

# First Unitarian Church 2018 Annual Report



Albuquerque | East Mountains | Socorro

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**DRAFT**



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# State of the Church

The Rev. Angela Herrera, Senior Minister

## **The state of the church is... thriving. Refining. Reaching out. Repairing. And rounding the last bend... of the senior minister transition.**

Although it might seem like we rounded the last bend a year and a half ago when you called me as senior minister, the truth is that saying goodbye to Christine and hello (again) to Angela were just parts I and II. The final part, part III, is filling the position made vacant by all of that: the Associate Minister position.

**The process of hiring a new Associate Minister** is very similar to the one used in 2010 when Christine hired me as Assistant Minister. (But what is the difference between Assistant and Associate, you ask? The level of leadership expected. I was promoted from Assistant to Associate 18 months after I arrived, because I was sharing more and more of the ministry with Christine. Today we have 75-100 more members than we did back then. We need a second minister who can take on an Associate level workload pretty much right away.)

In August, I formed a search committee to help with the process. The group includes two board members, and together the six-person committee represents a diverse swath of our congregation, including identities of atheist, pagan, theist, young adult, elder, middle age, people of color, parents of young children, social justice activists, and musicians, just to name a few.

The Senior Minister Search Committee back in 2017 held extensive conversations with the congregation about the future direction of our ministry and what we value most. The Associate Minister Search Committee began by reviewing those 2017 results. Then they created a hypothesis—a list of qualities and strengths we think the congregation wants in its next Associate Minister—and shared that list in town halls, at a table in coffee hour, and on the church website (<http://uuabq.com/ministerial-search-qa/>). The committee asked for feedback, adjusted accordingly, and posted the position with the UUA.

The search committee and I have now completed seven initial interviews by video and **have identified four strong candidates to bring for in person interview weekends.** By the end of March,

we expect to select a final candidate. That person will visit First Unitarian to meet everyone and preach in the first week of May. There will not be a vote on this minister—according to our bylaws, only Senior Ministers are called by a vote. Associate Ministers are then hired by the Senior Minister. But the final candidate will be here in May to meet everyone and lead us in Sunday services before a ministerial agreement is finalized. The new minister will then begin work in August.

**Throughout this transition, it has been such a blessing to have Dan Lillie as our Ministerial Resident.** He has provided continuity and good ministry for us during this transitional time. He has been an adaptive partner for me as I stepped into my new role and found my feet, for which I am truly grateful. As planned, Dan will depart in July, with all our blessings and good wishes.

...

In other news, **after last year's 5% increase in membership, we've basically held steady in membership this year.** That makes sense, as bumps in growth are often followed by a period of adjustment. Programming and physical spaces such as parking and seating have to expand to accommodate new numbers of people. And for growth to continue, there still has to be enough room left over for additional newcomers to feel they can also fit. The fundraising that supports programming and physical spaces, through staffing, capital, and campus care funds, also has to grow. (Something we accomplished beautifully today by raising more than \$50k in additional pledges during our two services! Wow!)

This year my priorities are to finish the minister transition and help our new Associate Minister get started; help us navigate the Social Hall renovation—including coming up with a new plan for coffee hour; and to sustain health at our new size.

**In order to do that—to sustain health at our size—I'll be putting focused attention on the stewardship processes and generosity that support First Unitarian.**

One thing that has become clear is that we need a fresh approach to the fall campaign. On Stewardship Sunday last fall I preached one of my favorite sermons of the year, but there were almost as many people behind me in the choir as out in the seats.

People just don't come when they know we're talking about money. I know this is not for lack of love. Look what happened today! **When the congregation knows what is needed in order to accomplish its goals, it steps right up.**

So we need renewed attention, better expertise, and some creative thinking in this area.

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Finally, it doesn't seem so long ago that we completed a strategic planning process here at church. Remember that? We started in 2014, with lots of conversations about our goals and directions as a congregation. The following year, the strategic planning task force published the results: a beautiful report called "**Strategic Directions: 2015-2020.**" Well, 2020 is just around the corner! The Strategic Directions have made an impact. They have led to changes in staffing and job descriptions, and informed annual priorities for each year's Board of Directors, with rippling effects. Here are a few highlights from the report's three core areas: RE, Community Bonding, and Social Justice.

**In RE:** we've invested in staff development and continuity as well as programming. Mia is now in her fifth year, the longest DRE tenure in many years, and is months away from achieving credentialed DRE status with the denomination. The credentialing process involves a level of study, writing, and practice, comparable to some college degrees. In notes she prepared for her annual review, Mia describes this year's learning. With her permission, I'd like to share a snippet with you. She wrote:

This year, my work ... led me to study Sexual Health policy in our various church communities and OWL offerings, become more familiar with some of the religious and humanist sources that form our current faith and the way I employ them in our curriculum, study systems thinking and how to apply that to conflict that occurs in ... congregations and between individuals,

a closer study of our particular UU theology and history and applying that in every way I can in whatever I am involved in at church, studying worship ... and being able to apply those lessons when creating worship experiences for our community,

and finally, my elective of Family Ministry allowed me to apply focus to a few different areas.

UU family faith formation at home,

support of the family as a component of the church,

communications,

creating programming that ties parents into RE programming,

pastoral care in our community,

and making all different types of families welcomed in our programming all fall under the umbrella of Family Ministry.

Impressive, right? **Having a DRE who has completed the credentialing process represents a major investment in our programs for children and families.**

Meanwhile, new RE programming this year includes Family Sing on Sunday mornings, monthly theological themes to link RE and Adult programming, and a Potluck theology group for parents, modeled after Theology on Tap.

**In Community Bonding:** in 2018 we launched a greatly **expanded pastoral care program**. Previously, pastoral care consisted of two volunteers and the ministers. That was pretty much it. Today, we have a robust program under the volunteer leadership of Kristen Satterlee and Nancy Bowen. A big team of trained visitors makes regular outreach and visits, and gathers monthly for support and continuing education; a team of caring cooks, led by retired caterer Andrea Mason, prepares meals to hand out as a way of supporting and caring for each other when new babies are born, or someone is recovering from surgery, or anytime a little extra love is needed.

And in **Social Justice**, we've now had a Justice Coordinator staff person for a little over a year. Although it's only a 5 hour per week position so far, it has helped make **our justice work more united, visible, and accessible.**

Next weekend, your newly elected board will review the strategic directions and hear a fuller update, to help them as they set their Board goals for the year.

You can expect to hear a full report about the impact of our strategic plan next January, when it reaches its end date.

And then, with our new Associate Minister in place and the Social Hall renovation complete, it will be the perfect time to lift our gaze and set our course for the next five years. **I can't wait to see what we dream up next.**

It is a blessing to be your senior minister and to know you and work with you. Happy new year, and thank you for being such a wonderful congregation.



# President of the Congregation

Gwen Sawyer

## 2018 Board Members

- Gwen Sawyer, President
- Meghan McHenry Shattuck, Vice-President
- Linda Skye, Treasurer
- James Gilson, Secretary
- Heather Clark
- Donna Collins
- Alisa Cooper de Uribe
- Sterling Crow
- Keith Morris
- Marilyn O'Boyle
- Dumas Slade
- Rev. Angela Herrera, ex officio

Thank you for electing me your Congregation President a year ago. It has been my honor and privilege to serve this year. Board membership provides an opportunity to see the overall view of the church that you cannot get by being on a committee, and I recommend that you consider saying "yes" if you are asked to serve. We had a great Board this year, and I'm happy that Meghan Shattuck is willing to be our President for 2019.

## Social Hall Renovation

The largest project for the Board in 2018 was the **renovation of our beloved Social Hall**. After many months of work by the renovation team, we called a special Congregational Meeting in June to vote on raising the funds to proceed with the project. You voted yes overwhelmingly.

The resulting combined campaign to raise \$1.4 million for the project, as well as operating funds for 2019, was a major task. Members of the Board joined Pat Diem, the project lead, in

working with the excellent Radical Generosity Team for the task, which was completely different from the normal annual church pledge drive they had conducted for the past five years. Thank you to all the volunteer visiting stewards who met with members to talk about the campaign and to all of you who pledged. Your generosity made the capital campaign successful, and we will vote to spend the funds at this year's annual meeting. The project will only take a few months, but the pledge period is three years, so we will also vote on a construction loan to last until the pledges are completed.

## Funding for Campus Care and Full Staffing

Over the past few years, the Board has been working to increase our operations budget to: bring our professional staff compensation into compliance with Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) guidelines

increase staffing hours to accomplish all our missions

provide enough funds to care for our campus buildings and grounds

This year we set a goal of \$848,000 in operations pledges. Unfortunately, we fell well short of that goal (partly as a result of fewer pledges than expected) and had to make some hard decisions. The budget in the annual meeting notice reflects our decisions, although we hope to secure more pledges by the annual meeting.

