
THE ANNUAL REPORT
FOR
THE 160th ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE FIRST CHURCH IN BELMONT
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2016



TO THE MEMBERS OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN BELMONT

GREETINGS:

Pursuant to a call by Todd Schatzki, President of the Parish Board, you are hereby notified that the Annual Meeting of The First Church in Belmont Unitarian Universalist will be held on Sunday, May 22, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall, for the election of officers, reports from committees and the transaction of such other business as may lawfully come before the meeting.

**PROPOSED SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR THE PARISH BOARD
TO BE VOTED UPON AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE FIRST CHURCH IN BELMONT**

PARISH BOARD NOMINATIONS

Officers to be elected

- President: Ana Hammock
- Vice President: Catherine Claypoole
- Treasurer: Penny Schafer
- Clerk: Downing Cless

At-Large Trustee to be elected

- Marion Westgate (2016 – 2019)
- Eloise McGaw (2016-2019)
- Lauren Corning (2016-2017)

Continuing At-Large Trustees to be elected

- Jackie James (2015-2018)
- Deveaux Duckworth (2015-2019)
- Peter Guthrie (2014-2017)
- Sara Oaklander (2014-2017)

Past President

- Todd Schatzki (2016-2017)

NOMINATIONS for THE FINANCE COMMITTEE for 2016-2017

- Scott Johnson, Chair (2010-2017)
- Jonathan Wolf (2014-2017)

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- Mark Thurber (2015-2018)
 - Chris Albano (2016-2019)

Ex-officio members

- Ana Hammock, nominee for Parish Board President
- Penny Schafer, Parish Board Treasurer

Ex-officio members

- Todd Schatzki, nominee for Parish Board President
- Penny Schafer, Parish Board Treasurer

NOMINATIONS for the NOMINATING AND RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE for 2016-2017

- Eva Patalas, Chair (2014-2017)
- Kate Searle (2014-2017)
- Doug Burden (2015-2018) co-chair
- Leslie Kolterman (2015-2018)
- Scott Ferson (2016-2019)
- Ed Bing (2016-2019)

Respectfully submitted by the Nominating Committee:

Beverly Gillette & Eva Patalas, co-chairs. Sam James, Kate Searle, Doug Burden, Leslie Kolterman

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Senior Minister's Annual Report

Reverend David M. Bryce

This report is accurate as of the date it was written (April 20 of 2016)

Sunday Services 2015 - 2016

Note: some of the services mentioned below are scheduled to take place after the date this report was written (April 20).

We held all of our scheduled services this year.

On January 24 I worked with the Partner Church committee to present the service.

And on April 17 I worked with the FCB Green Committee to present an Earth Day related service.

There are three lay-led services during the year which will undoubtedly be in the Worship Committee report. These include a service on Sandy Island during the annual retreat. On the Sunday between Christmas and New Year's day there is a lay led service in the library and early on Easter morning there is a lay led sun rise service at Habitat (led this year by Kristin Phillips and Kathy Crawley) prior to our "regular" Easter services.

Counting the twelve summer services, there are fifteen Sundays of the year with a lay led service.

There are two fabulous Music services during the year.

And, of course, there are also the wonderful Coming of Age and Youth Group services.

My thanks also go to the staff who took part in the Multigenerational services in September, December, March and June, especially to Charlotte Lehmann, our acting director of Children's RE who took the lead on the March multigenerational service.

OTHER PREACHERS

October 11 - Victor Carpenter, Minister Emeritus of this congregation, preached. He announced that he was delivering his final sermon; that it was time for to cease the practice. We will miss his eloquence and his insight in the future.

November 15 - Rev. Mary Margaret Earl of the UU Urban Ministry (we are a member congregation) preached.

February 07 – Laura Wagner of UU Mass Action preached.

February 21 - Rev. Doris Hunter, former Interim Minister for this congregation, and friend of and participant in the congregation, preached.

March 06 - Rev. Rose Schwab was a guest preacher for the 11 am service only.

June 05 – Rev. Bill Schultz from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee preached at our annual spring UUSC Justice Sunday celebration

I must again express my gratitude to the members of the Worship Committee. They continue to work very hard to help deepen the value and meaning of the Sunday services.

And of course Ian Garvie has continued to provide us with a level of music like that of his predecessor, Rev. Alfa Radford.

OTHER ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

I regularly (weekly) meet with the staff

I have individual meetings with staff members (some weekly, some every other week)

I regularly meet with the following groups and committees:

Parish Board; Program Council; Lay Pastoral Care team; Worship Assistants; Worship Committee.

Also, I met at times with the Sabbatical Committee and the Intern Committee.

I attended the Parish Board retreat on September 13.

I attended the Program Council retreat on January 9.

Coming Of Age group meeting (2), Youth Group meeting (1),

Coming of Age and Youth Group pre-service dinners

I attended the Welcome Back reception and the CRE Pizza Party welcome reception.

I had a number of individual meetings with congregants.

I ran a prayer workshop on November 1

I led a Lay Pastoral Care training workshop on March 12

The selection of an Intern Minister for next year entailed a number of interviews with candidates and meetings with Rev. Doris Hunter.

I interviewed candidates for Director of Children's Religious Education and for Director of Youth Programs.

ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE CONGREGATION (UU related)

Mass Bay UU Minister's Association (every other month)

UU Minister's Cluster group (monthly)

Workshop on Staff Covenants – September 22 presented by our New England UUA Regional staff
Installation of Rev. Mary Margaret Earl as minister of the UU Urban Ministry
UU Mass Action Advocacy Day - Apr 13
Mass Bay District Annual Meeting – April 23

ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE CONGREGATION (non-UU related)

I regularly meet with the Belmont Clergy group

Belmont Interfaith Thanksgiving service (participant)

This report would be incomplete without mention of staff changes that have or are occurring here at FCB: After thirty years of service, Susan Street, our Administrator, retired. And Rev. Alfa Radford informed us that she is leaving her position as Minister of Music after fifty-five (!) years. These are major changes for us. Both of these wonderful staff members will be deeply missed.

We are fortunate that they have been replaced by such able people; Janice Zazinski as our new Administrator and Ian Garvie as our new Director of Music. We were blessed by the long service of Susan and Alfa, and are blessed that we have talented people to take their places.

Annual Report of The Parish Board

Todd Schatzki, President

The Parish Board has had a busy year, with a range of activities related to staff, congregational and committee activities, and the church itself. The church continues to thrive in many areas and creates a welcoming and engaged community. We provide a wide range of religious education and many opportunities to get involved in inward and outward facing committees. Over the past year, we successfully managed staff transitions after the retirement of key long-standing staff. But, the church also faces a number of challenges. We face budget challenges for the coming year that raise questions about the sustainability of our current level of services, particularly in light of relatively flat stewardship (pledges) and potential transitions among some of our most generous donors. We also see declines enrollment in children's education, and slight declines in attendance at Sunday services (off about 10 percent over two years). Such ebbs and flows may be natural in the course of any congregation, particularly in lights of the many directions people get pulled in these days, but the Parish Board continues to keep an eye on these trends to identify the best course for the congregation.

Below, I provide some more highlights on the church activities over the course of the year. Before doing so, I want to thank all the members of the Parish Board for their hard work and dedication over the course of the year. Two board members, Betsy George and Jack Weiss, will be stepping down from the Board, so I want to thank them for their conscientious and thoughtful participation over their terms. Tom Neel resigned from the Parish Board to attend to personal matters, and was replaced by Deveaux Duckworth. I also thank Tom for his service, and am glad that he has stayed actively involved with the church in other dimensions, particularly FCB Green. I also thank the new officers, Ana Hammock, President, and Catherine Claypool, Vice President, and new Board members, Lauren Corning, Eloise McGaw, and Marion Westgate.

The Parish Board deliberated with the Nominating Committee over the length of leadership positions terms, particularly President and Vice President. Concern was raised that one year terms could result in depleting the pool of potential leadership candidates too quickly. As a consequence, the Parish Board agreed with the Nominating Committee that it consider the implications of two-year terms, given the various tradeoffs that were identified and discussed. It was agreed that the current Bylaws permitted two year terms.

Several staff positions underwent transitions over the course of the year. Director of Youth Programs (DYP) Julie Ennis announced her resignation, while Acting Director of Children's Religious Education (ADCRE) Charlotte Lehmann's completed her second year at First Church in Belmont (FCB), which is anticipated to be her last year, as she moves onto to the next phase of her career. These transitions triggered the formation of a hiring committee, chaired by Catherine Claypool, and discussions within the leadership about the structure of the religious education programs at FCB, with some consideration of a shift from the current structure to an alternative structure, including one organized around a "life span" director of religious education. After deliberation, the hiring committee, at the Parish Board's behest, placed job descriptions for two positions. A new DYP Sana Saeed was hired in April. At the time of this report, the committee is still considering candidates for the Director of Children's Religious Education position. In other areas, an assistant office administrator was hired, but resigned shortly thereafter when other job opportunities arose. Many people were instrument in this process, but I want

to, in particular, recognize Catherine Claypool, who led the process, and Ann Dexter, who provided invaluable, practical recruitment advice.

In congregational activities, following on discussions from the prior church year, the Parish Board deliberated whether to undertake a congregational planning or “visioning” process. The Board discussed what such a process would entail, what its purpose or objectives would be, what kind of process it would follow, and whether it would have other consequences for the congregation. A subcommittee was formed to consider these questions and provide recommendations to the Parish Board on how to proceed. After research into the process for undertaking such an initiative, the subcommittee recommended that the process be postponed until Reverend Bryce returns from sabbatical so that he can be in attendance for the entire process without constraining the time available for the process to evolve.

The tragic circumstances facing many migrants, particularly from Syria, led to investigations into ways in which the Church might become more actively involved in supporting migrant resettlement. Led by Sam James and Bev Freeman, these investigations led to a grant proposal to the UU Social Responsibility Fund to support participation in a consortium of faith communities, including FCB, the Belmont Religious Council, Plymouth Congregational, Beth El Temple, and All Saint’s Episcopal Church. The UU Fund will support expenses associated with helping refugees as long as there is direct involvement of some UU parishioners.

The Board worked with FCB Green on a number of dimensions. The committee was formally designated as a sub-committee of the Social Action Committee after discussion at the Parish Board about whether it should become a full committee. A charter was subsequently approved by the Parish Board. FCB Green was also active with several initiatives at the Parish Board. First, a proposal was made to undertake “recommissioning” of the church’s heating ventilation and air conditioning systems to improve its energy efficiency and to identify system alternatives that can improve the church’s energy efficiency in the event that the boiler requires replacement. Deliberations considered both the benefits of these initiatives, as well as the expenditures required, and the FCB Green continues to work with the Building Committee to refine these proposals. Second, FCB Green proposed to put to a vote at annual meeting a decision to divest the church’s endowment from investments in fossil fuel companies in light of concern of concern regarding climate change. The Parish Board with FCB Green decided to delay the vote until late 2016 to allow greater education and deliberation within the congregation about the objectives of such divestment, and the implications of such a decision (e.g., for endowment return, for the range of investment options available to the church, and for the work load of volunteers in the Finance and Investment Committees).

Regarding the Church’s finances, the year has been fairly smooth. This is a testament to, among things, our treasurer, Penny Schafer’s, ability to oversee our finances, and to implement many changes in the way we organize and represent finance information to decision-makers in the Finance Committee and Parish Board. Words can hardly begin to express my gratitude toward her. The Parish Board and Finance Committee began a process, with the guidance of James Henke, of reviewing the church’s insurance coverage to ensure that the church has appropriate coverage.

