

Annual Meeting – Universalist Unitarian Church of East Liberty

May 18, 2008

Agenda

Opening Kerry Hart, Board President

1. Minister's Report, Dr. Rev. Cynthia Landrum
2. Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes - May 6th 2007
3. Treasurer's Report, Steve Beison
4. Approval of 2008-2009 Budget
5. Annual Report of the Trust Fund, Victor Marshall
6. Approval of Board of Trustees Nominees
7. Approval of delegates to General Assembly
8. Selection of Agencies to Receive Financial Support in 08-09
9. Receiving of Board, Staff and Committee Reports

Adjourn

Annual Report from the Minister
Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Landrum
Universalist Unitarian Church of East Liberty
2007-2008

Without a big initiative started this year, such as the forums, and without a major event to celebrate, like the sesquicentennial, and without hosting a large conference, like the MUUSJN conference last year, I thought this would be a quiet year, in comparison to the last few. But, my goodness, we managed to fill it up!

Ministry in the Church

Worship – More of my time goes to worship than about any other activity of the church, which is not surprising, I am sure. I spend about 10 hours a week on worship. I usually preach 31 services per year, as my agreement with the church is for 30, but I add the one for auction. This year I will have only preached 30, as one of my Sundays got dropped when we moved the holiday pageant, since the Sunday it was originally scheduled for was cancelled due to weather. This year, however, I have been a little less present, since I did two pulpit exchanges, one of which was a round-robin exchange between several different UU ministers in the Eastern half of Michigan. We're hoping to do that again next year. I started the church year with a summer sermon series on four "Spiritual Types." Some of my other favorite sermons have been on Humanism, the Big Read (*Bless Me, Ultima*), Respect, and, of course, the auction sermon on Forgiveness. I always enjoy the topics that are suggested to me for the auction sermon, but I also love it when, at other times, members share the questions they would like to hear preached on with me. The sermon on the Souls of Animals came from a member who gave me several articles she had read on the subject, over the course of a year, until I finally decided to take the topic up and fit in into the schedule!

Religious Education – The major ways I participate in our **lifespan religious education** program is through **adult religious education** and **intergenerational worship**. I do, however, try to go to the children's religious education classes on some of my "off" Sundays, and I was also involved in some of the **Peace Camp** we held last summer at St. John's UCC. The major adult RE offering this year was one that Sharon and I have been co-leading and which will continue into the fall. This is a program on racial diversity titled "**Building the World We Dream About**" which we are test-piloting for the UUA. We've had a steady group of attendees, and we've made some fun changes to the curriculum in response to opportunities that have come up in the community, such as the speech on racism given by Barack Obama, and programs that were part of the "Big Read." This year Sharon and I also started investigating the possibility of a future "**interfaith youth group**" in our community, and Sharon went with some of our youth to an interfaith play in Ann Arbor at the UU church. Meanwhile, I've talked

with religious leaders in different religions and been reading Eboo Patel's work about the creation of the Interfaith Youth Core in Chicago. We have yet to launch a youth group, as the response to the Ann Arbor event was not strong from other faiths, but we're still keeping possibilities open for the future.

Rites of Passage – One of the most difficult aspects of ministry and one of the most rewarding is rites of passage—**funerals** and **memorials, weddings** and **child dedications**. This year we honored the passing of Monty Myers, son to members Doug and Sharon Myers, and Virginia Smith, mother to former member Bob Lewis. I was honored to lead the services for both of them. Friend of the congregation Joe Collins also died this year, but, as he was a member of another congregation, I was not directly involved in his funeral, although I attended the funeral mass. As for weddings, I usually only have a couple of weddings per year here, and this year proved no exception. This year, however, in response to the work I was doing with the Marriage Matters initiative at the United Way, I went through Prepare/Enrich training, a training program for performing pre-marital counseling. I've used the program with one couple now, and believe it is very worthwhile.

Pastoral Care – One of the most important things I do as minister is pastoral care, and I couldn't do it without the members of **the Caring Committee**. Nena Obits took the leadership of the Caring Committee this year, and did a wonderful job. In the spring, she and I, along with Mindy Radsek, attended a **team training** in Detroit. I rely on the wonderful members of the Caring Committee to be my eyes and ears in the congregation, letting me know what's going on. I also rely on them to be helping hands and caring hearts, helping me in the work of pastoral care. There are many situations that have happened this year where I may have not personally responded, but I was hearing updates through the Caring Committee members. While I cannot share with you here individual stories, I will take this moment to remind you that, while we do have these members, sometimes I do not hear of a situation right away, and, too, I am often somewhat reluctant to call until I hear that a call is desired. Don't be shy about calling me and asking me for a visit or a conversation—I'll be grateful to you that you did!