## Risk Assessment

Our Risk Assessment Task Force solicited input from the congregation to identify the risks facing the church, along with their likelihood and severity. The results were given to the newly formed Safety and Security Team to develop mitigation procedures, which will be finalized in 2019.

### Policy and By-law Review

The Board revised an existing policy for naming delegates to assemblies, and created a policy detailing the procedure to be followed for taking congregational stands of conscience. A Board team also completed a thorough editorial review and revisions of the Policy Manual.

### Social Bonds

One of the congregations strategic goals for 2015-2020 was to increase social bonds within the church. The Board did this in 2018 by taking action on two recommendations in the goals report:

“Provide year-round social bonding opportunities, especially during lulls in the program calendar.”

The Board has done this in the past by having a very short “fun” or bonding activity at the be-

ginning of our meetings. This year we tried something new by keeping the meeting to business and arranging social activities once per quarter to include families. All reports were positive.

“Enhance a culture of inclusion and action to initiate and support social bonds.”

Inspired by our experience at this year’s General Assembly, we decided to work with the Leadership Succession Committee to recruit a church youth as a Board member for 2019. We are happy to have Gina Kennedy on the slate for election to the Board this year.

### Minister Commemoration

After congregational feedback at the 2018 annual meeting, we decided to explore several options to commemorate Rev. Christine Robinson’s 29-year ministry of our church, rather than voting last year to name the social hall in her honor.

As a first step, we are recommending honoring her as Minister Emerita of our church, and we will vote on this at the 2019 annual meeting.

During 2019, we will survey the congregation for additional ideas and plan for a vote at the 2020 annual meeting.



## Treasurer

Linda Skye

**Thank you** for the opportunity to serve you as the church's Treasurer in 2018. This is my last year in this role and it was a pleasure to work with church finances in cooperation with our highly professional staff. As you read this report, please refer to the table on the following page which shows how our actual income and expenses compared with our budgeted plan for the year.

### Summary

Total actual income from all sources (pledges, contributions, rentals, miscellaneous, endowment income, and surplus) was **\$843,504** or \$34,252 (4%) lower than we anticipated. It is interesting to note that the revenue shortfall came primarily from non-pledge giving and rentals. Income from pledges met its target fully.

Total expenses were **\$842,782** or \$34,974 (4%) less than our budget. This resulted in a very small surplus of \$722. It should be noted that this balanced result would not be possible without the careful management of our expenses by staff.

### Transfers

You will notice (under Pledges) the transfer of \$20,000 in revenue to our 2019 budget along with associated **expenses related to the hire of our new Associate Minister**. We had anticipated that the new hire would occur in 2018 but when that changed, the Board authorized the shift of funds.

Additionally, revenue from pledges is transferred to our Capital Fund in order to pay both the interest and principal for our mortgage.

Lastly, we transferred \$5,000 to the Capital Fund where expenses related to planned capital improvement projects are managed.

**Please join me in thanking our hard-working staff for another well-managed year.**

### Finance Committee

As your treasurer, I also chair the Finance Committee. Members meet regularly throughout the year to review monthly financial reports and they provide important feedback to the Board on the state of our budget and the transparency of our procedures. Committee members this year were Cheri Plavnick, Joyce Etheridge, and Melissa Curry. **Please join me in thanking these church members for their service to this congregation.**

# YEAR-END REPORT 2018

OPERATIONS FUND	VARIANCE			
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	Amount	(%)
<b>INCOME</b>				
<b>PLEDGES</b>	789,750	791,186	(1,436)	0%
<i>Transfer to 2019 for Assoc Minister</i> <sup>1</sup>	0	(20,000)	20,000	
<i>Transfer to Capital Fund:</i> <sup>2</sup>				
Mortgage Interest	(34,230)	(34,230)	0	0%
Mortgage Principal	(33,784)	(33,784)	0	0%
Planned Capital Improvements	(5,000)	(5,000)	0	0%
<b>CONTRIBUTIONS</b>			0	
Music Angels Fund	40,410	40,410	0	0%
Non-Pledge Gifts	56,000	51,079	4,921	9%
In-Kind Gifts	0	698	(698)	
<b>RENTALS (Campus)</b>	32,000	23,199	8,801	28%
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	5,800	5,110	690	12%
<b>ENDOWMENT FUND INCOME</b>	15,310	15,329	(19)	0%
<b>SURPLUS (2017)</b>	9,506	9,506	(0)	0%
<i>Additional Surplus</i>	1,994	0	1,994	100%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>877,756</b>	<b>843,504</b>	<b>34,252</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>				
Staff Compensation	618,987	604,475	14,512	2%
<i>Transfer Payroll Expenses</i> <sup>1</sup>	11,178	0	11,178	100%
Program Director Expenses	26,360	20,873	5,487	21%
<i>Transfer Professional Expenses</i> <sup>1</sup>	1,187	0	1,187	100%
Operations	110,900	128,495	(17,595)	-16%
<i>Transfer Recruiting &amp; Moving Costs</i> <sup>1</sup>	13,000	0	13,000	100%
Religious Education	10,200	10,011	189	2%
Music Program	11,300	7,997	3,303	29%
Sunday Services	5,000	5,241	(241)	-5%
Councils & Committees	9,250	7,053	2,197	24%
Branches	7,235	5,567	1,668	23%
Miscellaneous	22,368	20,696	1,672	7%
<b>CONGREGATIONAL COMMITMENTS</b>	30,791	32,373	(1,582)	-5%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>877,756</b>	<b>842,782</b>	<b>(34,974)</b>	<b>-4%</b>
<b>NET BALANCE</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>Surplus</b>	
(Income less Expense)				

1. Costs transferred to 2019 budget (associated with hiring of new Assoc Minister)

2. Mortgage payments and expenses related to planned improvements are paid out of our Capital Fund





# Director of Music

Susan Peck

*The mission of the music program is to inspire and support worship through high quality music in a variety of styles, to encourage church members to participate in congregational music, and to build connections with the wider community through music.*

## Staff and Volunteers

The music program includes two paid staff: **Susan Peck (Director of Music)** and **Amy Woolley (pianist)**. Regular volunteers include **Chalice Singers** (45-50 singers); **Sol Singers** (12-20 singers); **Spare Parts** (7-12 musicians); **Chamber Playing Group** (around 12 musicians); **RE Family Sing song-leaders** (8-10 singers); **Soloists and Substitutes** (12 musicians).

## Key Events and Accomplishments of 2018

In **February**, we produced **Emma's Revolution** in a successful benefit concert for the Hopkins Center; and hosted gospel singer **Callie Day** in worship. Members of Chalice Singers participated in the New Mexico Black History Organizing Committee's **One New Mexico Gospel Choir**.

**March** found Susan supporting musicians at the **UUA's Finding Our Way Home** conference held in Albuquerque. She provided instruments, invited De-Reau Farrar and Amanda Thomas to work with Chalice Singers, and hired Amanda Thomas to give a workshop on South African songs and participate in Sunday worship.

In **April** she served as **Music Coordinator for the Pacific West Regional Assembly**. She collaborated with worship leaders on music for four worship services plus a concert with Emma's Revolution. She hired Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout as PWRA choir director.

**Music Sunday** was in **May** with the Chalice Singers presenting music on the theme of lux/light.

Susan spent a week in **June** serving as the Music & Choir Director for **Western UU Life Festival (WUULF) at Ghost Ranch**.

We hosted the **Roots Summer Leadership Academy** for three weeks in **July**, and Susan was the assistant music director under Dr. Stevie Springer. She also led a hymn-sing service at **Westside UU** congregation in Rio Rancho that month.

Susan and Amy attended the **UU Musicians Network** annual conference in Portland in **August**. Susan attended classes for her 2nd year coursework in the **Music Leadership Certification Program**: "Collaboration: an Antidote to White Supremacy;" "Leading Congregational Singing;" and "Music Leaders as Theologians," with an anti-racism focus.

Susan and the Sol Singers hosted a singing workshop with **Terry Garthwaite** later that month.

In **September**, she began participating in **UU Well-spring**, a small online group of UU religious professionals who meet biweekly to practice deep listening, ground each other in UU theology and history, and share personal spiritual practices. Church member **Cy Shuster** installed a DAMPP system in the Sanctuary's Steinway, to protect the instrument from changes in temperature and humidity. Susan coordinated with the **Radical Generosity** team to provide musicians for a Lead Donor event and our Canvass Kick-off Celebration later that month.

In **October**, the Chalice Singers held their yearly **choir retreat**, and Susan attended worship and shared music with our **Socorro** branch

On **November 18**, First U hosted the **Interfaith Thanksgiving Service**, a benefit for HopeWorks. Susan and Dan Lillie co-led the planning team, and she directed the inter-congregational choir, fulfilling her certification program requirement for Community Service.