Regarding the church and its infrastructure, the Pilgrim Window was re-installed after an extended refurbishment. Several parishioners, including Nancy Davis and Jerri Strickler, played important roles in ensuring that the window was properly restored and reset into its position above the sanctuary. The

Parish Board authorized the Communications Committee, under the oversight of Jim Sugarman, to identify a Information Technology (IT) provider to audit our systems, recommend needed enhancements, undertake approved upgrades and provide on-going IT support. A new IT provider, BaseZen Consulting, was selected after discussions with several vendors and the review of several offers. BaseZen is now providing on-going IT support, and has begun to identify and implement needed upgrades after consultation with Jim Sugarman. Otherwise, many other aspects of building maintenance have quietly proceeded; much thanks to Bob Corning and Mike Flamang, for the continued service, and for Betsy George and Jack Weiss in acting as liaisons for the Parish Board on these issues.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Scott Johnson, Chair

The First Church Finance Committee (the “Committee”) met monthly during the year to conduct its business.

Committee Composition

The Committee is comprised of members with various financial and programmatic experiences at the church along with the Parish Board President and Treasurer as ex officio members. The current members are:

- Scott Johnson, Chair
- Charles Hamann
- Bob McGaw
- Jonathan Wolf
- Mark Thurber
- Todd Schotskly, P.B. President
- Penny Schafer, P.B. Treasurer

Goals, Objectives and Responsibilities

The Committee, elected at the Annual Meeting, serves in an advisory capacity to the Parish Board in financial matters affecting the church and the wellbeing of its operations. More specifically, the Committee’s activities are a mix of recurring, often annual, responsibilities along with one-time, project-specific tasks with a defined beginning and end. Examples of recurring activities include:

- Working with the leaders of the annual Stewardship Drive to advise and assist in setting pledge goals.
- Reviewing the performance of the church’s endowment and discussing related issues with the Investment Committee and formally appointing, as necessary, the members of the Investment Committee.
- Tracking the cash flows of the church for early identification of potential departures from budget.
- Reviewing financial matters throughout the year, as well as assisting with the formation of the annual church budget and advising the Treasurer and Parish Board President on pertinent issues.
- Resolving matters of accounting treatment of unusual financial items with the Treasurer.

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- Assisting with communication of financial information to the congregation.

Projects

This year, in addition to its recurring responsibilities, the Committee was involved in the following projects:

- Complete overhaul of the financial statements including the production of a balance sheet, migration to modern financial software and a move to fund accounting methods. This was a large project performed by the Treasurer who deserves special commendation.
- Help the Parish Board understand different options to address the expected budget shortfall, as level service expenses rise about \$10,000 - 15,000 in a normal year, and revenue has leveled off.

Observations

- To fund the coming 2016-2017 fiscal year, the Stewardship Committee set a pledge/gift goal of \$601,000, roughly in line with the prior year's target. As of this writing, we expect pledge income to be flat year-over-year.
 - We are losing about 10% of our annual pledge dollars annually through normal attrition. To keep revenue flat, we therefore must replace \$60,000 each year.
 - We've had several year-over-year pledge increases to help fill the void, but analysis suggests increased participation and growth in membership will be needed to maintain level services in the coming years.
- The endowment held marketable securities (mutual funds) as of March 31, 2016 valued at \$1.4 million. The church also has a mortgage on the building from the Santos foundation (\$720,222 principal remaining on June 30, 2016), and a loan made to the church by the endowment for the new building (\$189,327 principal remaining on June 30, 2016). Including the loan from the endowment, the total size of the endowment is \$1.6 million.

Stewardship Committee

The primary activity of the First Church Stewardship Committee during FY0216 was the planning and execution of the 2016 March Stewardship Drive, in which we solicited members and friends for pledges of financial support to fund First Church operations in FY2017 (July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017). This report is a summary of the timeline and key events of the 2016 March Stewardship campaign. Actual financial results of the campaign will be presented at the May 22, 2016 Annual Meeting.

Committee members:

Roger Read, <i>Chair</i>	Bruce Kozuma
Martha Gallagher	Donna Ruvolo
Laura Gomez-Ickes	Jim Staton
Charles Hamann	Mark Thurber
John Howe	

Like the preceding two years, the 2016 Stewardship Drive used the month of February as a time to educate the congregation about the Stewardship Drive and the financial needs of the church, and we designated the month of March as the time for members and friends to make their actual pledges for the upcoming 2017 Fiscal Year. The objective of this timetable in recent years has been to give parishioners a predictable, concrete, and limited time frame in which the Stewardship Drive takes place each year.

Key events of the 2016 Campaign:

- Jan. 31: Stewardship Sermon (ideally would be first Sunday in February)
- Feb. 9: Posting of materials online (appeal letter, Finances brochure, pledge form)
- Feb. 18: Pledge packets mailed
- Feb. 28: Celebration Sunday - Pledging kickoff at special celebratory services, at which parishioners bring pledge envelopes forward during Offertory
- Mar. 13: Posting of Honor Roll of prompt pledgers, drawing for Black Forest Torte
- Mar. 31: Official end of Stewardship Drive
- April: Follow-ups with people who didn't respond during March

Celebration Sunday, with its special music and a coffee hour featuring pastries courtesy of Kay Wiggin at Quebrada Bakery, proved once again to be a popular and effective event that resulted in a very strong start to the pledging. Congregational feedback to this "pledge ingathering" service has been very positive. The mid-March interim pledging deadline also proved effective at bringing in a strong

number of additional pledges. Parishioners who pledged by Thursday, March 10 had their names included on the honor roll posted on Sunday, March 13 in the Upper Gathering Hall, and those names were entered into the drawing for Ariane Frank's popular Black Forest Torte. Overall, this timetable events seems to be effective at encouraging more parishioners to make their pledges earlier in the process.

The Committee used a variety of communications to parishioners during the campaign, including:

- Mailing pledge packets to all church households
- Posting pledge materials and online pledging links on the Stewardship webpage
- Weekly notices in The Unitarian, with prominent link for online pledging
- Weekly notices in the order of service
- Weekly spoken announcements at the beginning of each church service
- Stewardship testimonials at services on two Sundays (Feb. 21 and March 6)
- Visibility at Coffee Hour with Stewardship table staffed by Committee members
- Over twenty high-visibility, multiple-size posters designed by Ariane Frank highlighting the pledge theme, target, and the remaining "gap", which was updated weekly
- Weekly all-church email updates
- Supplemental mailings to selected households
- Emails to Senior and Nova Choirs
- Emails to CRE, COA, and Youth families
- Emails to Junior, Chancel, and Youth Choir families
- Emails and related individual follow-up with non-responders, including all households that pledged any amount in FY2016
- Various follow-up phone calls

Goals for next year include:

- Provide better education, including in the fall, about church finances and the need for increased pledges, especially from younger members and friends
- Expand pool of leadership donors, especially among those in their 40s and 50s.
- Evaluate use of personalized appeal letters, including last year's pledge amount and perhaps an appeal to increase to a specific higher amount
- Continue to tap further into Fellowship One to aid efforts
- Ensure list of emails is as complete as possible to make sure all-church email communications are reaching the widest possible audience

Respectfully submitted,

Roger Read

Stewardship Chair

Adult Programs Advisor

Lillian Anderson

My fourth year as adult programs advisor has seen growth and expansion in the number of programs offered as well as an increase in attendance of those events. Together with the Adult Programs committee under the able leadership of Debbie Dobbins and the participation of Yolanda Aliberti, Diana Dill, Karl Klasson, Susan Kobayashi, Laurie Carter Noble, and Ed Siegfried we have continued to reach out to members of the First Church community to offer excellent and thought-provoking programs. The Ministerial Programs sub-committee, which oversees all of our support groups, is ably co-chaired by Bill Blumberg and Mark Davis. This year, in addition to our regular program offerings we have focused our attention on end of life issues. Atul Gawande's powerful book, *Being Mortal*, was the catalyst and framework for many of our programs. We showed the PBS Frontline documentary of "Being Mortal" and discussed the book. Based on those discussions we elicited topics for future programs. Thanks to Jane Fisher, Eleanor Hobbs and Tom Neel, we successfully completed a two-part series on "Understanding Hospice" followed by a program on "The Five Wishes". Rick Hawkins offered a very well-attended two part program on "The Conversation Project".

The First Church women's retreat took place at Rolling Ridge Conference and Retreat Center in North Andover from February 11-13 and continued to be very well received and attended by thirty women. Thanks to the dedication and creativity of the planning committee - Miriam Baker, Niti Seth, Martha Spaulding, and Hayat Weiss - the event was a great success and we plan to do it again in March/April next year at the same location.

We continued several traditions with both a fall and spring potluck supper for the men and women of First Church, and a fall and spring prequel to our Major Music program. In March we decided to combine a potluck supper with a program and 24 people enjoyed hearing about "Gravitational Waves" from Andrea Prestwich and Edwin Taylor. We plan to continue the potlucks and programs next year. For the first time we offered a program at 10:15am during the time between services. The topic "Children and Technology" drew a great deal of interest and Adult Programs and CRE are dedicated to continue offering this since those who attended were very pleased with the choice of topic and the time slot. We were pleased to be able to arrange a tour of 24 Farnsworth St, the new UUA headquarters and we followed that tour with a program on our Unitarian Universalist purposes and principles led by Doris Hunter and Edwin Taylor. This year I have continued the weekly adult programs announcements both electronically and on our web-site and have incorporated the Belmont Unitarian Alliance and Social Action events in all of our publications and publicity. The Alliance is now under the Adult Programs umbrella. The fall, winter and spring brochures were very important in publicizing our programs as well as posters during coffee hour and our new bulletin boards.

Respectfully submitted,
Lillian Anderson

ADULT PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Debbie Dobbins, Chair

Mission

The Adult Programs Committee collaborates to create opportunities for adults to find spiritual, emotional, intellectual growth by exploring diverse ideas and connecting in a safe environment.

Activities and accomplishments in prior year

-Overview of programs for 2015-2016 year

- Single evening/single topic programs
- Various series, including end of life and related themes. Recurring: poetry, science, various end of life programs & spirituality

As Lillian Anderson completed her fourth year as the staff person for the Committee this resulted in our ability to offer a rich program of events throughout the year, with ongoing collaboration with Social Action and within the larger Church community. We targeted and pursued programs with an aspect of spirituality, social action, or other “UU” values as often as possible.

The Belmont Unitarian Alliance requested and we agreed to bring them under Adult Programs, especially to help with space planning, scheduling and communication. Otherwise they will continue to function autonomously, while expanding their audience. The Parish Board voted to support APC’s recommendation on this matter.

We responded to initiatives and requests that came from members of the congregation. The Committee continued as an incubator for new ideas and offerings and, The Committee, under Lillian’s leadership, has ideas and opportunities for the upcoming year 2015-2016.

Adult Programs 2015-2016

Happenings

Fall Programs

Sept. 24	Hootenanny/Jam Session - Jon Svetkey (Monthly)
Sept. 25	Women’s fall potluck supper
Sept. 29	“Being Mortal” - Frontline PBS documentary
Oct. 2	Men’s fall potluck supper
Oct. 18	“Awe at the Edge of the Universe” - Andrea Prestwich and Edwin Taylor
Oct. 25	Climate Activism in Boston - Alice Trexler and Downing Cless
Oct. 28	Book discussion of <i>Being Mortal</i> by Atul Gawande
Nov. 1	Prayer Workshop - Rev. David Bryce

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- Nov. 8 The Conversation Project -Part I - Rick Hawkins (Meets Twice)
 - Nov. 15 The Tiny Village of Izotalillo - Lanier Smythe
 - Nov. 15 Theatre Discussion - *Einstein's Dreams* - Jane Minasian, Downing Cless
 - Nov. 19 Film and Discussion - "Growing Up Trans"
 - Nov. 22 12 Steps to a Compassionate Life - Doris Hunter and Edwin Taylor
 - Dec. 2 Prequel to Major Music - Ian Garvie

Winter Programs

- Jan. 31 Children and Technology - CRE, Diana Dill (Met Twice)
- Theatre play reading *Waiting for Godot* - Jane Minasian, Downing Cless
- Jan/Feb. Spiritual Renewal Poetry - Peter Guthrie (4 sessions)
- Feb. 19-21 Women's retreat at Rolling Ridge Conference Center
- Feb. 21 Gravitational Waves - Andrea Prestwich and Edwin Taylor
- Feb. 23 Understanding Hospice - Part I - Adult Programs Committee (Bi-Seasonal)
- Feb. 29 Movie - Lena's children - Miriam Baker
- March 3 Presidential Campaign - Mike Widmer
- March 6 Boston School of Painting - Jean Lightman/Laurie Carter Noble
- Theatre discussion of *The Convert* - Jane Minasian, Downing Cless
- March 9 Prequel to Major Music - Ian Garvie
- March 22 Five Wishes - Eleanor Hobbs
- Italian Wedding Soup- Donna Ruvolo

Spring Programs

- April 3 UUA Tour - APC
- April 10 UU Purposes and principles - Doris Hunter and Edwin Taylor
- Theatre Discussion of *Boyt candy* - Jane Minasian, Downing Cless
- April 15 Potluck and Program - Gravitational Waves - Andrea Prestwich/Edwin Taylor
- April 24 Solar Flares - Steve Saar
- April 26 Salsa Sensation - Patricia Garcia/Laurie Carter Noble
- April 27 Film and discussion - *Pariah*/ Jess Hicks
- April 29 Women's spring potluck - APC
- May 6 Men's spring potluck - APC

Budget Comparison

APC requested a higher budget for the 2015 – 2016 Church year in order to have the Staff Advisor fee paid for the Women's Retreat Weekend (and not from her personal expenses), and also to provide a small stipend for professional education.