Outreach – The Outreach Committee did a great job this year with many commUnity forUms which were well-attended. I was involved in coordinating several forums, including the one on domestic violence in December, the one on Healthcare in January, the one on adoption in February, and the one with PFLAG in May. For the Big Read forum, I did not coordinate the forum but I went to many of the Big Read meetings at the library to help coordinate the church's other Big Read activities. Starting in 2008, I worked with the Membership Committee and Outreach Committee to start advertising church events at the forum and to have church events related to the forums each month. We had a sermon on Healthcare following the Healthcare forum, an adoption potluck after the adoption forum, and several social events following the "Entertaining Ourselves to Death" forum. The Big Read sermon was earlier in the month than the forum, but we advertised it the month before. We paid more attention to advertising forums this year, and early in the year, I was on JTV as part of advertising for our forums. Next year's forums are still in the works, but I do know

that we have one on Islam that we're hoping to hold in the fall, and that we'll probably do another Big Read one, as well.

Membership – As the Membership Committee can tell you, this was a good year for new members. We had a couple new committee members, and a change of the registrar's role to Paul Bowen. We also created policies that will serve us well in the future. In conjunction with Membership Committee, I lead periodic “**New UU**” classes for visitors and new members. One of the fun things that the Membership Committee does is make sure there are social events every month at the church. One that I organized which was well attended was the **Hungarian Dinner**. I'm hoping we'll hold another one in the fall, as many people asked when we were doing it again. A new on-going social event is our monthly **Craft Day**, hosted by my mother, Caroline Landrum.

Growth – Our **growth committee** is one of our committees that does not have a chairperson, so I will report on it in a little more detail. We started the committee this year and had several meetings about growth which resulted in our hiring the district **growth consultant**, the Rev. Linda Eppert, to lead us in a workshop. About ten members attended the workshop, including some board members (Kerry Hart, Steve Beison), growth committee members (Sharon Pedersen, Mindy Radsek, Marge Duane), membership committee members (Kathy Haynes, Joan Bernstein), and a few other interested members (Tom Pepper, Paul Jenkins, Steve Kish), and, of course, myself. Linda Eppert used a process of “Appreciative Inquiry” and helped us talk about our strongest values in the church. She also named two practical concerns for growth—signage and space. In the appreciative inquiry process we focused on our values and strengths as a congregation, a process that the board used to focus the “value meal” discussions for our annual pledge drive.

Committee on Ministry – The Committee on Ministry (Ministerial Relations Committee) is a little-known committee of three members that functions without a chair, so I will tell you a little more about it here. This year Paul Bowen joined other members Becky Bowen and Phyllis Myers on the committee. The committee serves to nurture the ministry of the church in all its forms, and to help me with any conflicts or questions about my ministry or the church's ministry that arise. Members are selected by the board from a slate of nominees that I provide. Next year, this committee will be focusing on how to evaluate the ministry of the church, and my ministry as a part of that.

Publicity – While I don't do things specifically for the press coverage, it's certainly a goal to get our name out into the community more. This year I had a letter to the editor about Planned Parenthood, an article about a Harry Potter sermon, a mention in an article about Peace Camp, a quote in an article about health care, and an appearance on JTV about forums. Our church and members were mentioned even more. Much of this coverage of our events is owed to Sharon Pedersen, who with her volunteer hat on does most of our press releases. Sharon and I staffed a table together to display our information at the Jackson Interfaith Peacekeepers convocation, as well.

Fundraising – We had some really large fundraisers this year. Special thanks are due to those who helped with all of them. The **pig roast**, the sale of the **boat**, the **harvest sale**, and the **auction** were the largest ones, and it took many people to make these happen (as it will for the upcoming **rummage** sale). We also had smaller ones, such as **Nomad gift cards, lunches** and **brunches**, and others. Many thanks, too, to the groups, and sometimes individuals, who took these on. I also created a small but on-going fundraiser through a link on our website to **Amazon.com**. Next year we'll need to do even more fundraisers, so if you have a great idea, please share it with the board, myself, or the Membership Committee (which handles the calendar schedule).

Administration – One of the hidden jobs of a minister is administration. This always takes up a certain amount of time, just in dealing with mail, phone calls, e-mails, filing, staff management, policy creation, and other tasks that I do behind-the-scenes. In a small church, such as ours, without support staff like a church administrator, church secretary, and other support staff, more of these things tend to fall on the minister's shoulders. This year, I took on one large task that added to the administration work of the church, which was redeveloping the **website**. I worked on it part-time for several months, going through about six drafts of the 30 individual pages before we finally declared it done enough to put up. Vicki Haynes took a number of wonderful photographs for the site, and my father, Bill Landrum, worked behind the scenes setting up software and connections for me, and teaching me HTML code. One thing led to another, and now we're trying to put sermons on the web on a regular basis in **mp3** format, so that members who cannot get to church can hear the sermons. Because of copyright rules and privacy reasons, we cannot put the whole worship service on the web, but we're hoping that this will be a valuable connection to the church for those members who are not able to get to church regularly. We haven't worked out all the details of a system like this, but it's something that we're currently looking into.

