UU ministers, a recovery group of those who identify with substance abuse, compulsive behavior disorders, and their family effects. As an alcoholic in recovery, this group is especially valuable for me.

For my spiritual development I maintain strong connections with two groups of the ManKind Project, and I began work with a spiritual life coach this year as well.

### *Worship and Rites of Passage*

Leading worship is a primary part of my responsibility here and one that I take joy in. I work with a dedicated Worship Team monthly to plan and reflect. We also had a retreat this year for deeper planning and training. I love working with different people as worship associates, and I am always open to the input and involvement of the congregation to make Sunday worship the best it can be. It is clear that hybrid worship using Zoom is here to stay, and I work with the Worship Team and the Technical Assistant to maintain the best quality that we can.

I was delighted to officiate two weddings in our sanctuary this year: Mark Meadows and Laurie (Rivera) Meadows were married in February; Manuel Prout and Katelynn (Davis) Prout were married in April. I was honored also to lead two memorial services. Don Rust passed away in November. Sue Jones, mother of Aaron Jones, was remembered in our sanctuary in June.

This year I led other ceremonies as well, such as dedicating the Board of Trustees to their work, welcoming new members, and honoring graduates. In addition to Sunday morning services, special services for Blue Holidays and Christmas Eve were held in December. Finally, we collaborated with the UU Fellowship of Midland for a series of three worship services in January and February.

### *Pastoral Care*

Along with worship, the other most important role in my ministry is pastoral care. In times of crisis, I am available to visit people in the hospital and on call for emergencies seven days a week. I offer pastoral counseling to anyone in the congregation—this is different from meeting with a licensed therapist or counselor, but can be helpful to process challenges and transitions in life.

Aside from times of crisis, my role as minister is to be in touch with all the members and friends of the congregation regularly. It is my intention and my goal to reach out regularly with an invitation to have a conversation over coffee or whatever. I don't always make time for this in spite of my best intentions; I welcome everyone in the congregation to contact me when the time is right to have lunch together or just set aside some time to talk. One on one conversations and connections are the life-blood of my ministry, and I enjoy the time spent in each one of these meetings.

Looking for ways to improve my pastoral care is one of the goals I'm working on; I want to be there when people need me and to offer the right amount and the right kind of listening called for in each situation.

### *Community Involvement and Social Justice*

I meet with a group of local clergy regularly and have attended worship at several local churches. I occasionally attend events at Central Michigan University and school board meetings of the Mount Pleasant School District. I also serve on the district's Sex Education Advisory Board as a clergy member.

I have been involved with the anti-racism task force at UUFCM all year, planning and attending about ten events related to Native American and African American race and culture. I also spent election day in Grand Rapids as a non-partisan poll monitor with two other UU ministers.

I am able to help both congregants and community members in financial need through the Minister's Discretionary Fund. This year I assisted more than a dozen people with needs ranging from rent assistance or an overnight hotel stay to food, clothing, and other needs. Sometimes people come into the building, sometimes they call on the phone, and sometimes they are referred from another community service agency. I always offer spiritual and emotional support as well as financial support in these situations. More than \$2,000 has been given in assistance through the Minister's Discretionary Fund this year, every dollar coming from donations from the congregation.

### *Governance*

As minister I am head of staff for the other paid employees of UUFCM. I attend all the Board meetings and meet often with UUFCM leaders, but I do not vote on Board business. Working with the Board this year, a major accomplishment was to re-write the supervision policy that governs hiring and supervision of paid staff.

### *Where we are as a congregation and a movement*

In spite of some ongoing risk, COVID has receded enough to allow more and more people to feel comfortable returning to Sunday worship (and other Fellowship events) in person. Recent months have seen an increase in attendance, including some new people coming to our gatherings. In March we welcomed eight new people who officially joined as members. I constantly remind myself and the existing members of the congregation that new people change us as much as we let them; we must be flexible enough to realize that we are new every time someone new arrives.