Goals for Upcoming Year

Provide consistent offering of stimulating and enriching programs, responding to ideas presented by members of our congregation as well as the Committee's ideas. We will have the goal of adding an additional committee member, and continue to work toward succession planning. We

believe the number of programs and activities sponsored by the Adult Programs Committee are at a level that is sustainable if the current staff and Committee members remain committed. For the upcoming year the Committee, with Lillian Anderson's support, will target 3 or 4 programs with broad appeal to publicize more widely in both the Belmont community and the larger UU Boston area community. We will continue to seek ways of collaborating with other religious institutions within Belmont, and within our larger UU community.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Dobbins

Adult Programs: Ministry Programs Subcommittee

Mission:

The Ministry Programs Subcommittee contributes to creating and maintaining safe spaces for mutual support and sharing to help members and friends of the congregation to meet life's challenges and explore the sacred dimensions of human relationships and our individual lives.

Membership:

- Bill Blumberg and Mark Davis (Co-Chairs)
- Andrea Prestwich, Jeanne O'Farrell, and Barbara Terry
- Lillian Anderson, Adult Programs Advisor

Activities and Accomplishments This Past Year:

First Church has an extensive complement of ministry support programs meeting a wide range of needs of the First Church congregation. These programs include:

Women's Groups: We added a second women's group facilitated by Deb Lockett and Eloise McGaw that meets twice a month with 15 women attending. The Wednesday women's group is facilitated by Miriam Baker and Anne Stuart and continues to have a large attendance.

Small Group Ministries: We added a fourth small group ministry facilitated by Robert Donaghey and Joan Loewenburg that meets twice a month with 8 people attending. The other small group ministries are facilitated by Paul Santos, Catherine Stalberg, and Eleanor Sugarman. These groups meet bi-monthly.

Men's Groups: Three men's groups facilitated by Will Cordis and Joe Weiss, Paul Santos, and Jim Staton, respectively are continuing. **Caring for Older Adults:** Provides information and support for caregivers of elders and is facilitated by Miriam Baker and Deborah Blumberg. This group meets on the first Thursday of the month.

Lay Pastoral Care Team: Helps with Sunday morning candles, provides follow-up with people who light candles, and maintains connections with others as needed including some of our shut-ins. We continued to be actively involved with helping David recruit new members for the team. Next year's team includes: Bethany Allen, Janet Amphlett, Pam Andrews, Devon Beckett, Joanne Birge, James Hencke, Tom Neel, Martha Read, Steve Saar, and Martha Spaulding. David is planning to hold another orientation session (including our new ministerial intern) early in the fall for the other two people who expressed an interest in this but couldn't attend this spring's session.

Parenting Kids with Challenges: Provides support for parents of children with neurological challenges and is facilitated by Andrea Prestwich. This group meets monthly. **Jobseeker Buddy Group:** Provides support for people looking for a new or a better job. This group was facilitated by Ed Yee, Teresa Howe, and Tom Neel and met weekly. Fortunately all of the members of the group are now employed

so group meetings were discontinued. The need for this group has re-emerged, so the group is again meeting weekly, facilitated by Martin Plass.

Breast Cancer Wellness Journey: Provided support for women with breast cancer. Facilitated by Melanie Deveikas, the group met 4 times this spring. Melanie will offer this again next winter.

Living with Serious Illness: Provides support for those receiving and giving care. The group has changed its name to “Facing Illness Together” in order to accurately reflect their goals.

Next Chapter Discussion/Support Group: Rick Hawkins has proposed starting a new combined small group ministry/support group around issues of retirement. This initiative will be advertised this spring and will begin meeting next fall if there is sufficient interest.

Facilitators Gatherings: Lillian met several times with the facilitators of the small group ministry circles and other support groups.

Metrics (Average Attendance):

Ministry Programs	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Caring for Older Adults		10	8 - 10	8 - 10	8 - 10
Jobseeker Buddy Group	9	9	4 - 6	4 - 6	0 - 2 *
Living with Serious Illness	6 - 12	6 - 12	4 - 6	3 - 4	3 - 4
Men's Groups	11	12	16	14 - 18	14 - 18
Parenting Kids with Challenges		5	5	5	5
Small Group Ministry	25	22	22	23	31
Women's Groups	22	23	13 - 21	15	30
* Good news - all of the members now have jobs					

Activities and Objectives for the Upcoming Year

Engage the new ministerial intern in the work of the Ministry Program Subcommittee; Identify potential facilitators for additional small group ministries; Create a team focused on exploring options for activities and fellowship groups for young adults; Recruit three new committee members to replace retirees; Provide support for on-going and proposed new ministry program groups as needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Blumberg and Mark Davis, co-chairs

Caring Connection Committee Annual Report 2015-2016

Mission

The Mission of the Caring Connection Committee is to provide short-term assistance and support to people in our church community and to foster enriching bonds, both old & new, through this out-reach. The support we provide for individuals or families during times of challenge or crisis includes meals, visits, calls, cards, transportation, flowers and funeral collations.

Membership

- Laurie Graham, Chair
- Bob McGaw, Eloise McGaw
- Reverend Bryce

There are 100 individuals who have signed onto the Caring Crew Lotsa Helping Hands list, 75 have completed the registration process. There are 45 “active members” having either been available to provide support of some kind in the past year or who have responded to requests for filling a need.

Activities and accomplishments in prior year

Focus for the 2015-2016 year has been to fully implement using Lotsa Helping Hands to coordinate providing services and assistance and to increase Committee and Caring Crew membership.

Activities and accomplishments include providing assistance with:

- Meals and meals delivery
- Cards of sympathy and support
- Transportation and errands
- Memorial collations
- Weekly arrangement of flowers after services though this has really fallen mostly to Jim Staton
- Meeting with members of the Ministerial Programs Sub-committee to co-ordinate recruitment of Caring Connection Committee members and Coordinators

Metrics

Caring Connection Requests

Type	Requests	Fullfilled	2015%
Meals	38	30	78.95%
Rides/Errands	45	30	66.67%
Cards	28	28	100.00%
Totals	83	60	72.29%

Activities and objectives for coming year

The Caring Connection Committee will continue to work with Lay Pastoral Care, the Membership Coordinator and Reverend Bryce to identify and support First Church members and friends who are in need. Specifically, we will:

- Explore restructuring of committee
- members to the Caring Committee and to identify those who might be Caring Coordinators and
- Align Fellowship One, First Church database with Caring Connection Lotsa Helping Hands to identify the affiliations of those members in need of support and to coordinate meeting these needs
- Implement Fellowship One Database as means of communicating with Caring Connection Committee and Crew
- Continue to increase awareness of the Caring Connection as a resource within the First Church Community through newsletter, bulletin boards, New Member information

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Graham, Caring Connection Committee Chair

Children's Religious Education, Acting Director Annual Report

Mission Statement (adopted March 2010)

To foster and support a program that provides an enlightening, rewarding religious educational experience for children that:

- Is grounded in the principles of Unitarian Universalism
- Focuses on fundamental human values, life skills, and spiritual development and exploration
- Encourages an understanding and acceptance of all religions
- Creates a sense of belonging to the entire church community

CRE Committee Membership

- Patricia Garcia
- Karsten Kueppenbender
- Veera Mylapore
- Gerri Strickler
- Wendy Conroy, CRE Assistant and OWL Coordinator
- Charlotte Lehmann, Acting Director of CRE

Activities and Accomplishments in Prior Year

The First Church in Belmont's Children's Religious Education (CRE) program is vibrant and healthy. There are approximately 150 children registered from nursery through grade 8, representing 88 families at FCB.

This year, Acting Director of Children's Religious Education, Charlotte Lehmann oversaw the CRE program with invaluable help from CRE Assistant and OWL Coordinator, Wendy Conroy. Child Caregiver Denise Azar staffs the FCB's nursery on Sunday mornings. Alex Nichipor worked as the lead pre-K/K teacher from October until April. Nevertheless, it takes a lot of volunteers to have a successful religious education program. The CRE committee did not have a chairperson and operated primarily as an advisory body. A support committee for the Acting Director of CRE consisting of Lee Ackerson, Nancy Davis, Donna Ruvolo and Eleanor Sugarman exists separately from the CRE Committee. Parents and other adults fill the roles of teachers, presenters for special programs, and volunteers for special events and projects. For example, Kate Searle was the 7th grade Building Bridges (formerly known as "Neighboring Faiths") coordinator this year. Kate will continue to lead this group of kids next year in the third semester of the program. CRE has asked a 3-person team of parents to step into this role for 2016-17. Each family is asked to commit to teaching eight (8) times during the year or volunteering at least 16 hours to helping the CRE program in another way.

Teachers, primarily parents, but also including some non-parent volunteers, provide meaningful classes, using carefully prepared lesson plans, for children from pre-school through grade 8. Pre-school and kindergarten children explore Unitarian Universalist values, life skills and beliefs through age-appropriate curricula such as *Chalice Children*, *Treasure Hunters* and *Spirit Play*. Grades 1 through 6 curricula rotate on a two-year cycle – Year 1 (i.e., 2015-16): Unitarian Universalism (first semester) and Judeo-Christian Heritage (second semester) and Year 2 (i.e., 2016-17): World Religions (first semester) and Social Action (second semester). Classes are offered during both the 9 and 11 a.m. services times. In *Building Bridges*, youngsters in grades 7 (full year) and 8 (first semester) learn about our neighboring faith communities through lessons and visits to worship services around the Greater Boston metropolitan area. The UUA/UCC life-span sexuality program *Our Whole Lives (OWL)* with distinct, age-appropriate curricula, is offered to 8th graders from January through May each year on Sunday afternoons, while grade 5-6 OWL takes place from March through May during the 9 o'clock class time. Our OWL classes include kids in families outside of our congregation.

CRE Metrics

(Please note: CRE metrics for prior years are taken from the 2014-15 CRE annual report.)

Description/Year	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Nursery to 6 th grade	139	151	120	114
7 th Grade	18	18	14	25
8 th Grade	17	18	18	10
Total CRE enrollment	174	187	152	149
Volunteer teachers	77	56	61	67
Total OWL enrollment	37	48	49	40
Trained OWL Facilitators	9	10	12	14

Some specific accomplishments in the 2015-16 CRE program are:

- Extended contract of Charlotte Lehmann as Acting Director of Children’s Religious Education for a second year.
- Hired Alexandra Nichipor as Lead Pre-K/K Sunday School Teacher in October; Alex stepped down in early April after she started working full-time at a non-profit organization.