She wrapped up the year in **December** with planning seasonal services, attending our Socorro branches **Christmas concert**; and purchasing **PERFORMmusic** and **WORSHIPcast** licenses from Christian Copyright Solutions, to cover copyrights for non-worship performance and streaming video of music from ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC catalogs.



# Director of Religious Education

Mia Noren

## Staffing

Mia Noren, Alana Rodriguez, and Alymay Atherton continue as DRE, RE Administrative Assistant, and Youth Programs Coordinator. Brie-Anne Stout resigned her position at the end of September in order to pursue a teaching opportunity. Arianna Espinoza joined us in October as the new RE Aide. The child care pool is at 10.

Mia Noren is completing her second year in the UUA's Religious Educator Credentialing Program and is on track to be interviewed by the RE Credentialing Committee in April 2019. In 2018, she attended the Mountain Desert District DRE retreat in March, General Assembly in June, and the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) Conference in November. She completed a Renaissance Module on Ministry with Youth in November. She also attended multiple workshops and webinars online.

## Registration Numbers

During the academic year, from September 2017 through August 2018, there were **111 individual children registered in the program**. An additional 26 children participated in an unregistered status, attending three or more classes during the academic year. Children who participated in less than three classes were not included in the count. The children and youth were managed on Sundays by **61 adult volunteers**, ten paid child care workers and four staff.

## Attendance Numbers

Individual instances of attendance in RE classes for the year for first service totaled 718, and for the second service total 1,604. For OWL and Coming of Age, individual instances of attendance for the year equaled 300. Total instances of child and youth attendance in an RE program equaled 2,262 individual occurrences. The total instances of adult attendance in an RE program numbered 691 individual occurrences. These numbers refer to programming only, and not to the community events we held. Attendance isn't taken for Family Sing, but those numbers reflect the number of children showing up for class that day- most children

take part in it, along with one or more parent or caregiver, and many of the teachers. There are seven adult volunteers signed up as Family Sing leaders.

## Religious Education Council

The RE Council continues to operate in a way that benefits the DRE and enhances programming. Mia meets individual members as needed to discuss their portfolio work and to plan, and progress is reported on and discussed at the meetings. This year our Council Chair, Geri Knoebel, recruited her replacement, Benita Terrell, who will begin in February 2019.

## Teachers

Elementary summer classes were staffed with volunteers by free sign-up, and conducted in a 'one-room schoolhouse' format due to our experimentation with the new Thematic Ministry model and light summer attendance. We returned to an age-based classroom format for Fall and Spring classes, and continued to staff with Teacher Teams. Because there were only three Pre-K children registered last year, the Pre-K class was combined with the K/1 class. Only one 5th grader showed up regularly for the 9:30 4/5 class, and so we cancelled the 9:30 class and held 4/5 at 11:00 only- something we end up doing in Spring anyway in order to work smoothly with 4/5 OWL classes. Because of the reduction in teachers needed, it was easier to fill the teams and all teams had a full teacher roster. Parents, other adults, and some youth signed up as floaters, hall monitors, and as other special volunteers. Staff occasionally stepped in to fill in vacancies.

## Advisers

Both of our youth adviser teams were fully staffed. We had four returning advisers and four new ones. I'm planning an appreciation lunch for advisers in January 2019- it's been a challenge to come up with a time that everyone can participate because two of our advisers work evenings and/or weekends. OWL facilitators and Coming of Age advisers also came to appreciation lunches.

## Elementary

Summertime classes were successful. Our church

decided to try a Thematic Ministry model and subscribed to the Touchstones subscription service. Mia worked with Carol Cowan, the Curriculum Team Lead, to figure out the best way to proceed over the summer and used feedback from that experience to model how to go forward during the fall and spring.

## Youth

Our Youth Programs Coordinator wrote an original curriculum that we felt would highly interest our summer mid-high class of mostly active boys, “UU Martyrs”. The class was a hit! High School youth didn’t meet on Sundays in summer but participated in some evening Open Houses held on Friday nights. Some of the older youth elected to help run the mid-high Sunday classes by modeling leadership, good behavior and how to participate in covenant. Our YPC worked on forming a Youth Adult Committee (YAC) with representatives of the La Amikoj and Mid-High classes, whose purpose is to work with some of the advisors to plan youth activities. They planned this year’s Halloween Dance together. High School youth attended three conferences. The MLK Con was supposed to be in Denver but ended up in Cheyenne, WY due to last-minute circumstances, and our volunteers soldiered through that! The Bridging Con was in Los Alamos this year and some of our Young Adults participated along with High School youth. The Fall Con was in Salt Lake City, and even though attendance was low for that one (two youth and one adult), we managed to fly them to the venue on the same flight with youth and an advisor from Los Alamos. Youth continue to volunteer at Roadrunner Food Bank one Saturday per month. This year youth were also involved in the March for Our Lives and Family Separation protests. Many youth and volunteers participated in the Pride Parade Overnight and subsequent Pride Parade. Attendance in the High School group has risen somewhat from last year’s low numbers.

## Community

Our annual RE BBQ was moved to early June so as not to conflict with so many end-of-the-school-year activities. It was a successful event with families, staff, and all volunteers invited. We had an RE Pool Party in September, which was attended by 30. Our Halloween Party was also a success.

Staff met earlier in the year to examine the number and spacing of special events that the RE Department hosts, with an eye toward thinning the num-

ber of events and making sure we attract good attendance by not conflicting with things we know a lot of our families participate in, like Run For The Zoo. A few events were dropped or moved.

## UU Kids Camp

The transition of camp leadership continued this year- The Core Camp Planning Team continued with camp planning this year. Mia and our Ministerial Resident, Dan Lillie, dropped out of the team after this year’s camp because there was too many staff involved in this volunteer-led effort. Alana Rodriguez remains on the team because she has duties related to camp planning and administration. The Camp Scholarship fundraising team handled fundraising events throughout the year and raised \$8600.00 for camp scholarships, which was enough to award scholarships to all 22 campers who asked for help. The program itself was a success, hosting 43 children and youth and thirteen adults. Numerous Albuquerque-based volunteers also helped to make camp happen.

## RE buildings and grounds

This year’s Building and Grounds efforts included a project to refurbish our La Amikoj/Wesson/Arnold Rooms. All rooms were repainted and new hard flooring installed last year. This year, the bathroom was remodeled and is now accessible from the outside, so that people meeting in the rooms don’t have to walk through other meetings to get to the facility. An outdoor sink was installed outside the bathroom so that children, families, and even possible renters will be able to wash their hands during any activities in the playground. The Arnold Room has new chairs and a new couch, new spacious storage closets, new bulletin boards, and beautiful artwork donated and installed by Ron Friederich- seven wood carvings, one for each of the seven Principles. The Wesson Room has new chairs and reinstalled bulletin board. Sound-absorbing panels are in the process of being installed. The La Amikoj room has new chairs and two new couches, a refurbished storage closet which includes a small refrigerator for the youth group, and a brand-new French door and windows which have replaced the old sliding glass doors. The small courtyard outside the room was also cleaned out and is in the process of becoming a gathering place for youth.

Security improvements from last year have proven to be helpful but we’ve still had incidents, and security is still an ongoing concern.



# Membership Director

Beth Elliot

## There were 67 people who joined or re-joined First Unitarian in 2018.

When guests express interest in joining the church, they visit the Welcome Table where a volunteer from the Membership Committee is available to answer questions, provide information, and assist in filling out paperwork. New Members fill out a Ready to Join form. Once the information from the Ready to Join form is entered into the church database, the new members are contacted by the Membership Director, who invites them to participate in a Joining Ceremony, which take place on the first Sunday of each month.

New members are contacted the week after they join with a formal welcome from the Membership Director and information about the church, website and activities. They are invited to have a one-on-one meeting with the Membership Director regarding how to best make their membership meaningful and to find ways to participate that best suit their skills and availability.

The New Member Recognition Ceremonies and the New Member Dinners took place in the spring and fall. **Additionally, the Membership Committee added a New Member Brunch.** These events promote social bonds and allow new members to meet church leaders and get general information about the community and programs. Twice a year new members are formally welcomed in the New Member Recognition Ceremony during Sunday services. Six-month and one-year anniversaries of joining the church are recognized with contact from

the Membership Director. In 2018, we also held **a ceremony to honor long term members of the church.**

2018 began a new Membership program called **Ori-entation.** This is a tour of the campus that includes information about the faith, the congregation, and the community. Orientation runs on the 3rd Sunday of every month. New Members may also participate in **UU101**, an intensive set of classes that inform people about the theology and history of Unitarian Universalism.

Connections Sundays continue for two weekends in the fall. **We had 31 groups participate in Connections Sundays,** allowing the congregation and community to learn more about programs, sign-up to participate, or receive more information.

There have been numerous new groups, events and programs in 2018. The Membership Committee began a new Diversity Task Force. This sub-group of the committee was formed to explore ways in which the Membership Committee could be more aware and effective with matters of race, gender, and identity.