There are big things happening at the national level in Unitarian Universalism; this summer we will elect a new president and will consider a sweeping change to the language we use to express our values as a religious movement. This proposed change would replace the seven principles which have served for decades as the encapsulation of UU values. This is a big change which the whole congregation discussed at the annual retreat in January. Whatever happens in voting for the new statement of values, this congregation must continue to be clear about what is important to us; how do we define our beliefs and values, and how are we called to live them out in the world. Whatever the exact wording may be, it is some version of love, community, and justice that animates us, that draws us together, and that is the reason for this Fellowship to exist.

I am honored and blessed to serve as your minister for these past three and a half years, and I look forward to being part of your future.

With love and blessing,

~ Rev. Andrew Frantz, minister

## **Administrative Assistant's Report**

As administrative assistant, I assist the Board of Trustees, Minister, Team and committee members in carrying out administrative duties for the Fellowship. An average of 26.1 hours each month (July 2022-March 2023) was spent performing the following duties:

- Communicate regularly with Board President, Minister, and Team members
- Prepare and send out weekly eNews
- Maintain and update website
- Maintain online church calendars
- Maintain directory of members and friends, available on website and printed annually
- Maintain various email address lists (e.g., eNews, Members)
- Send out emails as requested and approved by President, Minister, or designee
- Design and produce brochures, flyers, annual reports, handbooks, mailing labels, digital forms, signs, and other documents
- Assist with online voting
- Maintain digital back-up system regularly
- Serve on the Communications Team
- Other duties as appropriate and requested

~ Kirsten Keeton



## Adult Religious Education Team Report

Team members: Jim Dealing, Jodi Fisher (chair), Joyce Henricks, Stacey Pattison, Debbie Reid (partial member during 2022-23).

The team planned and provided a variety of educational experiences since its May 2021 inception and first offering in June 2021. The goal of adult religious education is to provide events that engage a wide range of members and meet different members' needs for education. Programs must meet the UUFCM mission and the UU Seven Principles. Planned programs have been both multiple sessions/series and one-time programs. Topics ranged from religious in nature, to collaboration with other groups/committees, such as the Social Justice Coordinating Team. All offerings in the past year were offered through Zoom due to COVID concerns.

*The following is a list of educational events provided in this year:*

- April 26, 2022: Paganism - Annette Pratt
- June 2022- Field trip to the Ziibiwing Center
- October 29, 2022- Women's Empowerment Night, Stacey Pattison, Jodi Fisher
- March 2023- Judaism 101, Ricki Courlander and Steve Lifson

*The following is a list of educational events provided in this year:*

- April 2023: Three watch sessions of the 1619 Project cosponsored with the Social Justice Coordinating Committee and the Anti-Racism Task Force

*Other possible events:*

The Adult RE Committee has reached out to the membership for other ideas and members. We have reached out to a few individuals to attend our April 12, 2023 meeting. The team is grappling with future events, timing, etc. It was suggested in early 2023 that we offer programming quarterly or every six months to get better attendance. We're also considering programming that could be offered by individuals outside the team and congregation.

~ Jodi Fisher, Adult RE Committee Chair

## Building, Grounds, and Safety Team Report

Team members: Norma Bailey, Jerry Cavalieri, Daniel Davis, Kris Los, Jen Prout.

*Scheduled tasks completed:*

- Inspections of physical lift/elevator, AED unit, fire extinguishers, furnaces and air conditioners
- Contracts for lawn care, snow removal and inside building cleaning renewed
- Sprinkler system maintained – summer and fall
- Security light on Wisconsin Street entrance maintained to reflect daylight time changes
- Rain gutters and flat roof cleaned
- Ongoing maintenance tasks – furnace filters, smoke detectors, hoses in, lights replaced

*Other tasks accomplished:*

- Maintenance of outside of building completed by volunteers for each side of the building
- Had the Fellowship floors cleaned and waxed
- Trimmed the trees on the Wisconsin side of the building
- Rain barrel emptied, cleaned and stored
- Repaired the rain gutter in the kitchen area
- Edged the sidewalks
- Labeled circuits in fuse box
- Had new front doors installed and painted
- Maintained watering of two new trees to replace the ones on Wisconsin Street that the city had removed
- Finalized the safety plan for a possible intruder, purchased and placed kick sticks in all rooms, and redid laminated safety cards to include intruder procedures
- Had a DTE building assessment for heat
- Had sides of the front stairs blocked in for heat retention
- Had three clean-up days – one in the spring and two in the fall
- Had the two windows in the small bathrooms replaced