-
- Continued to stream-line CRE class grades, curricula and lesson maps to reduce the number of needed teacher-volunteers as much as possible; used on-line sign-up system and targeted e-mails to recruit volunteers. However, there were still more than 574 teaching spots in 2015-16 (including 86 for OWL), 166 at 9 a.m. and 322 at 11 a.m.
 - Sixty-seven (67) parents and other adults volunteered to teach in CRE in 2015-16.
 - First Sunday of the month, “Community Sunday” combined grade 1-6 lesson with significant worship elements: chalice lighting, children’s offering, sharing time, and theme tied to curricula.
 - The children’s offering became a standard part of Community Sunday (aka Children’s Chapel); the children choose a recipient organization twice each year (the World Wildlife Fund received \$128 in January 2016; a second recipient will be chosen in May and will receive over \$100) for their offering contributions just as they do for the Annual Holiday Gift Fair, which raised \$378 for the UUA-UUSC Refugee Crisis Relief Fund in December 2015.
 - Remaining funds (~\$509) in the CRE restricted account were used to purchase A/V equipment for CRE: a Blu-ray DVD player, flat screen TV monitor, and cart.
 - Continued the use of improved signage for CRE on Sunday mornings with permanently mounted sign holders.
 - Charlotte lead intentionally multigenerational worship services with a greater number of participants of all ages, that took place on December 20 (“Giving Our Gifts: A UU Holiday Tradition”) and March 13 (social justice-themed, “Celebrating Our Differences”), as well as the Water and Flower Communions, at the beginning and end of the year, respectively.
 - A new site (First Armenian Church at 380 Concord Avenue in Belmont) was chosen for the Eastern Christianity visit by 7th grade Building Bridges (BB) class.
 - 10-week Spirit Play curriculum for combined pre-school/kindergarten classes at 9 a.m. (Eleanor and Jim Sugarman) and 11 a.m. (Lee Ackerson and Tara Donner) from early April through mid-June.
 - Grade 5-6 UU pillar curriculum changed to *Toolbox of Faith* (previously used in grade 3-4) and grade 3-4 used *Faithful Journeys*; both are UUA Tapestry of *Faith* curricula.
 - UU Visitors came to the Community Sunday classes during the fall UU pillar; a few Bible Visitors came during the spring Judeo-Christian Heritage pillar; see newsletter columns for photos and what the kids learned.
 - Field-tested the Grade 4-6 OWL revisions with our OWL 5/6 class.
 - Field-tested “Parents and Caregivers as Sexuality Educators”, a UUA curriculum that is in development stage; 26 adults registered for the series of 10 workshops facilitated by Charlotte Lehmann and Wendy Conroy.
 - Co-sponsored two Adult Programs offerings for parents and caregivers between worship services on Parenting Concerns; the program will resume in the fall.

- Supported the Youth Programs multigenerational event titled, “Transcending the Gender Binary: How to be an Activist and an Ally” on March 13th.
- “Forty to None” Day event, co-sponsored with Adult Programs, on the issue of LGBT youth homelessness included a film – “Pariah” – and discussion on April 27th.
- Encouraged CRE families and children to participate in Belmont Serves, the UUSC Guest-At-Your-Table program, the SAC’s Annual Holiday Gift Fair, and Beyond Shelter picnic.
- In an effort to foster stronger relationships among CRE families, CRE hosted a “Welcome Back Pizza Party” on September 22nd with over 80 adults and children enjoying fellowship.
- CRE and the Youth Group resurrected the annual Halloween party tradition, with a pre-Halloween party that was well attended and a lot of fun.
- Coffee-hour was held in the Lower Gathering Hall (downstairs) three times during the year.
- The annual May “Intergenerational Tea” tradition, when FCB’s elders are invited to tea served by the children in grades 1-4, was held on May Day.

Budget

(Budget figures for prior years are taken from the 2013-14 CRE annual report, except as noted.)

Description/Year	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16*
<i>Income</i>				
Church Budget	\$3800.00	\$4180.00	\$4980.00	\$5240.00
Donations (1)	\$1105.00	\$435.00		
Other (2)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Income	\$5155.00	\$4615.00	\$4980.00	\$5240.00
<i>Expense</i>				
Curriculum & Supplies (3)	<\$4230.00>	<\$4180.00>	<\$4419.00>	<\$4750.00>
Storage cupboards (1)	<\$925.00>			
Total Expense	<\$5155.00>	<\$4180.00>	<\$4419.00>	<\$4750.00>
CRE Year-End Balance (3)	\$0.00	\$435.00	\$561.00	\$490.00

<i>CRE Offering/Holiday Fair Restricted Account (4)</i>				
Children's Offering/CRE Holiday Fair Proceeds			\$319.00	\$506.00
Donations from Children's Offering/Holiday Fair Restricted Account			<\$321.00>	<\$506.00>
CRE Offering/Holiday Fair Year-End Balance			<\$2.00>	\$0.00
<i>OWL Restricted Account (5)</i>				
Balance (as of 9/1/15)			\$3504.78	\$4424.34
OWL 2015-16 course fees (3)	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$5275.00	\$4480.00
Projected OWL 2015-16 expenses (3)			<\$4360.44>	<\$5000.00>
OWL Year-End Balance (3)			\$4419.34	\$3904.34
<i>CRE Fundraiser (6)</i>				
Net revenue raised				
Less 2011-12 expenditures				
Less 2012-13 expenditures	<\$2780.26>			
Less 2013-14 expenditures		<\$1138.84>		
Less 2014-15 expenditures			<\$0.00>	
Less 2015-16 expenditures				<\$508.84>

Remaining Balance in CRE Restricted Account (6)			\$508.84	\$0.00
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Notes: (1) estimated value, see prior-year annual report(s), (2) unused professional development funds, (3) 2013-14 expenses and year-end balance based on 10/31/14 Treasurer’s Report; 2014-15 expenses and year-end balance based on 9/1/15 Treasurer’s report; *projected* 2015-16 year-end balance based on account balances as of 5/1/16*, (4) reflects the CRE holiday fair proceeds given to UUA-UUSC Refugee Crisis Relief Fund in December 2015 and Children’s Offering donated to World Wildlife Fund in January 2016; additional funds raised by CRE offering are passed through this restricted account in June 2016, the amount of the second contribution is expected to be near \$150, (5) OWL course fees cover OWL expenses for curricula, administrative supplies, training of OWL teachers and coordinator stipends; these funds are kept in a restricted account, (6) one-time fundraising event; funds are held in a restricted account, which had a balance of \$508.84; these funds were used to purchase A/V equipment for CRE.

Activities and objectives for the coming year

- Hire a settled Director of Children’s Religious Education.
- CRE support staff will remain unchanged.
- Hire a pre-school/kindergarten teacher for the 2016-17 church year.
- Send interested volunteers to trainings for OWL and for Spirit Play.
- Include assessment of the CRE program in the future congregation-wide visioning process.
- “Building Bridges” the UUA Tapestry of Faith curriculum that replaced older Neighboring Faiths materials will be in use for both 7th and 8th graders.
- Continue to work on drafting Safe(r) Congregation policies and consistently implementing these practices.
- Explore ways to communicate congregation’s responsibility to support the CRE program through volunteerism (teaching, CRE committee membership and other service), to increase number of teaching volunteers and to decrease the number of teaching spots that must be filled while still meeting Safe(r) Congregations guidelines.
- Begin acknowledging and celebrating the CRE program and the many volunteers who teach and help with it by means of a multigenerational Religious Education Sunday at the end of the year.
- Continue to offer more opportunities for all-ages fellowship and connecting families to FCB, such as family welcome back pizza party in September, family hikes (Fellowship Committee), the family-centered Halloween party with Youth Group involvement, and holding coffee-hour in the Lower Gathering Hall 3-4 times each year.

The Communications Committee

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Communications Committee is to foster communications within and outside of First Church. The committee promotes community, ideas, activities; helping people to know what First Church stands for and who we are. The committee addresses the communication needs of the congregation members and Church committees in meeting their needs through working on various communication initiatives (technology/delivery).

The Committee is made up of volunteers who take on communication initiatives/projects from the Church throughout the year. Among the major areas of support are the:

- IT infrastructure
- Computer support for the staff
- Church Web Site & Face Book Page
- The Unitarian

This year we also coordinated discussions around audio/visual concerns.

New members are welcomed to sit in on our meetings and become part of the team. The Committee had meets bimonthly on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

Members of Committee:

Jim Sugarman (Chair), Lauren Crocker, Richard Curzi, Janes Hencke, Charlie Hill, Robin Hughes, Eva Patalas, Mark Rosenstein, Ed Yee, Janice Zazinski (Church Administrator).

Activities and accomplishments in prior year

This was a learning year, as the new chair tried to build on the excellent work the committee had accomplished in the past, and move forward with some key initiatives charged by the Parish Board and Staff.

Church Website

- Redesigned by Robin Hughes to be mobile friendly, and in line with Google search requirements.
- Janice Zazinski assisted with layout and home page content.
- Robin ran several Word Press training session so committees can maintain their own site.
- Lauren Crocker keeps the Facebook page current and events are created for Church activities.

Unitarian

- Eva Patalas & Janice had a couple of design iterations of the email version of the Unitarian. The final version has most of the content in it, with some links to the main site, and is mobile friendly.
- Constant Contact continues to be the tool used for creating congregation wide emails.
- Next year we will survey the congregation on how they read the Unitarian, and ways to increase its value.

Sermon Recordings

- Mark Rosenstein continues to post sermons to the website.

IT Issues

- Janice created a staff survey of computer and network issues encounters, and discussed it with Jim.
- Jim contacted Verizon and Comcast to see if better service was available. It isn't.
- The board recommended bringing in an outside party to use as a "Geek Squad" to help the staff, update the network infrastructure, and document and configure best practices for security, backups, software installations, etc.
- After a search BaseZen Consulting from Arlington. So far they have:
 - Fixed the minister's computer after a hard drive crash
 - Installed a 50 port switch, so that the Ethernet ports are now connected
 - Reconfigured the network router for faster internet speed
 - Conducted an inventory of all devices used by the staff.

Next project is to make the Church's wireless network increase the coverage area and make it more reliable and secure.

Budget Summary

- Telephone -- \$4,500
- Computer Networking Charges -- \$700, the same as last year
- IT/Communications -- \$4,938, up from \$3,238 last year

Activities and objectives for coming year

- Survey how the congregation uses and reads the Unitarian.
- Continue to keep the website current.
- Enhancements to the wireless networks.
- Expand the use of on-line credit card to accommodate donations, pledge payments, event fees, and take credit cards at events like the rummage sale and auctions.
- Further integrate IT and Audio/Visual activities.
- Update various communication policies – weather, photos, etc.
- Implement file sharing, security, backups, software installation best practices.
- Refresh Mission Statement and charge to the committee by the Parish Board.
- Explore digitizing the archives.
- e new Newsletter and mailing tool

Fellowship Committee

Deveaux Duckworth, Chair

Mission

The Fellowship Committee strives to bring together individuals from all age groups and with disparate interests, and enable stronger personal connections, through a variety of community-building events. Events differ from year to year, but typically include Sandy Island weekend in September, circle dinners in November, pot luck dinner in March or April, and the annual picnic in June.

Membership

Deveaux Duckworth (chair), Ariane Frank, Nina Garcia, Martin Plass, Nancy Greiner and Melissa Irion

Activities and accomplishments in prior year

The following is a list of the events that were scheduled for the 2015-2016 church year.

Welcome Back Reception- September 10, 2015

The Fellowship Committee assisted the Parish Board in hosting a welcome back reception on the first Thursday before the first service of the year. The Parish Board provides appetizers and beverages. The reception is held from 7 to 8:30 pm. This is an opportunity for the congregation to reconnect after the summer.

Sandy Island Weekend – September 18-20, 2015

The yearly trek to Lake Winnepesaukee is turning into a cherished tradition to start off the church year. About 90 congregants gathered to enjoy the many recreational opportunities at this YMCA camp. They gathered to reconnect with old friends, to make new friends and to participate in the many organized activities. Among the activities offered over the weekend were a welcoming reception on Friday evening, kayak and canoe trips around the island, the annual parent verses kids capture the flag game, a wine and cheese reception, a campfire sing-along, and a lay-led worship service on Sunday morning. In addition, there were many other opportunities to relax and play in a non-scheduled environment.