**New groups were started to promote social bonds,** including Souls in the Middle and new Extended Families. There were also several one-time events. There were numerous movie showing, an Isotopes baseball game, several Death Cafes, and guest speakers. New bulletin boards located in the Social Hall help inform the congregation about all the programs within the church and events in the community.



# Justice Coordinator

Beth Elliot

The Justice Coordinator aims to **increase visibility, coordination, and participation in First Unitarian's Justice programming**. While supporting current programs, the coordinator emphasizes the importance of **building relationships within the community**, making the current work visible and accessible, and coordinating events both within the church and in the larger community.

The Justice Coordinator receives requests from the congregation and wider community, and assists in prioritizing and coordinating the programs in which the church participates. They also provide information of programs going on in the community. The coordinator is responsible for the Justice Page in the monthly Messenger newsletter.

The Justice Coordinator **organizes attendance at events happening in the area**, like the Women's March or the March for Our Lives. They will work in conjunction with the ministers, director of religious education, and the music director in a collaborative way to enhance justice work in our congregation in the larger community.

The Justice Coordinator is meant to bring greater organization, enthusiasm, and inspiration to the already thriving justice programming. **The position should benefit the social justice work of the church by improving communication, recruiting new volunteers, and managing events.**

In 2018 the Justice Coordinator, in conjunction with the Social Justice Council, held a fundraiser for the Social Justice Council to distribute to the church's justice programs. The Justice Coordinator continues to work in conjunction with the Council and meets regularly with a representative to coordinate activities and stay updated.

Another major project of the Justice Coordinator is the new **ABQ FaithWorks** project. Working in collaboration with 10 other local congregations, the program will hire a social worker to help the participating faith communities with programs, education, and support for marginalized communities. This team also is working in conjunction with numerous local organizations.

The Justice Coordinator also had the opportunity to share with the community by being part of a service dedicated to faith and justice. In addition to the services at the main campus, the Justice Coordinator also visited both the Socorro and Edgewood branches to deliver the service. This allowed for building community bonds and begins support for justice projects that interest the communities within the congregation.



# Financial Review Committee

Bruce Newton, Chair

## Members

Nancy Kilpatrick

Angela Merkert

Bruce Newton

The Financial Review Committee, a committee of the Congregation, is **charged with conducting a full review of the Church's financial health and procedures or selecting review of portions of the financial area.**

The Committee held meetings March 28, July 24, and August 30, 2018 with church staff including, Paul Brown, Director of Finance and Operations and Carla Nieto, Accountant as well as meeting with Linda Skye, Board Treasurer.

The areas selected by the committee for review this year were the **procedures for use of credit cards, and systems for managing reoccurring contributions and pledges from congregation members.** In addition, the committee wanted to begin discussing future developments in the church that may challenge current financial systems.

New procedures for credit card use by staff were developed and implemented this year. In addition, Carla Nieto, Accountant, created a more automated and efficient system for completing and reviewing credit card purchases for each individual staff member assigned a card. The staff have been very cooperative with the new system. Carla has also started scanning receipts and other routine documents for easier access and storage. **The committee was satisfied with the new procedures and systems.** They allow staff the flexibility to manage their duties efficiently and ensure proper accounting and supervisory review of charges.

A new automated system for managing automatic drafts from bank accounts has been developed and implemented for members who wish to have their pledges automatically deducted. The automated clearing house ACH system eliminates most of the

manual work and will eliminate occasional inconsistencies created by the previous system.

Closing discussions with staff and the church Treasurer emphasized the importance and value of the internal audits of the Financial Review Committee, and the need for professional accounting expertise on the staff. The church is fortunate to have a Director of Finance and Operations who has accounting knowledge and background, in addition to the an accountant who is professionally trained. Managing the current financial systems of the church requires professional accounting skills in addition to routine book-keeping duties. The current accountant position is budgeted to work less than 20 hours per week. This is just sufficient to meet current demands, but will need to be increased as the church grows and needs increase.

The committee is impressed by the Treasurer Linda Skye's frequent and regular review of church financial accounts and records. She examines financial records, expenditures, book-keeping and accounting practices several times a month. The church is fortunate to have a volunteer Treasurer like Linda who supports the staff and works to monitor the financial interests of the church.

During the 2019 calendar year the church will have an audit conducted by an external accounting firm. Results of this audit should be reviewed by the Financial Review Committee to determine potential areas for review.

**In summary, the committee found the systems and procedures used to manage the church's financial affairs to be in order and well managed.** Staff are diligent, qualified and open to suggestions for improvement, and continually work to improve systems to meet the church's growing needs.



# Landscape Committee

Nancy Cushman, Chair

## Members

Nancy Cushman (chair)  
Virginia Burris  
Melissa Curry  
John Feaveryear  
Martha Kettle  
Scott Lake  
Sarah Manning  
Melisa Nicoud  
Stephen Phillips  
Ed Wallhagen

The Landscape Committee, a committee of the board, is charged to work as a team, considering the campus as one whole, with the understanding that the campus is made up of distinct areas that serve different functions. All areas of campus shall reflect the congregation's environmentalist values (as represented in the UUA's seventh principle and the congregation's decision to be a "Green Sanctuary") as much as possible, and must be in compliance with city ordinances.

The committee happily welcomed Melisa Nicoud, Melissa Curry, and John Feaveryear as new members. **We primarily focused on maintaining the campus and assessing future needs and their costs.** This assessment was sent to the Board, the Building and Grounds Committee and to Director of Finance and Operations Paul Browne.

John and Steve installed two new irrigation valves to the control box in the Wildlife Habitat, and installed water lines to the Ponderosas there suffering from lack of water; and to an area to the north of the habitat where Virginia plans to plant native flowering plants.

We held two cleanup days and an educational tree trimming morning in March which was offered to both educate and to demonstrate the need for volunteers. Thanks to John, we received two free loads of mulch from Baca Trees which were spread by a large group of volunteers on a Saturday in October.

Sarah and Virginia wrote three articles for the Messenger to raise more awareness of the Landscape Committee and their work.

Nancy requested and was granted \$10,000 as part of the Social Hall renovation budget to cover the costs of any damage done to the landscape during the renovation.

**The biggest improvement to the landscape this year was done in the Memorial Garden** by Martha Kettle and Melisa Nicoud. The Landscape Committee granted them an exemption from our native plants policy so that the area could be colorful, soothing and meditative for those visiting the garden and the Memorial Wall, and planted for color and fragrance. They planted climbing vines, and purchased a water feature for birds, a small storage shed, and new seating. Colorful pots were planted with annuals.

Nancy Cushman has resigned as chair, but will remain on the committee. Steve Phillips has agreed to chair the committee for one year. **It is our hope in 2019 to attract more volunteers** to cleanup days and to help with the work of enhancing the grounds as proposed to the Board and Building and Grounds Committee.



# Leadership Succession Committee

Bill Slakey, Chair

## Members

Vance Bass  
Judy Bentley  
Ian Carrillo  
Andrew Fearnside  
Chris Mayo  
Mikaela Renz-Whitmore

The seven-member Leadership Succession Committee (LSC) is a Standing Committee of the Congregation. The LSC identifies potential leaders within our Church and is responsible for preparing a slate of candidates for elections that are held at our Congregation's Annual Meeting in January. The LSC makes recommendations for nominees to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors, Endowment, Finance Review, and Leadership Succession Committees. There are 26 positions on these committees.

For the 2019 elections, the LSC has developed a slate of 16 nominees. Seven are nominees for a second term and nine are new nominees for committee vacancies.

## 2018 Activities

The LSC concentrated on raising awareness about opportunities for leadership in the church. The committee participated in Connection Sundays, offered pulpit editorials and followed those up with information and outreach after services. LSC members also attended new member events during the year. As a result of these efforts, we saw an increase in members actively seeking out leadership opportunities as opposed to being recruited. The LSC also supported including new perspectives in leadership, especially on the Board.

As noted in previous years, the LSC sees a critical need for a primary resource to record church members' activities, skills and interests in order to identify potential leaders and to help create a path to leadership as members become more active in the church.

The committee is deeply grateful to Geri Knoebel, who gathered and organized information from scattered church records. However, a comprehensive, regularly updated resource is still lacking.

The need for such a repository and/or program was noted in the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.





# Ministerial Search Committee

Kristin Satterlee, Chair

## Members

Randy Biggers  
Stirling Crow  
Roy Moody  
Marilyn O'Boyle  
Maya Stephenson  
Rev. Angela Herrera

The ministerial search team (MST) is an ad hoc committee formed to find an associate minister for the church, following Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) guidelines and timelines. The MST formed in September 2018 and will continue until the new minister is installed, most likely in August or September of 2019.