*Future tasks/plans for 2023-2024*

- Develop and train the safety team
- Have a practice tornado drill and intruder drill
- Install an emergency exit light over the door next to the kitchen
- Finish the repair of the rot on one of the front columns
- Replace the gutter covers on the high gutters on the north side of the building
- Caulk all the windows
- Block several openings in attic and basement to keep out as much air as possible
- Repair and/or replace large windows in the Fellowship Hall, nursery and Drew's office
- Replace a portion of the roof on the north side of the building
- Complete a folder with all building information – locations, explanations, etc.

~ Norma Bailey, Building and Grounds Team



## **Communications Coordinating Team Report**

Team members: Amy Voegel, Norma Bailey, Stacey Pattison, Terrie Robbie, Kirsten Keeton (non-voting member)

Each week, the eNews is compiled, reviewed, and published by the eNews sub-team so that it can be delivered to email recipients on Thursday morning. As soon as the eNews arrives, the Facebook sub-team gleans information that is then converted into a format that works on social media. Finally, content from the eNews and Facebook is connected to our church website.

We continued our work for the new website. Kirsten gave us instructions about what to include – few words and lots of visual. We communicated with the various teams who are providing her information necessary. We also reminded the teams to make sure that their content on our current website is up to date.

Our team also explored ways to expand our outreach through additional social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter, but there was little interest from the survey. Therefore, we focused our efforts on expanding both our Facebook Connections and our public Facebook outreach.

We developed five yard signs: potluck, sangha, pagan rituals, game night and movie night – to place outside with each event with the hope that passersby might check us out.

Since we returned to in-person gatherings, our team addressed the needs, concerns, and policies necessary for communication within our physical space. The Social Justice Coordinating Team took responsibility for the bulletin boards in the Fellowship Hall. We continued to work on how to make effective use of the TV monitor in the Fellowship Hall.

~ Norma Bailey, Communications Coordinating Team

## **Fellowship Life Coordinating Team Report**

Several important committees are combined under the heading of “Fellowship Life Coordinating Team” as a means to better support the functions of these related areas as well as provide more opportunity for collaboration. This team currently is comprised of membership, the Arms Around program (formerly the caring team), communications, and social fun.

This new administrative design continues as a work in process as we discern our way forward. Leadership and membership on this team are not limited – newcomers interested in serving on this multifaceted ministry team are most welcome! Contact Gisela Moffit or Laura McBride if you have questions or are interested in getting involved.

### ***Membership and Hospitality Report***

Our membership report this year reflects the continued melding of our hospitality ministry with membership services. Viewed as a continuum from initial welcome to engaged membership, it is fairly obvious how these fit together. Radical hospitality is an essential ministry of our fellowship, and its practice is integral to our growth together in community, virtually and otherwise. In spite of the limitations imposed on us because of COVID 19, we continued to reach out to newcomers and experienced our largest membership increase since our inception. A special thank you to Gisela Moffit for her dedicated service in the continually evolving role of Hospitality & Welcome team leader.

#### *Membership Goals That Support Board Goals:*

- To create a ministry of hospitality that is radically generous in the scope of its welcome to all who cross our threshold.
- To provide statistical data on visitor participation to the Board.
- To provide information and support to help interested people discern if our church community meets their personal spiritual needs.
- To offer *Welcome to UU* orientation classes monthly and *Path to Membership* workshops for anyone interested in deepening their understanding of Unitarian Universalism and/or pursuing membership in our Fellowship.
- To clearly outline the meaning and responsibilities of membership in the UUFCM.
- To help all members find their personal ministry through conversations, engagement in church activities, surveys, and trainings.
- To update the membership list with the UUA regularly and supply data by February 1 each year to renew our certification.