Ministry in the Community

Social Mission – I haven't done as much this year directly on our church's social mission as I would like, but individual efforts are flourishing, such as the **graduating foster youth assistance program** and the **Brooklyn Food Pantry**. We have not yet moved forward on **partner church** issues, but I hope to do more next year. Meanwhile, we have the money raised by the **Hungarian Dinner** to put towards efforts in that direction. Also, there are many things going on with agencies that we have voted to support, such as **Planned Parenthood, Jackson Interfaith Peacekeepers**, and others, some of which I have been involved in.

Healthcare Ballot Initiative – I was invited to speak at a press conference announcing a ballot initiative that would require the Michigan legislature to "make sure that every Michigan resident has affordable and comprehensive healthcare coverage through a fair and cost-effective financing system." I was quoted in the Citizen Patriot in an article about this press conference. I helped connect the state-wide initiative to local advocates, and also used those

connections for our healthcare forum. It was exciting to be able to tell all of them that our church passed a resolution in favor of the ballot initiative!

Family Services and Children's Aid – This year I was invited to join the board of Family Services and Children's Aid. I discussed this with our board, and they encouraged me to do it. The FSCA board meetings on Mondays, so in exchange I try to take a little time off during the following week, as Mondays is my usual day off. So far, my involvement as a board member has been minimal, but it has been a learning experience for me.

PFLAG – I was not as involved in PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbian and Gays) as I have been in past years. However, I was very honored to be nominated for one of their annual advocacy awards. I didn't win, but I was up against wonderful people such as the Rev. Julie Nemecek, and it was an honor to be nominated in the same group. Another of our members, Kerry Hart, was also a nominee this year. I've been attending PFLAG more again in the last couple of months, and have made many wonderful connections there, such as the opportunity to do a forum with PFLAG for our May forum.

Marriage Matters – When the "**Marriage Matters**" initiative at the United Way began some time ago, a couple of PFLAG members asked me to attend the dinner with them that launched the initiative. I joined the Marriage Matters committee, and stayed on for quite some time, but this year I felt that I was no longer effective and the committee was going in a direction I was not interested in, creating marriage resources primarily for the middle class, with prices for events too high for many people to attend. I did, however, go on the subcommittee that was focused on the "**Community Marriage Policy**" (CMP), as this would be a document they would be asking all local clergy to sign about supporting marriage through pre-marital counseling and/or waiting periods. I attended that group until a few months ago, when I also dropped off of it. The CMP group had insisted on having in the document that marriage was only between a man and a woman, and I felt this was not a document that I could possibly support. It also said that marriage is an institution ordained by God. They have a secondary "secular" document for supporters in the community that I may be able to sign, but have not rushed to do so. I am also pleased that other clergy have told me privately that they also will not sign a statement that includes that marriage is only between one man and one woman.

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative – This year we had a large controversy in our community when the **United Way** pulled money from a **Planned Parenthood** program, due to pressure from Pro-Life organizations and community members. Our church has voted to support Planned Parenthood as an organization. I contacted some of our members when I heard that this was likely to happen, and many of our members wrote letters to the United Way and to the paper, including myself. I was also mentioned in a list of supportive clergy in a letter by the Rev. Jay Cummings of St. John's UCC. Following that, I did not pursue the issue further, as I believed what we have to offer did not match what they were looking for, and I was waiting to hear the plan they were announcing in the late winter. After that program, which I attended and a couple other of our members attended, it was unclear to me that there was still that money pulled

from Planned Parenthood left to be allocated. However, after a recent conversation with one of **the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative** (TPPI) leaders, it was made clear to me that there is still money available for sexuality education in the community. I am interested in having our church write a proposal for using the UUA/UCC curriculum "**Our Whole Lives**" (OWL) in the community, but we need to have a core group of people interested in this. I have approached three churches, First Congregational, Arbor Grove Congregational, and St. John's UCC about this, and so far St. John's is the only one that may be interested. Michelle White of the TPPI is willing to come talk with our congregation to explain the TPPI and talk with us about grant opportunities.

Interfaith Group – For a few years I have been attending, off and on, an interfaith forum held on third Sundays at the downtown Jackson Spring Arbor University location. This has been a great place to meet members of the interfaith community, who I have worked with at various times on other interfaith efforts. This year I presented in September during their views on the afterlife series on "**UU views of the afterlife.**" It was a hard thing to encapsulate our many different views! A highlight of the year was the annual Interfaith picnic. Also, for the second year in a row, I enjoyed attending the Eid celebration that the Muslim Association holds.