Fellowship Hike – Octory 10, 2015

A group gathered at Habitat in the afternoon for a hike through Habitat and the Meadows. Refreshments were served at Martin's house. This was a new multi-generational event.

Circle Dinners – November 7, 2015

Circle dinners are held in the fall to give people the opportunity to connect with other congregants early in the church year. Although the turnout of hosts and attendees is relatively small, the feedback from both is that the evenings are enjoyable and allow for attendees to make connections in a more intimate setting with a broader spectrum of members and friends of First Church.

All-Church Spring Potluck and Game Night – February 6, 2016

The All-Church Potluck and Game Night were combined this year. Dinner was served at 6pm with games of all types played afterwards until about 8:30pm. This event is held in off years of the auction.

All-Church Picnic – June 12, 2016

Each year approx. 250 people gather after our last official worship service of the year on the Town Green for a community picnic with the traditional BBQ and Salad Contest. In 2015, we had a lovely day with over 200 attending. The cost of the picnic is covered by the ticket sales.

Metrics

The number of participants in the various events varies each year. Sandy Island continues to have the biggest draw along with the Church Picnic.

Budget

The Fellowship Committee has a budget of \$200 to pay for drinks and publicity supplies. Final numbers will not be available until the summer but in the past the committee had not exceeded the budget.

Activities and objectives for coming year

The Fellowship Committee has reserved the following dates on the Church Calendar for 2016-2017

- 9/8/16 Welcome Back Reception (parish hall) at 7pm
- 9/16-18, 2016 Sandy Island Retreat
- 10/?/16 Fall Hike
- 11/?/15 Circle Dinners
- Not to be held in 2017 All Church Pot-Luck
- 6/?/17 All Church Picnic (outside or parish hall) 12-2

Goal for the year will be to add more members to the committee.

Grow Clinic Committee

Kathy Crawley, Chair

Mission

The Grow Clinic is a Program Committee that has existed at First Church since shortly after the Clinic's founding in 1984 by Dr. Deborah Frank. It is an outpatient program serving infants and children diagnosed with 'failure to thrive' due to malnutrition caused by illness or family stress (poverty). The Preventive Food Pantry was the first in-hospital food pantry in the U.S. and provides monthly 'shopping' for Grow Clinic families (with a physician' prescription).

The First Church of Belmont's Grow Clinic Committee supports the children and families served by the Grow Clinic and the Preventive Food Pantry at Boston Medical Center by collecting food from the congregation and delivering it. We also support and promote the Grow Clinic as a recipient of monetary gifts from various First Church programs, including the Holiday Plate collection, the Holiday Fair and Second Friday Coffeehouse. There is a permanent 'gently-used' book collection program for age-appropriate books to be given to Grow Clinic children during clinic visits. We also hope to raise awareness of the issue of hunger in our community.

Membership

Catherine Claypoole, Evelyn Corsini, Kathy Crawley (Chairperson), Laura Caputo

Additional delivery provided by Julie Graessle and Jay Ballofet

Activities and Accomplishments in Prior Year

2015-2016 Accomplishments:

Have delivered 167 bags of groceries and board books (to date May 5th) to the Grow Clinic

Raised \$386 at the Holiday Fair through the sale of Grow Clinic bags and 'Grow-Nola'

Multigenerational Service collected \$1,045 and 35 bags of groceries for the Grow Clinic

Delivered groceries to the Grow Clinic from the Waldorf High School of Massachusetts Bay from their Thanksgiving food drive

Delivered gifts from the FCB Holiday Gift program to Grow Clinic

Continued the Grow Clinic Bookshelf to collect gently used books from First Church families for Grow Clinic families

Partnered with Hanscom Primary School to transport their food donations

Will be Coffeehouse beneficiary in June

Waged special campaigns throughout the year

Protein Power, Start the Day Strong, Great January Jar Race, March Mac & Cheese Madness, Springtime for Growing—Vitamin Collecting, Stock the Shelves for Summer

Metrics

Bags of Food Delivered

	2014-2015	2015-2016
Delivery prior to end-of-year drive	193	167

Activities and objectives for coming year

*To increase number of bags delivered next year

*To increase congregation's awareness of poverty issues, with Grow Clinic as model for helping to ease hunger among the most vulnerable in our society

*To advocate for Grow Clinic to continue to be a beneficiary of FCB funds, including plate collections and coffeehouse funds

*To participate in Holiday Fair and Holiday Gift Program for Grow Clinic children

The Grow Clinic Committee is deeply grateful to the First Church Congregation for its wonderful generosity this year toward the Grow Clinic patients and their families.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Leslie Kolterman, David Warner, Co-Chairs

Jim Staton, Membership Coordinator

Mission

The Membership Committee welcomes visitors, informs newcomers about the principles of Unitarian Universalism and the structure of First Church, recognizes new members formally, introduces them to the congregation and helps them become part of the First Church community.

Membership

Co-Chairs: David Warner and Leslie Kolterman

Members: Judy McSwain, Cathy Olofson, Martha Read, Mark Thurber and Betsy Broadman

Membership Coordinator: Jim Staton

Activities and accomplishments in prior year

This year the Membership Committee advanced several initiatives to invite, welcome, and support newcomers to First Church. During the 2015/16 year there were 52 first time visitors.

David Warner and Leslie Kolterman were diligent in their devotion to maintain a full roster of ushers. This year, the Membership Committee developed an on-line sign-up option for ushering to complement the sign-up poster available during coffee hour, which was a success. The role of usher includes preparing the sanctuary, handing out orders of service, managing the offering plate, and recording attendance.

The Membership Committee members take responsibility to identify visitors and make them feel welcome at coffee hour. The committee members organized and prepared to host a “reunion” for recent new members. The weather did not cooperate and the event was combined with a pot luck and game night organized by the Fellowship Committee. The combined event was very successful.

Ushers this year included the 84 individuals, 76 adults and 8 youth ushers, listed below. This year, the Membership Committee worked with Children’s Religious Education to include youth ushers on designated Sundays, which worked out well. During the course of the year there are 76 Sunday services, as well as holidays, and special occasions. Thus, many people served at multiple services during each term. Thank you to: **Adult Ushers** - Joanne Adamowicz, Lee Ackerson, Bethany Allen, Pam Andrews, Cheryl Brown, Katharine Canfield, Alan Cantor, Downing Cless, Sarah Cliffe, Priscilla Cobb, Evelyn Corsini, Martha Courant, Lauraine Dalton, Mark Davis, Nancy Davis, Ann Dexter, Connie Dicocco, Diana Dill, Abigail Donner, Dianthe Eisendrath, Margaret Ekland, Bev Freeman, David Fung, Laurie Graham, Denis Green, Michael Griffin, Peter Guthrie, Ana Hammock, Mary Harrison, Debora Hoffman, Carolyn Howard, Jeanne Johnson, Michelle Johnson, Betsy Klimasmith, Leslie Kolterman, John Kolterman, Brian Kopperl, Anjali Kumar, Karsten Kueppenbender, ML Landfried, Jim Landfried, Jeff Larson, Marianne Leahy, Kathy Lind, John Little, Bruce Logan, Jen

Marler, Margaret Marks, Judy McSwain, Scott Moorman, Verra Mylapore, Claudia Nasson, Sandy Nayak, Sara Oaklander, Kathy Olofson, Eva Patalas, Hanspeter Pfister, Martin Plass, Milo Plass, Andrea Prestwich, Martha Read, Jody Renouf, Mark Rosenstein, Catherine Scott, Thomas Schieber, Dave Scott, Martha Spaulding, Lanier Smythe, Jim Staton, Leslie Talmadge, Barbara Terry, Mark Thurber, Alice Trexler, David Warner, Leslie Wolf and Jack Weis **Youth Ushers** - Graham Backman, Marcus Davidson, Mariko Findell, Esperanza Garschina-Bobrow, Tilly Hamer, Lilly Pfister, Ian Svetkey and Ella Ciccolo. Thanks to all.

Judy McSwain continued to fulfill the crucial role on the Membership Committee by watching over the name tags. She monitors the tags, fixes those needing repair, and recycles those no longer in use to assure an adequate supply of tags for new friends and members. The process is very “labor intensive.” The Parish Board at its April 2016 meeting approved funds to obtain a new system of name tags which will be introduced in September 2016.

After at least 10 years of service on the committee with a major role in recruiting and orienting ushers David Warner is moving on to other activities. His graciousness and goodwill will be greatly missed.

The following individuals signed the membership book during this church year, as of May 4th, 2016. It is possible more new members may be added prior to the May 15th Annual Meeting, and New Member Sunday:

Debora Hoffman	Christine O’Neill	Eleanor Austin
Andrea Spencer	Collin Spencer	Jeanne Johnson
Michelle Johnson	Anne Adams	Thomas Schieber
Margaret Eklind	Abigail Donner	Joanne Birge

Metrics

Church Year	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Visitors	54	60	52
New members	16	10	12
Removed members (moved)	4	5	10
Removed members (deceased)	3	2	0

Removed members (inactive)	4	4	12
Total membership	412	411	401

Director of Music Report

Ian Garvie

Our Mission Statement:

The Music Committee supports the church's music program. Its aims are:

- *To provide music that will set and sustain a mood for worship in the services, lending a spiritual and emotional backdrop to the spoken word;*
- *To engender a sense of community and spirituality among participants and listeners, in worship services, as well as in a wide range of other activities;*
- *To use music as a form of community outreach by providing opportunities for people of all ages to participate in, or enjoy musical performances that attract and sustain new church members and friends.*

It is a pleasure to report that this year the music program at the First Church in Belmont is thriving. The transition of leadership from the long tenure of Rev. Alfa Radford went smoothly. I was assisted by Dylan Sauerwald, our Organist and Assistant Music Director, as well as the other members of the FCB staff - Rev. David Bryce, Minister; Charlotte Lehmann, Acting Children's RE Director; Julie Ennis, Youth Advisor; Lillian Anderson, Adult Programs Advisor; Jim Staton, Membership Coordinator, and Janice Zazinski, Church Administrator. Together we were able to create a series of engaging, varied, and sincere worship services throughout the year.

Highlights of 2015-2016 are outlined by Eliza Burden in her Music Committee Report. I am grateful to Eliza for her leadership as Chair of the Music Committee. Her assistance has been invaluable as I have navigated my first year as Director of Music. Additional members of the Music Committee include Richard Curzi, David Deese, Greg Duckworth, Joanna Dunn, Gretchen McClain, Jane Minasian, Bruce Kozuma, and Catherine Stalberg. We are fortunate to have such a large group of people who are as passionate about the music program at the church, and who are committed to its ongoing vitality.

For our Youth & Children's Choirs 36th annual musical, I chose the iconic Broadway musical "*The Wizard of Oz*." During the summer, Sandy Nayak and I created an adaptation of the full Royal Shakespeare Company version that was appropriate for our young players. The production staff included Michael Romero, choreographer; Sandy Nayak, Backstage Director/Costumer; Dylan Sauerwald, Pianist and Assistant Director; Vickie Livermore, Diane Lopez, and Kate Searle, Assistant Directors; Greg Duckworth, set design and construction, assisted by Josh Salomon, Ed Wintner, Reed Irion, Brian Kopperl, Kent Findell, and many, many others; Guy Parsons III, John Hughes, and Kent Findell, lighting; Stefan Frank, Peter Ickes, and Jon Svetkey, sound; plus a cast and crew of more than 100 people, including many other enthusiastic volunteers. The double cast was comprised of choristers age 5 to 15, and the show was an enormous success in every way. I wholeheartedly echo Alfa's sentiment that one of the most important results of the musical is that of community-building within the church. There were four performances, November 12th-15th, and the net proceeds were approximately \$10,000. This, as always, went into the general operating budget of the church. Our young players turned in stellar performances and character portrayals. Some of the many memorable moments were the Wicked Witch's solo "No Good Deed Goes Unpunished" as well as Dorothy's familiar

“Somewhere over the Rainbow.” The Junior Choir groups elicited rousing applause for their roles as the crows, the young Munchkins, and the Grenadiers of the Emerald City.