### *Accomplishments That Support Stated Goals:*

- Nearly every Sunday, visitors were virtually welcomed by Drew and Laura connected via the chat box. Inquiries were made regarding the eNews and/or welcome letters.
  - Visitors were encouraged during the opening of worship to join the coffee hour fellowship time following worship in person and/or virtually.
  - To facilitate communication and recognition of fellow congregants, color photos with captions of leaders of the congregation and their areas of responsibility continued to be updated on the east wall of the fellowship hall in an effort to give credit and to encourage newcomers to get involved as well.
  - In order to facilitate relationships to people outside of Sunday worship, a handout with all the social and small interest groups was developed and is available to anybody who is interested in deepening their connection to UUFCM.
  - A welcome letter was sent to all visitors who had signed in within a few days following their visit.
  - Visitors' email addresses were added to the eNews mailing list and other information entered into the fellowship's data base.
  - A follow-up process was implemented whereby someone contacts folks who have been absent from worship or fellowship activities for a time.
  - This was year #6 of our Pathway to Membership process. It is comprised of three steps: Welcome to UU Orientation class, Path to Membership workshop, and the New Member Ingathering ceremony. Thus far this year we have held in hybrid form:
    - Welcome to UU classes on the last Sundays of the month following worship.
    - A Pathway to Membership workshop.
    - A New Member Ingathering held in March 2023 for a total of 8 new members joining the UUFCM with current membership of 74!
- ~ Laura McBride and Gisela Moffit

### **Arms Around Report**

The *Arms Around* program is our congregational ministry of care. This is care provided in addition to the pastoral care offered by our minister. The members of the Arms Around team provide basic support in an effort to lessen the pain and stress on an individual or family going through a difficult time. This year they prepared and delivered meals, provided transportation for doctor appointments, and made visits in hospitals or homes. They also sent cards, made phone calls, and made themselves available during the time of healing.

This year also marked our eighth year of participation in the Isabella County Restoration House program. Partnered with St. John's Episcopal Church, volunteers made and served meals for the guests for two weeks. We thank the coordinator, Joyce Henricks, and the many volunteers for sharing their time, compassion, and delicious dishes with people in need.

~ Gisela Moffit

### **Social Fun Report**

After a long hiatus due to Covid, we started our popular First Friday Potlucks again. At 6:30 p.m. we gathered to celebrate the members and friends who had birthdays in that month and shared food and lively conversation. Many people stayed to play games after the meal. Thanks to Jen Prout who organized the events and to all the volunteers who provided a large variety of delicious dishes. There are great cooks and bakers among us!

We held our 2nd Annual UUFCM Picnic at the Rosebush Park on August 28th at 1:00. The weather was lovely, and everybody had a great time. We provided and grilled hamburgers and hotdogs including vegetarian options. The UUFCM also provided chips, beverages, all paper products and more, and we were also able to have the potluck component again. We purchased many supplies in bulk (at Costco) this year and still have all the paper products, dish soap, clean up supplies etc., put away for next year's picnic. We spent a total of \$490.00 that includes the park rental fee. For entertainment, we provided cornhole boards, ladder ball sets, ball mitts, softballs and kickballs. Even the young children had a great time using the park's swings and other equipment. The picnic lasted approximately two hours. 61 people attended which was up from 47 last year. Rev. Drew welcomed everybody and introduced the new Board members. He also described the various volunteer opportunities available

at the UUFCM and thanked the “Fun Trio” (Jen Prout, Kris Los, Annette Pratt) for all the hard work they put in to make the event another great success. The 3rd annual picnic will be again at the Rosebush Park tentatively on August 13, 2023.

On November 20th we brought back our in-person Harvest Feast! It was held at the library annex after the church service. We were able to set up the day before which is always a good thing. We used in-person volunteer sign up sheets again as well as asking for volunteers through the e-News. We had plenty of food and good company. There were approximately 65 people this year. If Covid stays away, the plan is to do it again in November of 2023.

The social highlight of our year was the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of our Charter with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Planning for the event started one and a half years ago and involved all the members of the Fellowship Life Coordinating Team plus Nancy White and Chris Bailey. A special thanks to Gisela Moffit who had the idea of the celebration and then kept everything organized and moving toward its success.

We tracked down earlier members and friends who had moved away and were able to send 138 invitations which included 48 former families. Several of the out-of-towners attended the celebration, and we had a chance to reconnect and get updated.