## Key Activities for 2018

- Orientation, guided by coach Nancy Bowen
- Publicity in Messenger, Broadsheet, order of service and pulpit
- Two Town Halls to communicate process and gather congregational input

- Filling out an extensive Congregational Survey at the UUA's Transitions website, using the 2017 Congregational Survey and input from church staff, to provide information to prospective candidates
- Receiving names of 18 applicants and reading their Ministerial Records and websites to select candidates for remote .

In the coming months the MST will conduct remote interviews; select pre-candidates to bring to Albuquerque for confidential, in-person interview weekends; conduct pre-candidate interview weekends; and select a final candidate to be introduced to the congregation in the spring.



# Personnel Committee

Geri Knoebel, Chair

## Members

Paul Browne, Director of Finance and Operations  
James Gilson, Board Representative  
Rev. Angela Herrera, Senior Minister  
Judy Parsons

The Personnel Committee is actively engaged in revising the staff Personnel Policy Manual which had not been updated since 2012. This Manual describes the Church's employment benefits, employment policies, and practices. The Committee will be presenting the draft Manual to the Board for action this coming spring.



# Radical Generosity Team

Dimitri Kapelianis, Chair

## Members

Linda Hudson

John Kwait

Chris Mayo

Michael McDonald

Kathryn Probasco

David Wilson

The Rev. Angela Herrera, ex officio

## Special Members

### Assisting with the Combined Campaign

Pat Diem, Co-Chair

Donna Collins

Marilyn O'Boyle

Linda Skye

In 2018, the Radical Generosity Team continued to fulfill the charge that it received from the board. Specifically:

*The Radical Generosity Team is an ongoing committee of the board, tasked with overseeing the pledge drive and fund-raising for the annual operating budget, and helping First Unitarian refine its stewardship practices and develop a culture of generosity.*

As part of a combined campaign, in addition to the regular Fall pledge drive, the Radical Generosity team was charged with responsibility for the **capital campaign to renovate our Social Hall**.

We are pleased to inform the congregation that at the time of the writing of this report we have received a total of **\$800,122** pledged towards our annual operating budget, with a further **\$1,321,299** pledged towards the renovation of our Social Hall.

The **founding members of the Radical Generosity team** (Dimitri Kapelianis, Linda Hudson, John Kwait, Chris Mayo, and Michael McDonald) have all served four-year terms and will be stepping down from the team. During the course of their service, **they raised more than \$4 million in pledges** for the church.



# Adult Religious Education

Dan Lillie, Ministerial Resident

The Adult Religious Education program has a newly-formed **Adult RE Council**.

## Members

Donna Collins  
Jane Davis, Ministerial Intern  
John Edwards  
Alicia Hawkins  
Dan Lillie  
Angela Merkert  
Lilli Nye

Members of the Council are establishing Mission and Vision statements, creating policies and procedures, developing a communication and outreach strategy, and of course, creating new and exciting courses to offer to the congregation.

## 2018 Program Offerings

- **UU 101** (a two-session course, quarterly)
- **Exploring Spiritual Practices** (a four-session course, offered twice in Albuquerque and once at the East Mountain branch)
- **Cultivating Your Personal Theology** (a four-session course, offered over the summer)
- **Explorations** (weekly, at 9:30 am Sunday)

- **Humanism, Secular Buddhism, and Spiritual Naturalism** (a six-session course, offered in the spring and fall)
- **Theology of Social Justice** book discussion group (six-session course, offered twice- two different groups met about two different books)
- **Christian Archetypes: The Nativity Story** (a one-session “teaser” workshop to preview a more extended Christian Archetypes: The Easter Passion Story coming in the spring of 2019)
- **Covenant Groups** (now an offering of Adult RE)

We are excited to offer new courses in 2019, as well as to continue running popular courses. Stay tuned for updates and course offerings throughout the year,



# Arts & Aesthetics Committee

Elizabeth Runyon, Chair, & Bob Wood, Secretary

## Members

Jane Baldwin  
Tim Funk  
Bobby Jones  
Tenacity Kendig  
Bruce Little  
Pamela Livingston  
Sarah McCord  
Sally New  
Elizabeth Runyon  
Richard Sauls  
Selma Sayed  
Susanne Visor  
Bob Wood

The Arts & Aesthetics committee (A&A) selects and installs art exhibitions in the Social Hall for the enjoyment of members and friends, and as a form of outreach to the wider community. A&A members also provide consultation regarding other aesthetics questions on campus. Key accomplishments for the year are:

- Staged seven art exhibitions;
- Staged one Church History Exhibit to commemorate the new Church buildings;
- Prepared preliminary work on Juried art exhibitions for the year 2019;
- Worked with the Social Hall Reconstruction Committee for work in 2019;

- Welcomed three new members and one returning member to the committee;
- Selected two winners of the Eleanor Bailey Memorial prize. One artist was selected from the All Members Show in December. One other artist was selected from among the other seven exhibitions during the year 2018.

Artwork is sold off the walls on Sundays and through private arrangements. In addition, when desired by the exhibitors, a Mercado reception is held to give both Congregation members and members of the wider community time to view the show and to purchase smaller items from the exhibiting artists. Most art works in the exhibition are for sale; 30% of the sale price goes to the church's general fund.

For the year 2018, sale totals amounted to **\$13,184.80**, with **\$3,955.44 (30%) going to the church**. Final sales were completed on December 30, 2018, the last Sunday of the year.

We meet ordinarily on the fourth Sunday of the month immediately following the second service. Visitors and potential new committee members are always welcome to the monthly meeting. We also welcome people with an interest in art selection, or practicing artists who may devote time to hanging exhibitions, attend regular meetings and contribute to the business of the committee. Minutes are taken at every meeting and posted on the Church website.



## Sound Team

Abraham Ellis, Coordinator

### Members

Larry Alei  
Elya Arrasmith  
Carl Henney  
George Ruptier  
David Simpson

The UU Volunteer Sound Team provides support during live Sunday services and special church events, coordinating closely with the video and projection teams. Sound volunteers also support Spare Parts rehearsals. The mixed audio is required for hearing loop, live broadcasting to the foyer and Family Room, and A/V recording distributed to branches and the website. In addition, the sound team is responsible for maintaining and upgrading sound equipment.

Key accomplishments for the year are:

- Provided volunteer sound support for all services and special events in 2018;
- Completed training for new volunteers and welcomed two new full-time volunteer team members;
- Completed equipment upgrades necessary to maintain compliance with FCC regulations. This included equipment purchases, upgrades, installation and re-programming;
- Created and posted a detailed inventory of all sound system components and systems for tracking purposes;
- Maintained equipment in good working conditions;
- Provided input to Social Hall planning regarding A/V system considerations.

By October 1, 2018, First Unitarian was in full compliance with FCC requirements to migrate wireless broadcast frequencies away from the 600 MHz range. The volunteer team consulted extensively with the wireless supplier (Lectrosonics) to complete the conversion at the lowest cost and with minimal impact to Church services and rentals. This involved equipment and cash donations that exceeded \$8,000.

The highest priorities for the first half of 2019 are:

- (1) recruiting at least two new volunteers and a new team leader,
- (2) incorporating two new boom mics that are currently on order,
- (3) tuning and programming the board settings to simplify board operations.

Currently, the sound volunteer team is down to 4, the minimum necessary to cover two services and band practices with reasonable reliability and time commitment. Considering the Church's sound system capabilities, training a new committed volunteer for setup and sound mixing would take 2-3 months. The need for new volunteers became critical after we lost two of the most experienced sound volunteers during the last half of 2018. Also, the current volunteer team lead (Abraham Ellis) will be moving out of town on an extended work assignment and will need to step down from this role.



# Buildings & Grounds Committee

Jake Barkdoll

## Members

Jake Barkdoll, Co-chair  
Zoe Walton, Co-chair  
John Feaveyear  
Steve Phillips  
Dumas Slade

In 2018 the congregation continued the substantial initiative of **refurbishing the existing Social Hall**. Many of the planned improvements had previously been identified as individual “projects” by the B&G Committee and it is exciting to now see their completion being planned. Committee members have been documenting recent activities conducted in the Social Hall, collecting the congregation’s desires and expectations, raising the necessary funds, and working with the architect during the iterative design stage.

When completed the Social Hall initiative will contribute substantially to the accomplishment of the B&G Committee’s three goals: 1) assure a safe venue for church programs and activities, 2) provide a comfortable and welcoming campus for current activities, and 3) look to the future to meet the ever increasing needs of a growing church.

Although the Social Hall initiative is proving to be a very positive undertaking, it has overshadowed the goal of establishing **funding to assure continuing and appropriate campus care** in the long run. Our 30,000 square feet of existing space hosts over 3,000 scheduled events per year, and houses a busy staff. The need to establish a dependable funding mechanism to maintain and improve our campus endures.