This past November, the First Church hosted the annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, a tradition that brings many local congregations and ministers together. The choir for the service is formed of volunteers from any of the participating congregations, and several guest joined us to sing that evening. There was strong representation from both of our adult choirs, and the music was delightful.

At the Sunday Christmas Music Service, held on the morning of December 13th, the Sr. Choir and soloists sang C.P.E. Bach’s *Magnificat* with a professional chamber orchestra. For the Spring Music Service on Palm Sunday, March 20th, the Sr. Choir and soloists presented the famous *Requiem* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Both performances were attended by well over 200 congregants and received enthusiastic standing ovations.

Our professional quartet of soloists/section leaders are Melanie Bacaling, soprano; Irina Kareva, alto; Davron Monroe, tenor; and Chuck Claus, baritone. The Sr. Choir sang every Sunday morning at the 11:00 Services, and the Nova Choir sang twice a month at the 9:00 Services. The three Youth/Children’s choirs sang at various Intergenerational services, including Christmas Eve. The Alumni Choir (former Youth Choir members) continued their tradition of singing at the 11pm Service on Christmas Eve. This seems to be appreciated by many parishioners, and has the added benefit of relieving the overcrowding at 6:00pm. There were 33 alums in the 2015 Christmas Alumni Choir!

Currently, the choral music program is comprised of approximately 135 singers (plus 33 alums in Dec.) There are five ongoing choirs, as well as two additional, self-directed groups--the *Linden Singers* (a male quartet), and *Canzona* (a women’s ensemble). All groups are thriving. I have continued to direct the *Nova Choir* (16-20 adults), along with the *Sr. Choir* (30-40 adults), *Jr. Choir* (40 K-Gr.4); the 18-voice *Chancel Choir* (Gr. 5-6); and the *Youth Choir* (18 teens). A warm thank you to Dylan for his consistent, professional accompaniment, the section leaders, and all of the parishioners who share their time and talent with all of us.

The *21st Annual Piano Celebration* took place on January 24th. Ten performers participated in this popular event, including parishioners, friends, and students. We were unfortunately hit by a rather dramatic snow storm that night, so the audience was small, but nevertheless enthusiastic. Thanks to the generosity of numerous donors, funds were raised for the Piano-Organ Fund to be used for ongoing maintenance of our instruments.

Looking ahead: June 5th marks the *38th Annual Chamber Music Concert*, a benefit for the SPARK Center (formerly known as Pediatric AIDS Program) at Boston Medical Center. The concert program will feature music for harpsichord, piano, trumpet, voice, and violin. The performers give freely of their talents to combine music with social action. This annual event was instituted in 1979 in celebration of the gift of a harpsichord built by the late Harrison Radford. This month, the harpsichord will be taken by Dale Munsch, a local antiquarian keyboard expert, who will be restoring the instrument. Work to be undertaken includes re-stringing the instrument, changing the setting of the pins in the pin block, revoicing the plectra, and possibly removing a note in order to make it a transposing instrument. With these updates, the harpsichord will be a quality performing instrument again.

It is with regret that I announce that our Organist and Assistant Music Director, Dylan Sauerwald, will not be returning next year. He will be moving to New York, where he will be pursuing other

opportunities. The Music Committee is in the process of searching for candidates to fill the position and will notify the community as soon as an Organist is hired.

My heart-felt thanks to the entire community for all of the help, support, and advice during my transition to Director of Music here at First Church. I am fortunate to be working with such a caring community, and I look forward to more music making ahead of all of us!

Respectfully submitted May, 2016,

Ian Garvie

Director of Music

Music Committee

Eliza Burden, Chair

Mission

The Music Committee supports the church's music program and assists the Director of Music in financial and policy matters relating to the program. Among the primary aims of the Music Program/Music Committee are the following:

To provide music that will set and sustain a mood for worship in the services, lending a spiritual and emotional backdrop to the spoken word;

To engender a sense of community and spirituality among participants and listeners, in worship services, as well as in a wide range of other activities;

To use music as a form of community outreach by providing opportunities for people of all ages to participate in, or enjoy musical performances that attract and sustain new church members and friends.

Membership: Eliza Burden (Chair), Richard Curzi, David Deese, Greg Duckworth, Joanna Dunn, Gretchen McClain, Jane Minasian, Rev. Alfa Radford, Catherine Stalberg

Activities and accomplishments, 2015-2016

November 12-15, 2015, 36th annual children's musical, *The Wizard of Oz*

December 13, 2015, Christmas Music Service: CPE Bach's *Magnificat*

January 24, 2016, 21st Annual Piano Celebration Concert

March 20, 2016 Spring Music Service: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Requiem*

Upcoming: June 5, 2016: 38th Annual Chamber Music Concert

It is a pleasure to report that this year the music program at the First Church in Belmont is thriving. The Music Committee is so pleased that the transition of leadership from the long tenure of Rev. Alfa Radford to Director of Music Ian Garvie has gone very smoothly. Ian was assisted by Dylan Sauerwald, our accomplished Organist and Assistant Music Director, as well as the other members of the FCB staff. Together they were able to create a series of engaging, varied, and sincere worship services throughout the year.

Our professional quartet of soloists/section leaders are Melanie Bacaling, soprano; Irina Kareva, alto; Davron Monroe, tenor; and Chuck Claus, baritone. The Sr. Choir sang every Sunday morning at the 11:00 Services, and the Nova Choir sang twice a month at the 9:00 Services. The three Youth/Children's choirs sang at various Intergenerational services, including Christmas Eve. The Alumni Choir (former Youth Choir members) continued their tradition of singing at the 11pm Service on Christmas Eve. This seems to be appreciated by many parishioners, and has the added benefit of relieving the overcrowding at 6:00pm. There were 33 alums in the 2015 Christmas Alumni Choir!

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During the course of the church year, several parishioners and youth played and/or sang preludes, offertories, and postludes on various instruments, including piano, mandolin, flute, guitar, clarinet, recorder, violin, oboe, drums, autoharp, dulcimer, and much more, which added artistic variety as well as spiritual depth to morning worship. To give just a few examples, there was multi-cultural music; gospel, bluegrass, Middle-Eastern music; American jazz, Latino jazz, traditional, secular, and classical, plus delights such as family ensembles: Curzi, Quay-Svetkey, Racz-Kozuma, Livermore-Findell, Read, and Wooster.

For our 36th annual fall musical, Ian chose the "*The Wizard of Oz.*" The production staff included Michael Romero, choreographer; Sandy Nayak, Backstage Director/Costumer; Dylan Sauerwald, Pianist and Assistant Director; Vickie Livermore, Diane Lopez, and Kate Searle, Assistant Directors; Greg Duckworth, set design and construction, assisted by Josh Salomon, Ed Wintner, Reed Irion, Brian Kopperl, Kent Findell, and many, many others; Guy Parsons III, John Hughes, and Kent Findell, lighting; Stefan Frank, Peter Ickes, and Jon Svetkey, sound; plus a cast and crew of more than 100 people, including many other enthusiastic volunteers. The double cast was comprised of choristers age 5 to 15, and the show was an enormous success in every way, one of the most important being that of a community-building effort within the church. There were four performances, November 12th-15th, and the net proceeds were approximately \$10,000. This, as always, went into the general operating budget of the church. Our young players turned in stellar performances and character portrayals. Some of the many memorable moments were the Wicked Witch's solo "No Good Deed Goes Unpunished" as well as Dorothy's familiar "Somewhere over the Rainbow." The Junior Choir groups elicited rousing applause for their roles as the crows, the young Munchkins, and the Grenadiers of the Emerald City.

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generosity of numerous donors, funds were raised for the Piano-Organ Fund to be used for ongoing maintenance of our instruments.

Expenditures made from the Music Funds: During the course of the year, the Music Committee also made several expenditures from the music funds Alfa Radford Legacy Memorial Endowment (ARLME), the Duesenberry Fund and the Piano/Organ fund:

ARLME – Proceeds from the ARLME fund were used to pay for a digital and searchable inventory of all the First Church music.

Duesenberry Fund – This fund was used to cover a portion of the orchestra players for both the December and the Palm Sunday Major Music Services.

Piano/Organ Fund – This fund was used for piano and organ tunings during the year, and will cover the cost of a major refurbishment of the harpsichord by Dale Munsch to be undertaken shortly (approx. \$3,300). The fund will also be used to cover the cost of piano locks to be utilized when the facility is being rented.

Looking ahead: June 5th marks the *38th Annual Chamber Music Concert*, a benefit for the SPARK Center at Boston Medical Center. The concert program will feature music for harpsichord, piano, trumpet, voice, and violin. The performers give freely of their talents to combine music with social action. This annual event was instituted in 1979 in celebration of the gift of a harpsichord built by the late Harrison Radford.

It is with regret that the Music Committee announces that our Organist and Assistant Music Director, Dylan Sauerwald, will not be returning next year. He will be moving to New York, where he will be pursuing other opportunities. The Music Committee is in the process of searching for candidates to fill the position and will notify the community as soon as an Organist is hired.

Huge thanks to Ian for his enthusiasm, professionalism, vision and energy in maintaining the vitality of our music program here at First Church. We are so pleased that he is such an integral part of the First Church community and we look forward to next year!

Choir Leadership:

Director of Music, Ian Garvie, directs the following choir groups:

Senior Choir (auditioned choir) – Sings every Sunday at 11am service

The Junior Choir (K-Grade 4)

The Chancel Choir (Grade 5-6)

The Youth Choir

The Alumni Choir (former youth choristers that participate in Christmas Eve services)

Asst. Music Director, Ian Garvie, directs: Nova Choir (16-20 adults) – Sings 2X per mo., 9am

Soloists/Section Leaders:

Melanie Bacaling, Soprano

Irina Kareva, Alto

Davron Monroe, Tenor

Chuck Claus, Baritone

Activities and objectives for coming year

To enhance and support the spiritual and aesthetic experience of our worship services

To maintain the quality of the music offered at FCB and the integrity of our instruments

To increase participation of the FCB community, across all constituencies, in music

To continue to offer music as a form of community outreach and as a way to help make contributions to causes outside and within the church.

To support Ian Garvie as he continues into his second year leading the FCB Music Program

To choose a new Assistant Music Director/Organist and support that employee's integration into the music program

Respectfully submitted by Eliza Burden, Chair of Music Committee, May 2016

Nominating Committee

Mission:

The Nominating Committee, consisting of six members who serve staggered terms of up to three years, recruits and nominates a slate of candidates to fill the open positions on the Parish Board, the Finance Committee, and the Nominating Committee. This slate is sent to the clerk of the Parish Board who gives notice to The First Church members at least three weeks before the Annual Meeting. The full slate is then elected at the Annual Meeting (see by-laws section 8.02 / 5.02)

Membership: Bev Gillette and Eva Patalas, co-chairs. Sam James, Kate Searle, Doug Burden, Leslie Kolterman

Accomplishments:

This year's committee met monthly, for one highly efficient hour, between January and May, supported by email communication in the interim. Over the past few years, the NomCom has been building a database of potential candidates for the Parish Board. This year proved the value of this work, and we would highly recommend this forward thinking approach for other committees in the church. Reviewing the list of First Church members who said that this would be a good year to serve, we asked and found we were right on the mark. We are delighted by the strong slate of candidates that we are presenting for both next year's Parish Board and Nominating Committee.

Our strategic plans for the Finance Committee have been less successful, so we are suggesting a few changes. Past practice has been for the Finance Committee (and occasionally the Parish Board) to suggest names for its committee (knowing its particular needs and the skills necessary.) New names were then vetted and approached by the NomCom. However, we had been a little too casual about the terms of FinCom service laid out in the church by-laws (maximum of two, 3 year terms.) April found us with a number of expired terms and two few members going forward. This spring marks the return of carefully laid out terms for the Fin Com members and the beginning of more support. We take full responsibility for what was, previously, a lapse on our part.