On Saturday, March 18 from 4 – 7 p.m., we had a festive party with delicious hors d’oeuvres, sweet treats, and a variety of drinks. Laura McBride and David Macleod were the emcees of a wonderful program in which we looked back to our past with its ups and downs and our challenges in the future as we aspire to continue to grow by deepening our relationships and strengthening our commitments to our mission. We want to thank Chris Bailey who helped design and script the program and Nancy White who produced the PowerPoint program about our history as well as the trivia game. Our thanks go also to our speakers: Dawn Daniels, Rev. Dr. Lisa Presley, and Rev. Drew and our story/song/poem performers: Felix Jones, Stacey Pattison, Annette Pratt, Guy Newland and Zoe Jackson, and Mary Irvin.

On Sunday, March 19, our special service included Rev. Dr. Lisa Presley as guest speaker and the premiere of the UUFCM “Celebration Anthem” which we had commissioned Dr. David Wolfson, composer from NYC, to write. Under the leadership of Norma Bailey, the choir sang beautifully as they had done the previous Sunday, when they sang the “7 Principles,” also by Dr. Wolfson, which we had commissioned a few years ago. Accompanied by Beth Macleod on the piano, it was a feast for our souls.

Last, but not least, a big thank you for all the volunteers who made the weekend a great success! We had 19 volunteers setting up and taking down the tables, chairs, etc., in the library annex and in the fellowship hall; we also had 21 volunteers who provided the delicious dishes. With gratitude and admiration, we thank Jennifer Prout and Annette Pratt for chairing the party and the celebration after the Sunday service.

~ Jen Prout

## **Shared Ministry Team Report**

Team members: Betty McBride (through June 30, 2023), Jen Prout (through June 30, 2023), Jennifer Davis (through June 30, 2024), Joyce Henricks (through June 30, 2024), Rev. Drew Frantz

### *Meetings*

The Shared Ministry Team met monthly, beginning in August, with a special joint meeting including the Board of Trustees in February.

### *Three purposes*

First, the Shared Ministry Team is charged with evaluating the ministries of the Fellowship. This includes the work of the minister. It also includes any work that others in the Fellowship do: the Board has a ministry of service to the Fellowship; the Worship Team has a ministry of providing quality worship; the Youth Religious Education program has a ministry of providing a safe educational and spiritual environment for children. Everything within the Fellowship can be considered a ministry of the Fellowship and therefore is under consideration when the Shared Ministry Team meets to assess the health of the Fellowship.

Second, the Shared Ministry Team has a specific role in advising and supporting the minister.

Third and finally, the Shared Ministry Team is charged with conflict resolution within the Fellowship—working with the minister in this role.

### *Highlights of our work this year*

- At every meeting the Team discussed the overall state of the Fellowship, including what is going well and any concerns.
- We considered the ways in which Zoom attendees and in-person attendees could be more integrated instead of feeling like two separate congregations.
- We discussed one conflict between members, and Rev. Drew had follow-up meetings with two people involved.
- One member of this Team, Jen Prout, joined Elaine Emerick and Cynthia Damer to form an Accessibility Team to consider wheelchair access to the building.
- The Team supported Rev. Drew in a goal of improving administrative skills, including publishing office hours in order to be more accessible. Drew's office hours are now in -person and on Zoom, published in the order of service and on the website and in the e-News.
- The Team completed a major yearly evaluation of the minister in January and met with the Board of Trustees (who did a parallel evaluation) and Drew in February to discuss the evaluation, strengths and challenges, and steps forward.
- Beginning in March, the Team is doing a monthly review of Rev. Drew's progress on stated goals for professional development.
  - ~ Rev. Andrew Frantz, minister

### **Social Justice Coordinating Team**

Team members: Norma Bailey, Jennifer Davis, Gisela Moffit, Debbie Reid, Karen Turnbull, Katie Zapoluch

The UUFCM has been involved in a variety of community service and social justice activities over the course of the 2021-2022 church year as noted below.