Local Clergy Groups – There are several local clergy groups in the Jackson area. I am a member of the **Jackson Area Ministerial Association** (JAMA) and a **women clergy group**. I usually host JAMA at least once a year, as I did this year, and I also hosted the women clergy group. JAMA usually does the Thanksgiving Eve service along with the South East Ministerial Association (SEMA), and in the past I have participated. This year I planned to not attend, as last year it had become clear that it was not an interfaith event, however, this year SEMA withdrew from the planning, which meant that interfaith participation was more welcome, so I did attend, although there was not enough time to organize interfaith participation. This year the women clergy group had the sad loss of the Rev. Dr. Linda Hollies of Calvary United Methodist, who died suddenly. She had been a primary motivator for last year's "Bodacious Women Celebration," and without her presence, that idea lost some steam. However, we did celebrate Women's History Month with a Big Read event on "**Re-Membering Our Grandmothers**", which I and a few of the other women clergy led at First Baptist Church.

Jackson BPW – Last year I joined the Jackson Business and Professional Women, but this year I attended much less frequently, and have let my membership lapse. I did, however, attend their holiday parties and had a good time. I did make some good connections at BPW, which has led to some things, such as being on the board at Family Services & Children's Aid.

Big Read – Many of the events mentioned elsewhere in this article came together as part of the Big Read program in March, focused on the book *Bless Me, Ultima*: a sermon, book discussion group, clergy women event, adult RE outing, and a forum. I'm looking forward to next year's Big Read on *The Grapes of Wrath*, and have purchased the DVD of the movie for us to watch.

Other Conversations in the Community – There are a number of interesting conversations, groups, and initiatives that I've been involved in this year. I met with **Mary Jo Grogan** a couple of times, for example, to talk about ideas involving arts, youth, interfaith, peace, environment, and much more. I had an **interview with a seminarian** who asked me questions about our beliefs, structure, and activities. I met with the **Liberty Extension** group and presented to them on my trip to Romania. At **Albion College**, I was the guest presenter at a luncheon group of students who are interested in becoming ministers. I also attended "**The Bridge**," a day-long conference for area religious leaders at Albion College. The goal is to make area religious organizations feel like "spiritual partners" of Albion College.

The Larger Ministry

Michigan UU Social Justice Network – This year I attended the Michigan UU Social Justice Network's fall conference, along with Sharon Pedersen. The MUUSJN is very involved in some of the issues we've been working on, as well, such as healthcare, and has been a good connection to have for some of these.

UUMA – This year for the Unitarian Universalist Minister's Association Heartland District chapter, I took on the role of "**arrangements**." This means that I was responsible for getting reservations from the ministers, making room and food arrangements, and providing things like directions and nametags. It's a two-year position, and it took some work to do at first, but I think I've made good improvements for next year. Because of the arrangements position, even with limited professional expenses this year, I put the UUMA meetings in the fall at **Grailville** in Loveland, Ohio, and in the winter at **Pokagon** State Park near Angola, Indiana at the top of my list of things to attend. I will not be attending the annual national UUMA meeting that precedes General Assembly this year, but hope to attend next year. The following year is the **UUMA convocation** that happens only every five years, and I also hope to be able to save some money out of next year's professional expenses to allow me to attend "convo." On months that we do not have a district-wide meeting, we have **cluster meetings**, and I attend the Eastern Michigan cluster, which meets on the first Wednesday of the month in Flint. This year I have been carpooling with either a minister from Ann Arbor or one from Lansing, in order to save gas and mileage.

Heartland District and the Unitarian Universalist Association – This year, I would say, our district and denomination were of particular help to us. Our district enabled us to get a district growth consultant (they paid her fee, we paid only mileage). Our UUA, this year, launched a major advertising campaign, where they created a video, "**Voices of a Liberal Faith**," that we got a copy of (which you can see on our website), and placed ads in **Time Magazine**. This is advertising coverage that we, at a local level, could never hope to achieve, but which we benefit from. The latest ad in Time Magazine came out in the Time 100 issue on May 12, 2008. Our district and denomination are also of help to me behind the scenes, as I contact them for information on a regular basis, or search our UUA website (which I do weekly, at least).

Sabbatical - My letter of agreement states "Sabbatical leave accrues at the rate of one month per year of service, with leave to be taken after five but before eight years of service." Next year will be my 5th year at UUCEL. In the fall, I plan to form a sabbatical committee to explore whether or not I will take my sabbatical the following church year (2009-2010). Once the date for sabbatical is decided, the committee will work to ensure that the church has adequate coverage during my sabbatical and that members are informed about details.

Growth in Ministry

Continuing Education – This year I had less money for continuing education and professional expenses, due to borrowing against it for my Transylvania trip last year and the rising mileage rate due to gas prices, so I didn't go to some usual things, such as my minister's study group in Ohio, Ohio River Group, or the District Annual Meeting or General Assembly. Instead, I made use of what funds I had in more local ways. I had four great continuing education opportunities this year. First, I did the **Prepare/Enrich** training that I mentioned under "Rites of Passage." Second, I attended the **Jesus Seminar** that was hosted at Arbor Grove Congregational Church. Finally, I attended the **Dalai Lama's** lectures on "**Engaging Wisdom and Compassion**" in Ann Arbor. Thanks to some help from continuing education funds from the UUA, I was also able to attend the **Meadville Lombard Winter Institute** in Chicago on "**Can We Build the Beloved Community Through Political Action?**" with Dr. Melissa Harris-Lacewell of Princeton and Rob Keithan of the UUA. I've also been watching a video that the UUA sent to ministers titled "**Listening to the Voice of Experience: 12 Visionary Ministers Discuss Growth.**"

Study Leave – I take four weeks of study leave every year. This church year, I used some of it for my trip to Romania, since it hadn't been planned as part of my regular denominational leave time for such things as General Assembly. This left me a little less prepared for the start of the church year than usual. Often my study leave is used primarily for planning the next year and getting organized after the past year, which is what I plan to do with my leave this summer. I did take a week after Christmas of study leave, which I used to do some reading for future sermons, some work on the website, and some work on the healthcare ballot initiative.