Goals for the coming year:

With another strong Nominating Committee in place, we will continue our primary role of filling open positions on the Parish Board, the Finance Committee, and the Nominating Committee in 2017. As always, we welcome and encourage names of interested church members for any of these positions. We will continue to develop our database of timely prospects and in the coming year we plan to continue this year's goal of posting past and current agendas and meeting notes on-line.

Finally – my sincere thanks to this year's committee – truly, you have been a treat to work with.

Respectfully submitted,

Bev Gillette, chair 2015-16

Addendum: Officers and slates from 2006-present with thanks to Eva Patalas for this research

Social Action Committee Annual Report

Patricia Garcia, Chair

Mission:

The Social Action Committee strives to deliver events that will educate, energize and inspire church members and friends to action on global and local social justice issues while promoting our Unitarian Universalist principles. These events focus on the following four themes:

- Poverty Alleviation
- Human Rights
- Environmental Protection
- Peace Activism and Conflict Resolution

Action is our Prayer: We work hard to put the social back in social action!

Membership

Patricia Garcia,	Chair
Deborah Locket	Former Chair, Holiday Fair
Kathryn Crawley	Vice Chair, Grow Clinic, Holiday Fair, Rummage Sale, A Path Appears.
Nancy Davis	Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry Delegate, Rummage Sale
Sean Westgate	Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry Delegate/programs
Michael Collins	Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry Delegate/programs
Jim Lanfried	UUSC Committee chair
Bill Zinn	UUSC Liaison, Holiday Fair,
Downing Cless	UUSC Committee member – FCB Green Committee member
Alice Trexler	UUSC Committee member
Frederica Frost	UUSC Committee member
Jim Staton	UUSC Committee member and Staff liaison
Eva Patalas	Holiday Fair,
Jackie Neel	Human Rights Subcommittee chair - A Path Appears
Laurie Carter Nobel	Holiday Fair,
Jean Dickinson	Coalition to end Gun Violence, Holiday Fair
Priscilla Cobb	Coalition to end Gun Violence,
Evelyn Corsini	Holiday Fair Treasurer, Grow Clinic
Sara Oaklander	Holiday Gift Program, Human Rights, Parish Board Liaison
Marion Westgate	Holiday Fair
Dorothy Stoneman	Beyond Ferguson Discussions
James MacKey	Beyond Ferguson Discussions
Betsy Broadman-	Beyond Ferguson Discussions
Debbie Page	Beyond Ferguson Discussions, Holiday Fair, Bulletin Boards
Lyn Read	Transylvania Church co-chair,
Livia Racz	Transylvania Church co-chair

Sara Calkins

Transylvania Church, Beyond Ferguson Discussions

Sub-Committees:

Human Rights Subcommittee: A Path Appears Project

Using the data collected in the Community Surveys done over the previous year during the events leading up to and including Nicolas Kristof coming to Belmont to speak, the Committee decided to focus on the top three concerns. Hunger, Homelessness, and Education/Literacy. Members of organizations within Belmont representing each of these areas were recruited to be part of the committee. It was determined to focus on one large event and to hold it in the Spring. Local humorist/comedian Jimmy Tingle was selected to be the performer and partner for the Fundraiser.

Some basic organizing was done in the Fall. It was necessary for the Committee to take a hiatus from December to April when the major advertising and organization of the May 7th event happened. The goal was to raise enough \$ to give each organization \$1000. To do this we needed to have sold 262 tickets. We met our goal and some, selling 299 tickets. When the audience was asked how they found out about the event, the most responses were- the Belmont Citizen article, the A Path Appears mailing, and the sandwich boards on Concord Avenue. Belmont Against Racism served as the fiscal conduit for this project.

UUSC Team 2015-2016

The UUSC Team strives to inform the First Church community about the current goals and activities of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) and to gather support for UUSC from within our church. The mission of UUSC is to advance human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies. The First Church is the founding congregation of the Unitarian Service Committee.

United Universalist Urban Ministry (UUUM)

Sean Westgate, Michael Collins and Nancy Davis were appointed as delegates to the UUUM and have actively participated in a variety of projects the UUUM offers. They have also worked intensively to bring awareness to FCB of their needs and ways our congregation can participate. This year Michael Collins announced his resignation as a delegate, we are seeking for a third delegate to the UUUM.

UUUM Delegates 2013/2015: Nancy Davis, Michael Collins, and Sean Westgate

- First Church members and friends make weekly visits to Urban Ministry, some are there 3 times a week, to teach ESL to past and current Renewal House residents. Started by Patricia Garcia several years ago, and carried on by Nancy Davis and others. These classes have

become so popular now that they currently have about 12 teachers volunteering for this program.

- First Church members gathered in teams to provide three dinners for the Urban Ministry Youth Program. One of First Church men's group has provided a dinner for many years, a newly formed men's group provided dinner. We expect to engage more groups in upcoming years
- First Church Members volunteered to conduct mock college/job interviews for students grades 9 to 12. These interviews not only help students prepare for their beyond High School journey but also allow volunteers learn from these student's life stories and struggles to get where they are, and their vision for a promising future.
- First Church members also spend several days a week at Urban Ministry assisting students with homework and other forms of tutoring sessions, and in an effort to provide appropriate teaching tools for all of these and other efforts.
- First Church Social Action Committee and the Religious Education Committee have co-sponsored for four years a "Beyond Shelter Picnic" for 40 adults and 30 children who are current or former residents of Renewal House shelter. Members of SAC prepared food, seventh grade students volunteered to lead games and arts and crafts tables and seventh grade parents donated presents for goodie bags. This was very successful, a great learning experience for adults and children. We have instituted this event as a service trip for Seventh Grade Neighboring Faiths Program.

Advocacy to End Gun Violence

Priscilla Cobb and Jean Dickinson started a Gun Buy Back Program in Belmont in 2014. This year they were contacted by the Belmont Police Chief, Officer McLaughlin, so that we organize in Belmont a second Gun Buy Back program. This time are going to be part of a 5 town regional gun buy-back including the cities of Cambridge, Arlington, Somerville, Watertown and the town of Belmont on June 11, 2016.

Cambridge's original event was modeled after Belmont's initiative, following detailed conversations with Jean. From those discussions they created a "How To" manual that is now being used as a model for all towns involved.

*SAC voted to make a \$250 donation to the Program.

*A request is being made to the Parish Board to be an official sponsor again.

*We are exceedingly proud of and grateful to Jean and Priscilla for their outstanding leadership!

Beyond Ferguson: Bridging the Class, Cultural, and Racial Separations Committee

This committee started after the town of Belmont had a vigil at First Church as a response to act of police violence that had happened against young black men.

We gather once a month at FCB under the leadership of Dorothy Stoneman, James Mackey and Patricia Garcia, with participation of the Belmont Police Department, members from Belmont Against Racism and Belmont Human Rights, young activists from Boston. We are working on expanding our connections to link Belmont High School students with the Teen Empowerment group from Roxbury, Somerville and Dorchester.

Additional Activities and accomplishments in 2015-2016

6th Annual Holiday Fair:

This year's Holiday Fair brought together 19 different charitable organizations, each represented by First Church member or friend. The Holiday Fair provides space for each of these outstanding groups to raise funds by selling specialty merchandise to members and friends in advance of the holidays. Examples of sale items range from hand-made baskets from Africa with proceeds benefitting an orphanage, fleece blankets designed by our very own Youth Group and whose proceeds benefit the biannual Youth Mission Trip, candles and other hand crafts made by our very own Children's RE classes, and chocolate bark and spiced nuts made by members of the Social Action Committee and whose proceeds benefit several SAC designated organizations.

In addition to highlighting for the entire congregation the many charitable organizations members and friends work with all year long and their very special and unique circumstances, the Fair also provides an opportunity to socialize with one another, something that we often forget to do as we bury ourselves in our very busy schedules.

Annual Rummage Sale:

This year we did not find enough leadership to run the Rummage sale. We are getting a strong committee together to run the sale next year.

Boston Medical Center Grow Clinic:

Spearheaded by Kathryn Crawley, there are now three members who work with Grow Clinic project which includes collecting donated food and delivering it to Boston Medical Center each week. All donated items go directly from shelf to families in need of Grow Clinic assistance. First Church is responsible for donating badly needed baby formula and other price prohibitive specialized foods and are directly responsible for assisting those "failure to thrive" babies reach adequate weight levels to put them onto the "normal" grow charts. And with First Church's continued support, we are now able to offer the Boston Medical Grow Clinic think through even more dynamic and positively ways to impact these families.

Transylvania Partner Church:

Spearheaded by Livia Racz and Lynn Peterson-Reed, the Transylvania Partner Church is becoming more visible to First Church members and friends as the four plate collections directed to our Partner Church are now accompanied with remarks on the significance of our relationship with the Partner Church and their attendance at the Holiday Fair and a designated lay led services are all supporting

ways this church remains familiar with this important relationship. This year a group from Transylvania Partner Church visited Belmont. SAC sponsored a dinner for them and collaborated in various activities. The TPC committee will provide a report of this visit.

Continued efforts to provide the “Alternative Gift Program”:

This program, which got its start with the 1st Annual Holiday Fair, and spearheaded by Laurie Noble and Eva Patalas continues to deliver contributions to chosen non-profit organizations (either of our choosing or yours) in honor of that special person and/or celebration. The Social Action Committee takes care of sending the recipient a note with your name on it. We offer this service to all First Church members and friends all year round and look forward to making this program even more commonplace over the coming months and years.

Second Friday Coffeehouse Annual Report 2015-2016

Mission Statement and History

The 2015-2016 season marks 31 years of continuous operation for the Second Friday Coffeehouse. It is the original all-benefit coffeehouse of greater Boston. Its purposes are three: to support worthy beneficiaries locally, nationally, and globally; to share acoustic music from a range of talented and generous performers; to create an atmosphere of fellowship and good will. Members of the congregation who have an interest in participating in the Coffeehouse Committee should contact Jim Staton or any other member of the committee. We welcome new members at all times.

Performers

The performers for the September 2015 - June 2016 season: (m=main act, o=opener); September: Polly and Anand (m), And Then There Was One (o); October: The Blues Rockers with Jim Sugarman (m), The Griffins (o); November: Emily Vick Agnew (m), Jim Hall (o); January: All Youth Group Night at the Coffeehouse; February: Jim Infantino (m), Chris Holm, Roger Miller and Chuck Greene (o); March: All Berklee Night at the Coffeehouse -- Ellie Buckland and Isa Burke, of Lula Wiles Band; April: Jon Svetkey and Heather Quay (m), Tammy Patrick and Jeff Farias (o); May: John Bunzli (m), Gerri Strickler and Friends (o); June: All Richard Curzi and Friends. The Coffeehouse committee extends its infinite gratitude and respect to these generous musicians who contribute their remarkable talents to performing benefits.

Beneficiaries.

The featured beneficiaries for the September 2015 – June 2016 season are Our Transylvania Partner Church in Desfalva, Romania; The Belmont Food Collaborative; Izotalillo Village, El Salvador Sister Cities; Midnight Run, Support and Bonding for NYC Homeless; Bristol Lodge Shelters and Kitchens; Youth Build, Education, Job Skills, and Giving Back to Home Communities for At-Risk Youth; The Transylvania Archives Project, Reclaiming the Past, Inspiring the Future; Renewal House, Safe Shelter and Support; The Grow Clinic at Boston Medical Center; The UU Urban Ministry.

Income

From May, 2015 through April, 2016, the Coffeehouse earned a total of \$10,844 (\$2499 in proceeds at the door and \$8345 from the sales of Season Tickets). Each year, total Coffeehouse income from the full September through June season is equally distributed among the season's ten beneficiaries. (The observant reader will note that sections 1-3 above refer to full September-June seasons. Because of the schedule of the Annual Meeting in May, our income reports include May and June of the prior season and end with April of the current season.)