#### *Our congregation served others through:*

- Arms Around Committee: our committee to help those in need within our congregation (meals, household help, driving, etc.). Several individuals and families were served by a number of volunteers this year.
- Isabella County Restoration House (ICRH): a number of members and friends volunteered by preparing and serving meals at St. John's Episcopal Church for two weeks. One member also served on the Board of Directors of ICRH.

#### *UUFCM educated and served ourselves and the greater community through:*

- We made sure that the various diversity events on CMU's campus (ex., Black History Month, Women's History Month, etc.) were posted in the eNews each week.
- We planned and implemented a schedule for plate collections for local agencies for the 2022-2023 year. In the July 2021-June 2022 year, our congregation donated \$3,643.
- One individual served on the Board of Directors of the Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network (MUUSJN).
- Throughout the year, people were contacted with action alerts according to their interests in social justice issues.
- Two Social Justice Coordinating Team members served on the coordinating committee of the Community Action Dialogue on Black Lives Matter which provided meetings of the action group on Police Oversight.
- Several members tabled at the farmers' market gathering signatures for two statewide proposals on voting rights and reproductive rights. As well, other members passed petitions around to their family members and friends.
- We coordinated the UUSC Guest at Your Table program at the Harvest Feast on November 20.
- We organized congregants to march in the CMU-sponsored MLK Peace March and Vigil behind our UUFCM banner.

- Co-sponsored with the Adult RE Team and the Anti-Racism Task Force, in April we presented three Friday night sessions of The 1619 Project Docu-Series. The Hulu video series examines how the legacy of slavery shaped different aspects of contemporary American life.
- We developed and implemented a year-long “Share Your Soles” campaign to collect shoes/boots/etc. for Clothing, INC in support of our 20th year anniversary celebration, collecting 500 pairs to donate!

*UUFCM has donated to help others through:*

- Fair Share Contributions to UUA and Mid-America Region - \$5,411
  - Guest at Your Table program for the UUSC (UU Service Committee) - \$469
  - Plate collection for MUUSJN - \$100
  - Provided holiday gift for a guest at the ICRH homeless shelter
  - Collecting donations on the 1st Sunday of every month to donate to the local Infant Pantry
  - Social Justice Coordinating Team coordination of monthly special plate collections to donate to support the work of various agencies (through March):
    - Discretionary Fund (for minister for local requests) - \$266
    - The Care Store - \$86
    - The Food Pantry - \$8
    - CMU Student Food Pantry - \$171
    - ICRH - \$136
    - R.I.S.E. - \$110
- ~ Norma Bailey, Social Justice Coordinating Team

## **Worship Team Report**

Team members: Rev. Drew Frantz, Norma Bailey, Laura McBride, Annette Pratt, and Jessica Jernigan. Director of Religious Education Jakobe Neal and Technical Assistant Claire Lester attended some of the meetings.

The team developed the liturgical calendar for the year through August – ministered services, lay-led services, and multigenerational services. At each meeting, themes and topics were discussed and lay leaders and worship associates were suggested. This year, ideas for music and Stories for All Ages were suggested in a separate monthly meeting of Drew, Norma, and Jakobe. All services were planned and led by Drew, except for the following:

- June 26 – General Assembly (GA) worship service
- July 3 – Norma Bailey (sermon from MidAmerica Region)
- July 10 – Annette Pratt (sermon from MidAmerica Region)
- July 17 – Norma Bailey (sermon from MidAmerica Region)
- August 14 – Norma Bailey (sermon from MidAmerica Region)
- September 4 – Laura McBride (sermon from MidAmerica Region)
- October 2 – Norma Bailey
- October 16 – Norma Bailey (sermon from MidAmerica Region)
- November 27 – Brigitte Bechtold
- December 4 – Laura McBride
- January 1 – Ricky Courlander
- January 29 – Rev. Eric Severson
- February 19 – Jessica Jernigan
- March 26 – Guy Newland
- April 2 – Joyce Henricks
- April 30 – Central Michigan Sangha

Multigenerational services were provided on September 11 (Water Ingathering), December 25 (“Christmas Service in a Box”), January 15 (Martin Luther King Day), all co-planned and delivered by Drew and Jakobe. We continued the involvement of the children in the multigenerational services now that we are in person for the worship services.