Personal

This year was a year of some transition for me and my family. My husband Peter continued teaching adjunct at Baker College, but he also started taking some classes this year, as well. He also started doing on-call chaplaincy at Foote Hospital. Our daughter started her first year of Preschool, which she loves. But the biggest change for us was the purchase of our first house, which we moved into in August. We had a week of vacation to accomplish the move in, but I confess it left me feeling exhausted and disorganized as we started the fall. In the spring, we had what felt like a second move, as we got new windows put into the house (the old ones had lead paint), and we had to move all our furniture and belongings into the middle of each room, and move into a hotel for three days! However, we are thrilled to be homeowners and Jackson residents.

Looking Forward

I don't know what the next year will hold for us, but I know that there are a lot of possibilities open to us. Our social events and fundraising events both greatly expanded this year, and I hope they will continue to expand. I also hope we can have some small groups start up in the congregation. There are certainly large community efforts that we have both fit and opportunity to take on, such as the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative. And, of course, we will continue the excellent work we have been doing, from worship to religious education to the commUnity forUms.

Wherever the future takes us, I know that I am privileged to be your called minister and proud to serve in this community. Thank you for this opportunity, and for all the ministry that we do together!

Blessings,

Cindy

Annual Meeting of UUCEL **May 6, 2007**

31 members present; Steve Beison, President, presiding

1. Approval of Annual Meeting minutes of May 2006 with corrections
Motion: Marge Duane Second Dorothy Kerr Approved
2. Board Report was reviewed
3. Minister's Report – "It Would Have Been Enough" was presented by Rev. Cindy Landrum
4. Treasurer's Report – presented by Kerry Hart The budget presented includes \$9300.00 for debt retirement. This represents an increase in staff salaries, hiring a payroll service, and keeping R.E. expenses in the budget. The Board is asking for increases in pledges to accomplish this budget. Voting on the budget has been deferred until a time when pledges have been revisited.
5. Trust Fund Report - presented by Vic Marshall
Trust Fund Balance – \$43,519.71 Interest is transferred to the Operational Budget. The Trust Fund Committee consists of Bob Lewis, Vic Marshall and Marion Shroyer.
6. Approval of Delegates to General Assembly: Bob Lewis and Alice Diebel
Vic Marshall moved Carole Hartsuff, second Approved.

7. Nominating Committee Board of Trustees Slate: Jane Volk, Alyce Oosting, Gratia Karmes
Those leaving: Bob Lewis and Marge Duane; Carole Hartsuff
Joan Bernstein moved to accept. John Duane, second Approved.
Nominees for the Nominating Committee: Debbie Marshall; Phyllis Meyers; Elissa Alden Sharon Pedersen moved to accept. Vic Marshall, second.
Approved
 8. Approval of Social Mission Force amended policy: (Correction to the version presented. The title should read “Three Approaches for the Congregation....”)
Jon Hart and Rev. Cindy reviewed the changes.
Peter Morrison, motion Vic Marshall, second Approved
Jon Hart asked for other members to join the Social Task Force.
 9. Approval of Social Mission Petitions for Action
Strike: Jackson Interfaith; Big Others; Coalition for Adoption Rights and Planned Parenthood from Level Two Participation because of lack of active sponsorship in creating support within the congregation.
Quarterly Collections: which received the highest votes:
 1. Brooklyn Food Pantry
 2. AWARE Shelter
 3. Planned Parenthood
 4. Jackson Interfaith Peacekeepers and Interfaith Shelter
 10. Motion made to approve church use of and support of Fair Trade Coffee: Vic Marshall moved. Second, Jane Volk Approved.
 11. To accept Committee Reports as published.
Jon Hart, motion Dorothy Kerr, second Approved
Discussion followed re: Building Committee activities in regards to the Capital Campaign.
 12. Memorial Garden: Steve Beison gave an update on the progress of the Memorial Garden
- Adjournment: 2:00 P.M. Jann Krupa moved. Joan Bernstein, second. Approved.