The physical state of the campus is maintained through the combined efforts of a dedicated staff led by Paul Browne and Mark Fickler; many hours of volunteer efforts; and the activities of the B&G Committee. Collectively these groups have worked

to achieve a number of campus improvements during 2018 including:

- **Storage inventory:** Concern was expressed that the Social Hall project might have the unintended consequence of reducing storage areas below critical levels. After measuring and photographing the 25 existing storage areas, several observations and recommendations were made to improve their current use.
- **Memorial Garden Improvements:** As a result of dedicated volunteer efforts building on 2017 progress, the garden has emerged as a welcoming and comforting area. Lines for the two irrigation zones were repaired, and a replacement for the aged controller has been requested for 2019.
- **Wildlife Habitat Irrigation:** Following the recommendations of the Landscape Committee, two new irrigation zones were added to the controller in the Wildlife Habitat and new polytube and emitters were installed. These will enable a reduction of water to the drought tolerant native plants while permitting deep watering of the Ponderosa; and provide the opportunity to create a pollinator garden of annuals along the north end of the Wildlife Habitat. This zone will be turned on when the pollinator garden is planted next spring. A cooperative partnership with the Landscape Committee is being nurtured and strengthened through cross-membership of individuals.

During the year the B&G committee has had three “formal” meetings in addition to meetings of the various Social Hall working groups; and the exchange of documents and email messages. We have held frequent conversations during Sunday coffee hours, and welcome more in 2019.



# Caring Network

Kristin Satterlee, Chair

## Core (Organizing) Team Members

Nancy Bowen  
Brenda Cole  
Marian Kraai (Friendship Ministry Coordinator)  
Andrea Mason (Caring Cooks Lead)  
Lilli Nye

## Care Team Members

Gale Borkenhagen  
Sue Coates  
Anna Eder  
Melissa Falkenstern  
Mark Frederick  
Ron Friederich  
Arne Gullerud  
Sheryl Guterl  
Blake Magnusson  
Wendy Small  
Anna Watkins

The Caring Network officially launched in February of 2018. This new group's mission is to provide **support for First Unitarian members in times of need, joy, and transition**, with the understanding that the whole church is responsible for caring for one another. The Caring Network's sub-teams include:

- The **Care Team**, whose members provide supportive visits and companionship in person, by phone, and through text and email as appropriate;
- the **Caring Cooks**, who fill the Caring Freezer with meals for the Care Team to provide as

needed;

- the **Friendship Ministry**, which provides long-term companionship to isolated church members;
- and **Sol Singers** (led by Susan Peck), who bring the gift of song to hospitals, hospice, and home bedsides as requested.

## 2018 was a fruitful first year for the Caring Network. Key accomplishments include:

- ◇ Launch in February with publicity in Messenger, Broadsheet, order of service, and pulpit;
- ◇ Training 15 Care Team volunteers over two orientation sessions (some Core Team members are also Care Team volunteers);
- ◇ Establishing monthly Care Team gatherings with time for mutual support and continuing education in caring issues and techniques;
- ◇ **More than 70 members visited and supported;**
- ◇ Funds raised and for and references made to Minister's Discretionary Fund;
- ◇ Purchasing, with the financial help of a generous church member, a freezer to keep stocked with meals to share;
- ◇ **Dozens of healthy, nutritious meals cooked**, hygienically stored, and shared with members in need.





# Coyote Willow CUUPS

Raven Reed Starr, Contact

## Officers

Jessie & Joela Bezzeg, Keepers of the Keys

Coyote Willow CUUPS (CWCUUPS) is an Albuquerque chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans. **We support the practice and understanding of modern Pagan and Earth-centered spirituality, with a focus on Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources.** We also provide outreach to the Pagan community, which is very active locally.

Coyote Willow CUUPS has an open, drop-in style membership; this year's officers are listed above. Our Treasurer had to resign for medical reasons.

CWCUUPS had another busy year in 2018. We regularly met on the second and fourth Friday of every month at 7:00 pm. This included a monthly business meeting as well as monthly workshops/discussion groups on various Pagan/Earth-centered interests.

Additionally **we hosted eight open rituals** for the most commonly recognized Pagan holidays: Imbolc, Ostara, Beltaine, Litha, Lughnasadh, Mabon, Samhain, and Yule. Attendance at these rituals included not just CWCUUPS members, but church members as well as people from the outside Pagan community.

CWCUUPS tried something new this year. We worked with Animal Advocates, the Arts and Aesthetics committee, and our Ministerial Resident Dan Lillie to produce a beautiful **interfaith Blessing of the Animals**. It was well received, and many wee beasties were blessed.

Finally, we were very active in the 2018 **Albuquerque Pagan Pride Day (PPD)** event, which is part of a global movement to increase awareness of Paganism through education, activism, charity, and community. The local PPD collects non-perishable food donations for the First Unitarian Food Pantry every year. **PPD provides the single largest food donation that the Food Pantry receives all year**, and in 2018 it was over 1,600 lbs. of food, and over \$100 in cash. CWCUUPS had its usual booth at PPD, where we passed out brochures and answered questions about our group and Unitarian Universalism. PPD is a great event to engage with a community which already shares similar values with Unitarian Universalists. Many new members to CWCUUPS, and ultimately First Unitarian, first meet us at a Pagan Pride Day event. CWCUUPS also provided support throughout the year to PPD in preparing for the event.



# Denominational Affairs Team

Judy Bentley

## Members

Alymay Atherton  
Kelsey Atherton  
Judy Bentley  
Nancy Bowen  
Ian Carrillo  
Judy Goering  
Mara Hoffman  
Martha Ketelle  
Peggy Roberts  
Mary Wright  
Dan Lillie, Ministerial Resident

The DAT is a committee with a shared leadership model and no chair. The team met 10 times in 2018 (almost monthly) breaking into small taskforces which met as necessary and had several notable accomplishments:

- A DAT member created a panel for the new bulletin boards behind the former mural wall in the Social Hall. This provides a permanent display about our Church's connection to the UUA, the Pacific Western Region and the Mountain Desert District, along with other justice centered partners.
- DAT partnered with the UU Young Adult Group,

who organized a very successful soup and salad fundraiser that sent 5 young adults to General Assembly in Kansas City. In addition, several DAT members and Religious Educators from 1st U attended and for the first time in many years we almost had our 17+ allotted delegates to vote on several important issues.

- DAT members organized two viewings of the 2018 General Assembly Ware Lecture given by Brittany Packnett - once live-streaming during GA, and the second several months later with discussion questions provided by the UUA. It was well-attended both times, and brought people together to share ideas about justice issues.

The DAT will begin planning for the 2019 GA in Spokane, Washington June 19-13. The Mountain Desert District business meeting will also be held during GA with the same delegates needed to attend and vote on important issues.



## iMinistry Video Team

Chris Paul, Volunteer Coordinator  
Dan Small, Technical Coordinator

### Members

Aryon  
George Bakula  
Danielle Bilotta  
Andrew Fearnside  
Chris Paul  
Liam Paul  
Eric Renz-Whitmore  
Patrick Rodriguez  
George Ruptier  
Dan Small

The First UU Albuquerque video team supports the video requirements for the church including recording and uploading Sunday sermons for the UUABQ branches and social media. Key accomplishments for the year are:

- Covered all 52 (both first and second services) in 2018;
- Uploaded 52 sermons for the branches and social media;
- Provided video/audio live feeds of both services to the Sanctuary foyer and Family Room every Sunday;
- Coordinated with the Social Hall Construction Team about video and light requirements for the remodeling in 2019;
- Welcomed and trained four new members to the team;
- At his request, transitioned George Bakula out of the leadership of the team and divided the duties between Chris Paul and Dan Small.

The team is working to maintain full coverage of both services each Sunday. In addition there were several requests over 2018 to provide video coverage of special events. Those requests were met. The team has had some intermittent problems with the wireless cameras in the sanctuary which may be caused by the wireless equipment in use in the sanctuary and/or the television station across Comanche. The team is still investigating the issues.

The team is experimenting with transmitting the Sunday sermons in real time on Facebook. Also, we are working closely with Susan Peck to determine what music can be captured on video and uploaded for branch and social media use.

Finally, all of the **video team volunteers have done outstanding work to successfully cover the Sunday services that many people have come to rely upon in the Family room, Sanctuary foyer, and branches.** Feedback from the branches indicate they would not exist without the video sermons.



# Membership Committee

Austin Silva, Chair

## Members

Nancy Cushman  
Beth Elliott  
Emily Kuo-Lillie  
Cheri Plavnik  
Michael Roake  
Debbie Sue  
Anna Watkins

The Membership Committee is focused on creating a friendly church environment that assists in helping guests become members and integrate with the community. The committee helps staff the Welcome Table to answer questions of guests and assists in membership signup. The Committee also hosts the New Member Dinners that allow new members to meet their joining cohort in a meaningful and lasting way while exploring their spiritual growth.