Drew offered two special services in December: a Blue Christmas service to support those for whom the holidays are difficult, and a traditional Christmas Eve service.

A series of three services in January and February featured a collaboration between Drew and Rev. Eric Severson of the UU Fellowship of Midland, reflecting on the



proposed changes to the seven principles and the connection between the Mount Pleasant and Midland congregations.

Our worship services throughout this year were hybrid (on-line and in-person). Over the course of the year, we moved from people having to sign up to attend in person to anyone can attend in person as long as they are vaccinated (or exempt). The services through the Zoom platform were led by Drew and supported by a technical assistant (Claire Lester) that we hired in March 2022. Annette Pratt and Monica Jean volunteered to run the OWL program to allow for the hybrid services and did an excellent job when Claire was not available. Additional volunteer technical assistants served as Zoom hosts for the 10:00-10:30 social gathering before the start of the service – Mary Alsager, Chris Bailey, Elaine Emerick, Roxanne Fleer, Joyce Henricks, Kirsten King, and Laura McBride. Based on recommendations from the Coronavirus Task Force and approved by the Board, we continue with hybrid services, modifying the guidelines when necessary (for example, singing is now allowed without masks).

As gathering together for conversation after service is important to us, we started with lemonade outside for a social time after the service and then resumed coffee hour once the weather turned cold.

In order to get feedback from the congregation about their worship experience, whether in-person or on Zoom, we surveyed the members and friends of the Fellowship and are now reviewing the data from the survey results.

Recognizing that our future will be hybrid worship services to serve those who wish to worship in person and those who value the online capacity to worship, led by Drew, we will continue to provide high-quality worship services supported by our technical assistant and volunteers who serve as Zoom hosts and worship associates. We continue to expand the number of people who serve in these capacities.

~ Norma Bailey, Worship Team

## **Youth Religious Education Team Report**

Team members: Jakobe Neal (Director of Religious Education), Cynthia Damer (Team Leader & Board Representative), Carla Jensen (Secretary), Mel Bailey (Team Member), Monica Jean Atkins (Team Member), and Katherine Stillson (Nursery Teacher). Roxanne Fleer (Team Member) has recently stepped down. Jennifer Kennedy stepped down as Team Leader in August of 2022. Carol Rard was Team Leader in October and November. Cynthia Damer became Team Leader in January. Jakobe Neal acted as Team Leader during the times we did not have a Team Leader.

### *Transitioning from Online to In-Person Sunday RE*

In March of 2022, we transitioned from a virtual only RE class, to a hybrid format where children who were vaccinated and masked could attend class in person, along with children online. The hybrid RE classes were taught by Jakobe Neal with the help of a volunteer and were geared toward 1st-5th graders. We had very few children attending the virtual and hybrid classes.

### *Summer Sunday RE*

In the summer, we held in-person RE class on Sunday mornings, taught by two volunteers. These classes were more activity-based than curriculum. We had very few children attending the summer classes.

### *September 2022- March 2023*

We started the new school year with the annual RE Kick-Off Party with games and food after service. Since then, we have hosted several events at the fellowship for our youth. All of the events have been well-attended with most of the children of our congregation participating. We had a pumpkin carving/painting party in October, holiday cookie decorating party in December, holiday caroling in December, and a pizza-making party in February. For the Sunday RE classes, Jakobe is using the Soul Matters Curriculum, which coincides with the topics covered in worship.

### *Nursery Room Hires*

In a positive step forward for our Youth RE Program, we now have the nursery room available on Sunday mornings. To help with this transition, we hired two new childcare workers, so that we would not have to rely on a large number of volunteers. A hiring committee made up of Rev. Drew Frantz, Jakobe Neal (DRE), Carla Jensen (RE Team secretary), and Norma Bailey (long time member and former RE Team member) took on the task of hiring additional RE staff to support the reopening of the Nursery. During November 2022, the hiring committee with the



approval of the Board moved to hire Katherine Stillson as Lead Nursery Teacher and Jolie Damer-Daigle as Religious Education Assistant.

With these two new hires, the RE Team has been able to keep open two classrooms simultaneously starting in January 2023, one for nursery-aged children and the other for elementary-aged children. This has allowed for age appropriate opportunities for the youth, and created a pattern of consistent attendance for many children. We hope to continue to expand on these opportunities and have more children participate in Youth RE in the future.