**Nominating Committee Report
Annual Meeting of UUCEL
May 18th, 2008**

Nominations for the Board of Trustees are: Becky Bowen – three year term
Steve Beison - one year term

Nominations for the Nominating Committee are:

Carol Bowen
Joyce Weatherwax
Nena Obits

Many thanks to the current committee of:
Debbie Marshall, Elissa Alden, Phyllis Myers

The Board of Trustees Annual Report - 2007-2008

Board Memebers: Kerry Hart, President; Jane Volk, Vice President; Gretchen Marshall, Secretary; Steve Beison, Treasurer; Gratia Karmes, Member; Alyce Oosting, Member.

The Board of Trustees' initial priority this year was to develop a reasonable budget for proposal to the congregation. We suggested additional cuts in copier costs, postage, and some committee budgets. We also introduced the \$17.00 annual subscription fee for the printed Bellnote and Annual Report copies. We were determined to provide Cindy with a modest salary increase by the amount that met the absolute minimum January 2008 UUA guidelines. When we presented the \$4,000 deficit budget, we asked the congregation to commit to new fund-raising activities. As the year progressed, we were pleased that members planned and participated in fun and financially significant events ranging from the Hungarian Dinner to the Fall Bazaar. With the help of the Membership Committee, we used our bylaws to review and appropriately adjust our membership list. This allowed us to submit a more accurate report to the UUA and avoid paying unnecessary dues for nonmembers.

Early in the year, the Board convened a retreat to identify some growth issues and crystallize our goals. We had some grand ideas that are still in stages of infancy.

However, we can celebrate the completion of the new website design, thanks to Cindy, her father, and all the members who provided input for our improved site. Thanks must also be extended to the Growth Committee for its tireless exploration of our church's interest in and ability to grow. With financial support from the Heartland District, the committee was able to bring a growth consultant for a workshop in February. The consultant used the Appreciative Inquiry Process with about 10 participants to help us identify our values. This process was extended to the Pledge Campaign this spring, where members participated in Value Meals. The workshop also helped us understand that the congregation has many fragmented and diverse ideas about the existing building plan and Capital Campaign Funds. The Board hopes the momentum from this experience will be channeled into more work on growth.

The Board reviewed plans to improve building and grounds, including the Memorial Garden, paving accessible parking spaces, and replacement of sanctuary windows. In the end, board members agreed the absence of a comprehensive building plan was paralyzing our ability to take further actions. One of our final duties this fiscal year will be to appoint a task force responsible for reevaluating our needs, options, and dreams for our physical plant. Because it feels like we've left unfinished business, the Board is exceptionally grateful for the Kitchen committee's successful completion of our beautifully renovated kitchen.

Lastly, this board has grappled to develop a new identity and transition into a new style of leadership. We thank Bob Lewis for providing accounting support to our reluctant yet dedicated treasurer, Steve Beison. We made the choice to pay a small fee for additional payroll support this past year, and we gratefully accept Paul Bowen's accounting assistance for the upcoming fiscal year. As President, I appreciate the church's support during our transition. I must also publicly thank Gretchen Marshall for her extensive work as secretary, and Steve Beison for his tremendously hard work and his offer to serve on the board one additional year past his current term. Go now and live your religion,

Board President, Kerry Hart

**Membership Committee
Annual Report
May 18th, 2008**

As of June '07 we had a two- person committee: Kathy Haynes and Joan Bernstein. We recruited two more members to the committee: Carole Hartsuff and Jann Krupa.

One hundred visitors have come through our doors. Our committee is directly involved with Visitor Orientation Q and A, Member Joining Services and Church Host Training. Tending to this large group of visitors has also required re-ordering visitor sign-in forms and our business cards. Eight visitor folders are made monthly with the addition of "Our Values" document, which was created at our Growth Workshop.

In December, Paul Bowen agreed to be the church registrar to update and maintain the membership lists. We recommended a new policy approved by the Board that defines "the process for removal of names from various membership lists." The committee has updated the phone tree, sent notes to those who have been absent for a while, updated the UU World mailing list and helped provide material for the new website.

The congregation responded well to the idea of receiving the Bellnote newsletter electronically or subscribing to it. Thank you to thirty-one people who now receive the newsletter electronically and to those who have paid for subscriptions. We have reduced the content in the newsletter, which also lowers the costs involved. Paper copies of the Committee Member Lists and regular meeting days and times are available in the foyer.

Social events which we helped to spearhead and plan are: Annual Picnic; Homecoming Sunday; trip to Potter Park Zoo; Rev. Cindy's Hungarian Dinner; Golf Outing, Hanging of the Greens, Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner; Christmas Cookie Exchange; Ethnic Food Potluck Dinner.

Members who joined within the last year are Tom and Anita Pepper, Austin Brue, Tom McFarland, Meredith Baither, Doug Myers, Chris Keith and Andy Bowen.

Worship Committee

Annual Report 2007-2008

The Worship Committee began the new church year with two major challenges: (1) reduce the committee budget by \$1000 from \$1400 to \$400 and (2) provide Sunday service speakers, both within and outside the church, who do not charge for their participation on days Rev. Cynthia Landrum is absent from the pulpit.