This year, we hosted three New Member meals: two dinners (June 24 & November 16) and one brunch (February 4). The brunch was added in addition to the dinners to allow for members that did not want to travel during the night. It was a welcome expansion and well received by the new members. The attendance for each event was 24,

30, and 27 (including church leaders and the committee members).

In 2018, a formal Orientation program that occurs monthly was added that allows guests to go on a guided tour of the campus that points out locations, philosophies, and traditions.

The Membership Committee also promoted use of FirstU Connect and getting members signed up and using the platform. These efforts will extend in the next year and will focus on encouraging committee leaders to adopt its use.

Efforts continuing into next year also include further exploration of the effectiveness of Yellow Mug hospitality and expanding diversity of our membership.



# Religious Education Council

Gerri Knoebel, Chair

## Members

Callie Cone, OWL Portfolio  
Carol Cowan, Curriculum Lead  
Eric Keiter, Secretary, Program Evaluation  
Nicia Rae, UU Kids Camp Liaison  
Wendy Simms-Small, Member-at-Large  
Desiree Spielman, Community Connections Lead  
Benita Terrell, Social Justice Lead, RE Council  
Chair-elect

## Former Member

Stirling Crow

## Ex-Officio Members

Mia Noren, Director of Religious Education (DRE)  
Alymay Atherton, Youth Programs Coordinator

Our Religious Education (RE) Program provides age-appropriate opportunities for spiritual, philosophical, ethical, and faith development for children and youth. The RE Council is responsible for organizing, promoting, supervising, and evaluating the religious education programs for First U children and youth. The Council shares leadership with RE Staff. The RE staff collaborate with the RE Council concerning issues of policy and direction providing lay leadership to the church's RE programs.

After serving 3 years as Chair of the Council, Gerri Knoebel retired from that position in December 2018. Two new members joined the Council this year: Eric Keiter who volunteered to be the Council's Secretary as well as assuming the Program Evaluation portfolio, and Wendy Simms-Small who joined as a Member-At-Large in November. We said goodbye to Stirling Crow who was elected to the Board by the Congregation.

The Council's shared leadership model is working well. Each Council member has a portfolio of responsibilities: Chair, Secretary, Curriculum Team Lead, Community Connections Lead, OWL Portfolio, Program Evaluation Lead, Recruitment Coordinator, and UU Kids Camp Liaison. The Council added the Social Justice portfolio position in 2018.

Mia includes in her Director of Religious Education [report](#) the operations about the religious education programs including children and youth, OWL and UU Kids Camp.

Our RE programs are only possible through the many deeply committed people who volunteer as teachers, assistants, floaters, and in other capacities. The Council has the practice of recognizing volunteers for outstanding service in support of RE programs. In 2018, the Council has recognized: Lia Atherton, Linda Bairstow, Keith Christopher, Amanda Harper, Gerri Knoebel, Brie-Anne Stout, Desiree Spielman, and Mary Wright. We appreciate their efforts on behalf of the RE children, youth, and families.

With Mia's DRE leadership, coupled with ministerial, Board, and RE Council support, RE programs are vibrant. Mia and RE staff continue to provide energetic leadership to all facets of RE programs and operations.

Congratulations to Mia Noren who has been diligently working on getting her credential through the UUA's Religious Education Credentialing Program. She expects to receive her credential in spring 2019.



## SipNSup

Pat Diem, Coordinator

Sip N Sup is a social program that arranges monthly dinners in member homes for the purpose of getting to know each better in a small group social culinary setting. Dinners are normally six to eight people and are arranged for the first Saturday evening during the months from October through June.

Members are assigned a menu item to share at the dinner.

SipNSup currently has 100 members made up of both couples and singles. During the year interested participants can join at any time during the year. There are new SNS members each month that have asked to be added to the member list.

Members are invited by email to each monthly dinner two weeks prior to the dinner. Participants who can participate in the current dinner respond and are assigned to dinners in member homes held on the first Saturday of the month. Members share responsibilities for food preparation and hosting.

**In total for 2018, SipNSuppers hosted 9 dinners attended by approximately 300 members for an average of approximately 34 people attending one of 4 or 5 dinners each month.** Efforts are made to schedule dinners so that participants meet new people in small groups throughout the year.



# After School Tutoring

Carol Oslund

The After School Tutoring Program continues its mission of **providing one-to-one tutoring, PE, art, and enrichment activities to at-risk children who live in the neighborhood of the Church.** The second through fifth grade students come from Montezuma Elementary School and are referred by their classroom teachers. Tutoring is offered Mondays and Wednesdays from mid-September through April.

This year there are 18 children enrolled in the program. There are 32 regular tutors, many substitutes and other volunteers who provide an art program on Wednesdays and help with PE. Our academic focus is on reading, vocabulary, writing and English language skills. Tutors also help children with their homework, math skills, and science projects.

Our program is also able to provide occasional enrichment activities for our students. Music, dance, science programs, pottery, and art

activities are scheduled throughout the year. This year we are continuing our efforts to connect with the community. We participated with the Montezuma Community Council in collecting food, Christmas gifts and funds which were distributed by the Student Council to the most needy families in the school.

We continue to celebrate at the end of each semester by holding potluck dinners in the Social Hall for tutors, students and their families; and teachers from Montezuma. At each of these events, each child receives a book which is at his or her reading level and books are also given to siblings.

**The ASTP is guided by a Steering Committee of six and powered by the love and devotion of our amazing volunteers.**



# Animal Advocates

Sharon Hall, Chair

## Members

Martha Anderson	Nancy Harris
Marion Ammerman	Margaret Keller
Mikki Aronoff	Cindy Kloss
Linda Bairstow	Carol Kraft
Sacha Bush	Al Kulp
Janelle Campbell	Beverly Lowrance
Marcia Caregeorges	Danny Rupert
David Gick	Janet Strong
Lisa Goldman	Jo Wilsdorf

**Mission: Promoting the Worth and Dignity of All Beings Through Education, Advocacy, and Assistance.** First U Animal Advocates was founded in January of 2010 and meets on the fourth Sunday of the month at 12:15 pm in the Wesson Room. We maintain an e-news list, a Facebook page, and publish a monthly newsletter.

Animal Advocates members **work with many local and state animal welfare and rescue organizations**, and each month members nominate and vote for two groups to receive a donation. Some of the groups who received financial contributions in 2018 include: Pecos People for Animal Welfare Society, Boxer Rescue of Albuquerque, Prairie Dog Pals, Animal Humane NM (Angel Fund), ARGOS Dog Rescue, Animal Protection of NM, Walkin' n Circles, Sandia Mt Bear Watch, Steampunk Farms, Wanagi Wolf Fund/Rescue, Taos Feral Feline Friends, From Forgotten to Forever Rescue & Transport. Fundraisers, including our **Patio Arts & Crafts Fairs**, support these donations.

Additionally, Animal Advocates helped **facilitate finding homes for many animals and/or provided emergency care** for animals in need. We continue to help supply pet food to the First Unitarian Food Pantry and we are a resource for community assistance in providing information on animal welfare services and organizations.

Our monthly meetings often include **guest speak-**

**ers and humane education forums.** This year we hosted Nancy Arenas, founder of the ABQ Red & Green Festival, and Tammy Fiebelkorn, animal activist and founder/organizer of The Link Conference.

Under the direction of founder Linda Bairstow, the **Critter Club** continued “celebrating and respecting the awesomeness of life” for children ages 6 and up.

In September, we joined Coyote Willow CUUPS, the Arts and Aesthetics Committee, Ministerial Resident Dan Lillie, Director of Music Susan Peck and members of the Sol Singers in a very special **Blessing of the Animals Service**. It was a joyful collaboration and moving celebration of our love for our companion animals. Photos of pets and their people were available as well as treats and commemorative ribbons. Lisa Goldman organized both the mercado and art show benefiting Animal Advocates leading up to the service in cooperation with Arts& Aesthetics.

Our field trip to the new Bernalillo County Animal Shelter was postponed due to a delay in the grand opening, but we **collected food, toys, treats, towels, beds and blankets** to be delivered when we are able to tour the facility early next year.

We had a table at both Connection Sundays as well as at the Social Justice Council annual potluck dinner. We contributed a gift basket for dogs and one for cats for the silent auction.

In 2018, Animal Advocates was again awarded a generous grant from the Social Justice Council to support our **Pets of the Homeless (POH) Project**. Although our monthly wellness clinics have been put on hold, POH has delivered thousands of pounds of pet food as well as collars, leashes, beds and other supplies to St. Martin's Hospitality Center over the past several years. Marion Ammerman devoted many hours to picking up donations at ABQ PetCare, VCA Wyoming, and Aztec Animal Clinic, our veterinary clinic partners.