#### Closing Statement

We are excited to be able to offer two RE classes on Sunday mornings now and hope that we will continue to see more consistent attendance. One of the Youth RE Team's goals is to continue to create new opportunities that allow children of all ages, including middle and high school students, in the congregation to get involved in our fellowship.

~ Jakobe Neal, Director of Religious Education and Youth Religious Education Team

## Stewardship Committee Report

Committee members: Mary Alsager, Norma Bailey, Rev. Drew Frantz, Gisela Moffit, Darlene Ritchie, Amy Voege

The committee identified this year's theme as "Deepening Connections," with the ideas that we are one congregation in two different spaces, yet we are all part of one community – oldies and newbies – and that we strive to deepen our connections in multiple ways. We also created a visual representing our theme which was included every week in the eNews with an update of how we were doing each week.

We also developed two kinds of incentives – one to encourage people to turn their pledges in early and a second to encourage people to increase their giving. The first involved raffle tickets and prizes to be earned while the second involved joining a "Moving Up Club" to be invited to a special event acknowledging their extra giving.

We identified a list of members and friends from whom pledges might be expected and surface mailed to each household a packet of material including a letter reflecting on our connections, our proposed budget, our incentive plans, and a pledge form and volunteer form. We also announced the stewardship drive in the eNews and during worship services.

We identified four members to give testimonials during worship; they spoke about their reasons for giving on four consecutive Sundays (March 26, and April 2, 9, and 16). We heard testimonials from Aaron Jones, Darlene Ritchie, Helenan Cavalieri, and Monica Jean. Rev. Drew gave his Stewardship sermon on April 16 preceding the official end of the stewardship drive on April 23.

Once the stewardship drive ended officially, we made phone calls to those members who hadn't yet made a pledge so that we could report to the Board at their May meeting the final result before the May 21 annual meeting.

~ Norma Bailey, Stewardship Chair

## Coronavirus Task Force Report

Team members: Steve Gellman, Penny Swart, Laura McBride, Rev. Drew Frantz, Jodi Brookins-Fisher

**All of our members have a connection with medicine and/or public health, except for the minister and the Board liaison.**

### *Purpose and meetings*

The COVID task force is advisory to the Board of Trustees. We meet regularly and usually do the following:

- Share information about the current state of coronavirus and other communicable diseases. The information is usually from public sources, including The Bridge Michigan which tracks COVID cases and deaths; and also any first-hand knowledge about local health conditions. While COVID is a primary concern, we also consider the threat from flu, monkeypox, and other diseases.
- Review current state of policies at UUFCM and current trends at UUFCM—for example, how many people are coming in person and on line? . . . are people wearing masks?
- Recommend changes, if any, to the UUFCM policies. If changes are recommended, the board of trustees votes to approve them (or not) at their next meeting.

For much of the year we were meeting twice per month, with the idea that COVID conditions could change rapidly and we wanted to be nimble. In recent months, with COVID at very low levels, we changed to meeting once per month.

### *Philosophy*

We are committed to the idea that immunization saves lives and that everyone should get COVID shots, COVID shots, and flu shots unless a doctor recommends against it for that person.

We have always had a stance, however, of an honor system: we are not asking for proof of vaccination from people who attend UUFCM events and we are not asking questions about whether someone is vaccinated or not. The wording of our policy is that you must be vaccinated unless exempt – and the practice is that only you know if you are exempt.

In our decision-making, we seek to balance the risk of communicable diseases—which will never be zero—with the benefit of gathering in person for worship and other UUFCM events.

### *Key recommendations this year*

July: recommend making masks optional at UUFCM events—still required for singing

August: added Monkeypox to our agenda for tracking

November: affirmed the immunization policy, including the honor system, as it applies to the Harvest Feast

February: flu and COVID risks are currently low. Recommend relaxing the masks for singing rule. Move to meeting once per month instead of twice.

~ Rev. Andrew Frantz, minister

**The UUFCM Mission:**

*We are a religious community guided by love,  
transforming our lives and our world.*