The committee concluded that attaining success for the second challenge would lead to the budget reduction of challenge one. Fortunately, both challenges have been met, and most of the credit goes to those speakers who developed programs that enlightened, entertained and informed all who were able to attend. The committee would like to thank the people who presented the programs listed below.

Giving Back- Ann Green
 Jackson District Library in the 21st Century- Ishwar Laxminarayan
 Wise Words and Otherwise from Children's Literature- Peg Beison
 The Holocaust Studies Learning-Serving Project- Hannah Trager
 Conscientious Objection- Jon Hart
 Perspectives on dis-Ability Continued- Phyllis Myers
 Adoption Sunday- Kirsta Grapentine
 Christmas Pageant- Religious Education classes
 Kwanzaa- Sharon Pedersen
 Artists Sunday- Rev. Peter Morrison

Another Look at the Color Line- Rev. David Carl Olson
Be the Change- Carrie Landrum
Gospel According to the Young Bob Dylan- Jon Hart
Secret Friends/Anti-Racism- Religious Education classes
UUSC Justice Sunday: The Cost of Iraq- Jon Hart
Salvation and the Teachers' Tea Party- Rev. John Corrado
Sit Quietly and Be Well- Dr. Kathleen Adzicek

The Worship Committee also established policies for guest speakers who wish to make changes in the Order of Service cover page or offer music provided by individuals other than our music director.

The committee decided to introduce "Greeting Sunday" on the first Sunday of each month, and the success of this addition to the service has made it a regular event.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Beison, on behalf of the Worship Committee

Trust Fund Annual Meeting – May 18th, 2008

The Trust Fund was established by Lee Wetherby to provide a long term source of financial support for the church budget with an endowed fund. It is funded by members and friends wishing to donate money for stable funding, to recognize and honor someone for outstanding activities, or as a memorial for someone who is no longer with us. The money donated is not spent, but kept in conservative investments to preserve the capital. Every year the earnings from the fund are transferred to the church to help with the annual budget.

The Board of Trustees has proposed that one Sunday each fall be dedicated to the education of our members about the Trust Fund and its purpose. At that service, members would be encouraged to give to that fund to ensure the long-term financial health of the church.

The Trust Fund balance and earnings are included in the Treasurer's Report.
Vic Marshall

Building Committee Annual Report – May 18, 2008

The Building Committee has had a very good year of accomplishments...finally. After years of planning and developing consensus, as well as a generous donation of cabinets and sink, we developed our basic kitchen plan. The next project was to find a contractor who could successfully complete the project and meet a budget. We also needed to coordinate with an electrician so that we were not popping circuit breakers every time we plugged in too many appliances.

All of those constraints were finally met, the kitchen has a new inspected and grounded electrical supply. The kitchen has been insulated and except for some touch up and trim work, it is nearly finished.

We've also redone the south entrance into the kitchen so that it enhances the beautiful arches that the builders incorporated into the original design. This has an additional benefit in that those who are vertically endowed will be much less likely to leave traces of their DNA on the woodwork!

Thanks so much to all who have helped through their contributions, ideas and help. It makes a significant improvement in the quality of our social hall, and will be appreciated for years to come. Vic Marshall for the Building Committee.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

2007- 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

This year the commUnity forUm has hosted the following programs:

Sept. 21 - "The Cost of War" special event at St. Johns UCC with live music following

Sept. 27 - "Banned Books- Why, Why Not?"

Oct. 18 - "Disability Awareness" (co-sponsored with Disability Connections)

Nov. 15 - "Getting Jackson to Work"

Dec. 13 - "Domestic Violence Awareness" (co-sponsored with Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee)

Jan. 10 - "Universal Health Care"

Feb. 21 - "Adoption Stories - Cross-cultural and Interracial Adoption"

Mar. 20 - "Navigating between Cultures with Bless Me Ultima" (part of the countywide Big Read Initiative) hosted by Jackson Area Youth Council

April 17 - "Entertaining Ourselves to Death"

(coming!)

May 15 - "Homosexuality and Religion" (co-sponsored with PFLAG)

CommUnity forUms are generally held on third Thursdays in non-summer months, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm, at the Carnegie Library auditorium. All programs have been with co-sponsorship of the Jackson District Library. Committee members are Lynn Hightower (co-chair), Nancy Smith (cochair), Debby Sears (library), Rev. Cindy Landrum, Kindra Wicklund, Sharon Pedersen, and Marge Duane.

Attendance at forums has ranged from 14 to 50 (approx). We have incurred some expenses paying for child care (\$20 to \$25 per event). Nena Obits has generously provided free child care at 4 or 5 of the events.

We have formed a public relations subcommittee to try to improve publicity and identify target audiences. The subcommittee has re-designed our flyers, written press releases, distributed flyers, and arranged a JTV promotional appearance.