Respectfully submitted,

Lauraine Dalton and Anne Selman

The Worship Committee Annual Report

Mission

The Worship Committee is responsible for working with the professional staff and congregation to foster meaningful worship in the church community.

Membership

Rev. David Bryce, Jen Deaderick, Ariane Frank (chair), Ian Garvie, Paul Judge, Lanier Smythe

Activities and accomplishments in prior year

- Organized and provided lay leadership for 12 summer services:

6/21/2015	Jackie + Sam James	Our Summer Journeys; Reflecting on our spiritual values
6/28/2015	Clifford Backman	The History of Forgiveness
7/5/2015	Lisa Stewart	The Real Work of Mission Work
7/12/2015	Dorothy Stoneman	The Power of Love and Opportunity for Overcoming the Odds.
7/19/2015	Sheila Cavanaugh	Who is our neighbor? The Parable of the Good Samaritan
7/26/2015	Julius Frank	Nuances of Empathy
8/2/2015	Jen Deaderick	A Room to Swear In
8/9/2015	Richard Waring	Poetry in Medicine
8/16/2015	Katharine Canfield	What's on your Spiritual Bucket List?
8/23/2015	Stefan Frank	The Power of Our Brain and How it Makes Equality Difficult
8/30/2015	Edwin Taylor + Doris Hunter	Worth and Dignity
9/6/2015	Eva Patalas, Ariane Frank + Jill Coelho	Fearfully and Wonderfully Made - The Spirituality of Knitting

Attendances History

2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
374	259	336

- Continued to work with David Bryce to build the Worship Assistants program. Assistants Douglas Burden, Katharine Canfield, Parish Dobson, Eloise McGaw, Edwin Taylor, and Richard Waring met with the minister several times throughout the year, helped to shape sermons, and participated actively in the several services.
- Worked with church members/friends to present Shared Spiritual Journeys (SSJ) and Committee Reflections (CR) for 7 services; Presenters: Edwin Taylor (CR), Leslie Kolterman(SSJ), Martha Gallagher (SSJ), Jeanne Widmer (SSJ), Ben Bauer (SSJ), Mary Harrison (CR), Karsten Küppenbender (SSJ).
- Organized and provided lay leadership for Sunday, December 27; Lay leader: Catherine Stalberg; Topic: “Looking forward, Looking back, with a Peaceful Heart.”; attendance: 12 people.
- Organized and provided lay leadership for Easter Sunrise Service at the Belmont Habitat, March 27; Lay Leaders: Kathy Crawley and Kristin Philips; attendance about 15 people.

Budget

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-16
Income			
Church budget	\$720	\$400	\$500
Summer Offering*	\$1,681	\$1,213	\$1,814
Total	\$2,401	\$1,613	\$2,314
Expenses			
Candles/supplies/workshops	\$100	\$267	\$417
Outside Speakers for Summer Service	\$150	\$150	\$250
Accompanists/child care for Summer Service	\$560	\$520	\$440
Total	\$750	\$1,137	\$1,107

*Summer offering pays for childcare at \$40.00/week, and a pianist at \$20/week; the remainder has been added to the church fund.

Activities and objectives for coming year

The Worship Committee will continue in the coming year to work with professional staff and members of the congregation to create and sustain meaningful worship experiences. As part of that large goal we will:

- Continue to provide lay-led summer services and other services during the year such as those that we have provided for Easter sunrise, and the Sunday between Christmas, and New Year.
- Continue to evaluate the potential for a well-functioning Worship Associates program that will support professional staff and engage members of the congregation in the worship service.
- Explore possibilities to involve 7 and 8 graders in the Sunday Service.

Youth Programs, Director Annual Report

Julie Ennis

Mission

The Director of Youth Programs, Julie Ennis, has overseen the vibrant Youth Ministry at The First Church in Belmont for the past 8 years. This 2015-2016 church year is her last in this position.

60 participants were enrolled in the Coming of Age program and the Youth Group this year. The Director of Youth Programs is charged with promoting a youth empowerment philosophy with the Youth Group while coordinating and encouraging the six components of balanced youth ministry: community building, leadership development, worship, social action, learning and youth-adult relations. Julie also administers the Coming of Age program and recruits adult mentors. She works closely with the Youth Committee, 3 Youth Advisors, 4 COA Mentors, youth leaders, the Lifespan Religious Education team and staff to provide ministry with youth, as well as to collaborate on multigenerational events and services. Additional responsibilities include providing pastoral care, program administration and on-going communication with youth, families, mentors, chaperones and the greater FCB community. Every other year the Director of Youth Programs coordinates outreach, curriculum, itinerary design, and logistics for a week-long service-learning trip.

The Youth Group (grades 10-12) strives to create an open and supportive environment where teenagers can be themselves and connect with a compassionate community. Largely youth led, but supervised and guided by our Director of Youth Programs and 3 Advisors; we practice leadership skills, engage in social action, explore spirituality, and model Unitarian Universalist principles in an inclusive community. Youth Group engages its members in a mix of large and small group activities, which combine thoughtful discussion and reflection with fun and action! We play games, search for meaning, and make time for quiet reflection in the midst of our busy and sometimes pressured lives. We also plan and take part in weekend retreats, fundraisers, social events, and volunteer service-learning, throughout the year.

The Coming of Age program is designed for ninth graders, who are beginning high school and are transitioning through adolescence and into young adulthood. Many faiths recognize this milestone of “Coming of Age” with a religious tradition — Catholic confirmation or Jewish bar/bat mitzvah, for example. Unitarian Universalists honor this time of transition for both students and families with the Coming of Age program.

The goal of the Coming of Age program is to create a supportive environment where youth are able to explore big questions, reflect on their beliefs, and ultimately have the confidence to make decisions based on their values. In this program, students explore their UU roots alongside the personal beliefs and values that they are developing. Together with adult mentors, students put their faith into action through community service projects, social action and by working to develop language to express their personal beliefs. The Coming of Age program runs from

September through May and culminates when the youth share their personal credo statements at a ceremony in the spring.

Youth Committee Report

Membership

The Youth Group had 42 members this year. 13 senior class members will graduate this spring. The Youth Group was supported by our Volunteer Advisors: Lynn Anderson, Jody Renouf, John Kolterman and Stefan Frank.

The Coming of Age program had 18 participants this year. The 9th graders will share their credos at a ceremony in May. COA was supported by 4 Volunteer Mentors: Cara Noferi, Lisa Eschenbach, Brian Iler and John Hughes.

Youth Group Activities and Accomplishments

YOUTH LEADERSHIP: Engaged 9 youth in the Youth Advisory Council (YAC), where they created a vision and goals for the year, planned Youth Group activities and practiced facilitation skills. Oversaw grade representative election for youth leaders, so as to give a sense of responsibility to the youth leaders and to aid with consistency in leadership and continuity in youth vision for the year. Provided fall leadership retreat, which included hiking in the Blue Hills and a visit to Houghton's Pond.

COMMUNITY BUILDING: Provided opportunities for community building among youth and with the congregation. Integrated sophomores into Youth Group by forming new family groups and helped youth leaders to facilitate small and large group get-to-know-you games. Encouraged youth to incorporate games and activities appropriate to the various stages of group development. Connected youth to larger FCB community by hosting a Halloween Party and Haunted House for younger children, as well as a Friday night Coffeehouse for all ages with youth performances. Provided babysitting, leaf-raking and odd job assistance for church families and organized musical concessions as fundraisers for the biennial Service-Learning Trip. Participated in the Teen Empowerment workshop (teenempowerment.org) that was sponsored by the Social Action Committee. Organized 2-night Winter Retreat at the Berkshire Outdoor Center over MLK weekend. Daytime activities were led by YMCA camp staff and included team-building, snow shoeing, outdoor climbing wall, and a campfire with smores. Collaborated with Youth Committee and parents to celebrate our youth at the annual potluck dinner the evening before the Youth Service, which gave parents the opportunity to share about their youth. A Spring Retreat is organized for late May at Camp Nihan as an opportunity again this year for grades 9 and 10 to connect in anticipation of the coming year.

WORSHIP: Oversaw development and delivery of bimonthly Sunday evening worships, which were led by grade representatives or other volunteers from the group. Ensured a supportive atmosphere for weekly sharing of candles of joy and concern. Advised youth about the organization of the annual Sunday Youth Service for the congregation. Supported seniors with the development of their reflections on how FCB has impacted them over the years, in concert with Jody Renouf and John Kolterman who advised the sophomores about the Story for All Ages and Lynn Anderson who advised the junior class about their tributes to the graduating class for this occasion. Will advise senior class about their final Bridging Ceremony worship at the end of the year, which welcomes the COA group into Youth Group and honors the graduating seniors as they depart.

SOCIAL ACTION: Collaborated with UU Youth Ministry staff from Newton, Arlington, Sherborn and Winchester to provide a Local Service-Learning Weekend, where high school aged youth had the opportunity to participate in leadership training, volunteer service and learning together over

Presidents' weekend. Youth connected with other high school UUs, while doing some meaningful service work and engaging in thought-provoking discussions (2 nights). FCB youth attendance was low due to family plans over school vacation. I would recommend a different weekend in the future.

LEARNING: The leadership training offered during the Local Service-Learning weekend was provided by Boston Mobilization (bostonmobilization.org). It helped contextualize the service work within larger structural systems of injustice, our own identities and the identities of those we served. The Youth Programs also co-hosted a multigenerational event with the Social Action Committee and Adult Programs. The program, *Transcending the Gender Binary: How to be an Advocate and an Ally*, was facilitated by staff from translate.org. A visit to the Lucy Stone (uucommunitycoops.org/lsc/) is planned for grades 11 and 12 in May.

YOUTH/ADULT RELATIONS: Maintained trusting relationships between youth and adults by having 4 regular adults present at Youth Group meetings: Lynn Anderson, Jody Renouf, Stefan Frank and Julie Ennis. Provided pastoral care and additional support to youth outside of Youth Group. Upheld a supportive adult presence for youth at all events and activities and incorporated parent involvement for selected events. Collaborated with the Youth Committee, which is charged with the oversight and direction of the Youth Programs at FCB. Youth Committee members took active roles in the Youth Programs throughout the year (See Youth Committee Report).

Coming of Age Activities and Accomplishments

Planned and implemented the Coming of Age (COA) program for youth in the ninth grade. Recruited 4 adult mentors, who nurtured and provided support to the 9th graders: Cara Noferi, Lisa Eschenbach, Brian Iler and John Hughes. Created a supportive environment where youth were able to explore big questions, reflect on their values and beliefs, so that ultimately they'll have the confidence to make decisions based on their values. Designed small and large group sessions, team-building, social justice and worship activities. Facilitated weekly meetings for youth and adult mentors and led one late night and one overnight retreat at FCB. Organized off-site retreats where the group learned about poverty and homelessness. The fall retreat was held at Heifer International's Global Village in Rutland, MA, where the where the group experienced what it might be like to be a poor family in Guatemala or Poland. The group was assigned to a home where they lived for the weekend, making meals using basic ingredients and the stove that would normally be found in that type of home in that country. They engaged in farm work with livestock and learned about Heifer's work internationally.

In advance of the winter retreat the group organized a winter clothing drive and brought the items donated with them to be distributed to the homeless in Boston. The group took part in Common Cathedral's City Reach program with 90 people from various faith backgrounds. We were assigned to 2 homeless guides/program coordinators for the weekend who shared their life experiences and helped the group better understand the personal stories, as well as the complexities of addressing homelessness. The City Reach program also included a walk in Boston to better understand strategies for survival on the streets, a brief open-air worship service in Boston Common and helping homeless people "shop" for new clothes among the donations.

Encouraged 9th graders to reflect on their experiences together and with their mentors throughout the year in order to discern their beliefs and values. Grouped youth with mentors during the spring for

more attention and support as the youth put their beliefs into words in the form of credo statements. Guided 9th graders as they organized the COA Ceremony for the spring. The year will culminate when the youth share their credos with the congregation in the Sunday morning Coming of Age Ceremony.