Of interest: The Sept. 2007 forum called “Culture of Non-Violence for Youth” was part of the motivation for the Jackson Area Youth Council, area kids in middle and high school who have met year-round since Fall 2007. Last year’s forum called “Race Relations in Jackson” (March 2007) inspired the formation of “Jackson Justice Watch”, a community group that still meets monthly.

Ideas for next year’s programs include a Candidate/Issues Town Hall (pre-election), “Islam in America”, and “Sacred Stories” (Washtenaw Interfaith Council). We welcome suggestions for program topics!

Religious Education Coordinator’s Report, 2007-2008

Kids are our future—literally! Through the religious education program at UUCEL, we hope to instill UU moral values within the children of our congregation, and raise up another generation to become the standard-bearers of social justice and religious freedom, and perhaps lifelong UUs.

We started the new fiscal year with Peace Camp, and summer RE lessons about peace. Then the fall came, and with it, new curricula aimed at teaching about diversity, multiculturalism, and anti-racism for all ages—including a new monthly preschool program. From *We are Many, We are One* at the Preschool level, to weekly *Rainbow Children* classes for the K-6 crowd, and even *Building the World we Dream About* bimonthly evening classes for adults, our church has been enriched by the RE program. I think I can speak for others when I say that preparing for and teaching these classes has been a learning experience as well as a joy for me and my fellow teachers: Kerry Hart and Gretchen Marshall (preschool); Paul Bowen, Jim Emerson, Rob Gaecke, Jon Hart, Kathy Haynes, and Anne Seifert (K-6); Becky Bowen, Janette Mraz (Youth); and Rev. Cindy Landrum (adults). Also, I’ve observed Vicki Haynes having a great time with our littlest ones in the nursery, along with many church volunteers. If you get a chance, please let these folks know how much you appreciate their work, as I do.

We’ve had many great special events too, like our kick-off breakfast last Fall, Harvest Bazaar, Santa’s Workshop, Pageant, Secret Friends, etc. We had a kids’ program for the first time at the annual auction, with toys to bid on, fun movies, and pizza. And our intergenerational services continue to be a joy, with interactive stories and activities. Thank you also to Anne Seifert and Gretchen Marshall, who serve with Rev. Cindy and me on the RE Committee, to Kerry Hart, who completed her tenure on the committee as her work geared up on the Board of Trustees, and to Chris Keith, who plans on working with the RE Committee in the future. Your dedication does not go unnoticed as we plant seeds in kids’ hearts to help make the future better!

Next year promises to be just as exciting, with more new curricula and volunteers. We hope to start an interfaith youth group to engage our teens, and we'll offer a middle school class as "the quads" and others enter 6th-8th grade. Our Adult RE class will continue through the fall, and we'll offer other adult learning opportunities, as well. Thank you all for your investment in the next generation!

Sharon

Sharon Pedersen, Religious Education Coordinator

RE Committee Report, 2007-2008

Start-up of RE classes was in September. We have quite a nice size K-6th grade group: Andy, Aubrey, Gaea, Gordon, Isaac, JD, Jeremy, Lindsay, Lindsey, Marina, Mason, McKrae, Sarah, and sometimes visitors! Several infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and occasional youth participants round out our children's RE program.

We also have a lot of great teachers—thank you all! Sharon Pedersen, of course, the Religious Education Coordinator, always makes sure we have the supplies and materials we need for RE classes, and always has fun and interesting lesson plans for us to teach.

The Fall Harvest Festival is always fun, with crafts to buy and make, and glorious baked goods nestled among Fall, Halloween, and Christmas items. Many of these items are made and baked by our own UU members. Pumpkins abound among the cornshucks for sale: small tall, short and fat, all ready to be painted or carved for the Halloween season. This always brings in a nice "profit" for our UU Church of East Liberty.

Soon the snow starts to fall, and its time for thanksgiving for our church and families. Christmas is around the corner, with preparation for the holiday pageant, Santa's Workshop, and cookie exchange. Santa's Workshop is always fun, with kids enjoying cookies to decorate and take home, and crafts to make, as well. Caring Baskets and Christmas Eve Celebration at the UUCEL is followed with a delightful assortment of Christmas cookies and punch after the candlelight service.

Before you know it, New Years is here and gone, and Secret Friends Month of February is here, where adult members of the church are assigned a younger churchgoer to be their "Secret Friend." Notes and small gifts are given to the children, followed by end of the month Secret Friends Breakfast, where kids find out "who is who." This is a great time for youngsters and adult members to find out a little bit about each others' likes and interests.

Yes, the Easter Egg Hunt this year was done indoors at the schoolhouse because of the wonderful white snow we had on the ground, but this did not slow the race for the Easter

eggs! 175 eggs were found and opened, with their candy treats enjoyed by all youngsters.

Now, things are somewhat winding down to Mothers' Day, Graduation, Flower Communion, Fathers' Day, and recognition of teachers and RE staff. Big thanks to the parents and kids who came and partook of our RE classes and celebrations. What a great year! Fund for all! Are you ready for some fun this Summer?

Anne Seifert, RE Committee Chair