# Earth Web

Marilyn O'Boyle and Nancy Shane, Co-Chairs

Earth Web meets the second Sunday of each month at 12:15 pm. Our activities consist of **education, outreach and participation in local environmentally-related events.**

## Spring Sustainability Fair

We had our Sustainability Fair in May this year with helpful participation of RE staff and students. There were displays from a solar energy company, plus cookies made in a solar oven, Master Composters, and plant sales. We had a walk and talk through our Nature Habitat, and the RE kids had a chance to see worm composting, and participate in Recycled Art from Off Center Arts.

## Current Projects

- We have been **working to educate the congregation about recycling and plastic**, through signage and articles in the Messenger. With a grant from the Social Justice Council, we purchased wooden stir sticks to replace the plastic ones, and also purchased compostable cups that are being used during Social Hours after services. We have posted signs on or near the recycle bins to let people know what they can recycle. We have scheduled a visit to the Albuquerque Recycling Center in January.
- We have combined efforts with Animal Advocates to schedule **vegetarian potlucks and movie nights**. These will start in January of 2019 and occur on the second Saturdays of each month.
- Several Earth Web members made a trip to Taos to visit the **Earthship Biotechture** there. We plan to continue this type of excursion at least twice a year.

## Outreach

Sally Jacobsen continues to send our ideas and information for publication in the church Messenger. This "**Green Corner**" lets the congregation know what we are doing and invites their participation. We also have suggestions and hints about how to care for the environment.

## Connections

Earth Web works with the RE department for our Sustainability Fair. It is also connected to **Transition Albuquerque**, a group that is out to help us move from away from fossil fuels and grow toward a resilient Albuquerque. We are also connected to **New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light**, a group that works with faith communities all over New Mexico in efforts to combat climate change. Our church is a member of this organization and several Earth Web members have been or are presently on the Board of Directors.



# ESL: Adult English as a Second Language

Connie Molecke, Program Director

## Tutors

Jean Conner  
Stephanie Grenier  
Sheryl Guterl  
Carlton Holte  
Cathy Intemann  
Alice Rearden  
Rebecca Steele

## Substitute/Advisor

Beatriz Mitchell

## Childcare Workers

Jacob Johnson  
Bridget Simpson

We provide **classes** to adults who wish to improve their English skills. We teach in English so tutors do not need to know another language. About 90% of our students speak Spanish but we occasionally have students who speak Chinese, French or Vietnamese. We also have a class for those studying for their **Citizenship** test. In addition, we are reaching out to build **relationships** with people in our community and other community organizations.

Our classes meet Monday evenings at 6:30 pm for 13 weeks each spring and fall. Classes are formed around skill levels and student needs, with some “one tutor/one student” classes and small groups of 3 or 4 students. Our Citizenship class has a main tutor and two assistant tutors for a group of 10 to 15 students.

We employ two child care workers for each session. They are hourly employees, have been fully vetted with background checks, and are certified in first aid. Childcare remains our largest program expense, but we could not draw in many of our adult students without this service. We are one of the few programs in Albuquerque that offer childcare during ESL classes.

Since the 2016 election, our attendance has been inconsistent. Other ESL programs around the state are seeing similar incon-

sistency. The increase in students is in our citizenship class, due to increasing fear and uncertainty of long-time Green Card holders. During classes, we post a sign to label the RE building as “Private for Students & Staff.” We constantly assure students of the privacy of the building and their names and addresses.

## Evaluation

**ESL:** We evaluate each student using the English Student Language Assessment (ESLOA) and work with a focus on basic needs but also language needs for work, parenting, and health issues. We document students’ progress on a check-sheet.

**Citizenship:** 6 students studied for the Citizenship exam and obtained their Naturalized status in 2018. We assisted one student by paying \$405 for her Reduced Application fee from the Citizenship Test Fund. Connie also assisted two people from the community in obtaining citizenship.

## Our Partnerships:

- **ReadWest**, a non-profit in Rio Rancho that teaches Basic Literacy, ESL and computer skills. Our First U volunteers are strongly encouraged to attend an excellent free training workshop for 12 hours at ReadWest. They also assist with our registration and offer use of their materials library.
- **Encuentro & El Centro**, two non-profits in downtown Albuquerque which provide classes in ESL, Citizenship, Financial Management, and Home Health Aide training; and various skills and rights workshops for the Latinex (Hispanic) population. We distribute their information about Immigrant Rights and community resources in our classes, and through workshops for the church community.
- **New Mexico Immigrant Law Center** We link with the NMILC through an online program called “CitizenshipWorks” to complete the N-400 Citizenship applications. They pre-screen our students to assure eligibility. When we have completed 95% of the form,



# ESL: Adult English as a Second Language

Connie Molecke, Program Director

their law team reviews the application and completes it before being sent to the US Customs and Immigration Service. Many First U members assist with their quarterly Immigration Fairs, and we are looking for additional volunteers to expand this aspect of our program.

Our program has mainly been funded from a past grant and donations, with occasional funds from the Social Justice Council. We are extremely grateful to everyone that supports our program in time, money, energy, and ideas. We hope we can continue this valuable program for many years.

## 2018 ESL Financial Summary

### **Beginning Balance**

<b>Jan 1, 2018</b>	<b>\$ 2,810.02</b>
Donations	+ 70.00
Transfer for program support	+ 1,000.00
	<u>\$ 3,880.02</u>

### Expenses

Childcare	\$ 920.80
Ink/Copies	22.98
Books/Materials	204.83
Food/beverages/paper goods	<u>135.77</u>
	<u>\$ 1,284.38</u>

### **Ending Balance**

<b>December 31, 2018</b>	<b>\$ 2,595.64</b>
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## Citizenship Fund Financial Summary

<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>\$5,762.00</b>
2017: Maria Giron	- \$405.00
2018: Maria Gutierrez	- \$405.00
<b>Current Balance</b>	<b>\$4,952.00</b>



# Food Pantry

Rebecca Gracey, Chair

In 2018 **49 volunteers** provided the help that allowed the Food Pantry to hand out an average of **124 sacks of food every Wednesday** afternoon.

This number of volunteers includes people who pack the sacks of food, those who hand out the sacks; people who donate cat and dog food; people who meet the Roadrunner delivery truck every Tuesday morning, unload the food and put it away in the pantry; and volunteers who buy pinto beans and rice and repackage it into one-pound bags. Rice and beans are organized every week by the Johnson-Jimenez family, Doug Thiesen, and Ken Callahan. The packers and food distributors do the job once per month. Pam Bliss coordinates the distribution aspect of the committee and Linda Hudson, the packing duties.

The **goal is to provide nutritional food to the needy that come to us for help**. The sack of food provided includes a pound of both pinto beans and rice, cans of fruits and vegetables, a snack of cookies or crackers, cereal, a package of bread, fresh fruit and or vegetables, and a package of meat such as hot dogs, chicken, turkey, pot pies, veggie burgers, or ham. Then an “extra” is added to the bag such as tuna, soup, a can of beans, canned milk or tomatoes, mac and cheese, or peanut butter. **We must purchase 140 of each item every week in case more than 120 sacks are needed.**

Most of the food is obtained from Roadrunner Food Bank at a minimal charge that covers their

labor and stacking charges, usually at **.19 per pound**. If food we desire is not available there, it is bought at Smiths. The rice and beans are bought at Costco if not from Roadrunner.

Rebecca Gracey does the food purchasing and ordering online from Roadrunner. **Most of the money for purchasing food comes from church member donations since the pantry is not a budgeted expense for the church.** The estate of Elaine Smith, whose husband Nolan Smith was an early volunteer for the Food Pantry, gives \$1,000 monthly to the pantry.

A total of 6,323 sacks of food were given away in 2018 with an average of 124.7 sacks per week. The average cost per sack was \$2.82.

<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	\$27,383.22
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<u>\$17,940.67</u>
<b>NET INCOME:</b>	\$9,442.55
<b>2018 BEGINNING BALANCE:</b>	<u>\$13,943.19</u>
<b>YEAR-END-BALANCE:</b>	<b>\$23,385.74</b>



# Immigrant Justice Task Force

Marilyn Holscher, Chair

## Members

Marie Baca	Dena Lucas
Bobbie Brown	Beatriz Mitchell
Amy Carpenter	Connie Molecke
Alisa Cooper de Uribe	Linda Myers
Jill Desjardins	Linda Piper Price
John Ellig	Sonja Pulvino
Gil Guitierrez	Dawn Reed
Amy Herrera	Peggy Roberts
Jay Johnson	Nancy Shane
Martha Ketelle	Susan Smith
Dan Lillie, Ministerial Resident	Nancy and Ron Sweet
Pamela Livingston	Crystal Vander Zanden
	Sally Wistand
	Renee Wolters

**Our Mission is to support the rights, dignity, and well-being of the Immigrant Community and to work for justice, equity and compassion for Immigrants.**

Here's what we're doing:

- **Building relationships with Albuquerque Immigrant Justice advocacy groups.** The Task Force works with other local organizations to provide support for immigrants and asylum seekers. For example, in 2018 we provided funds for rent for asylum seekers, we helped facilitate training for sanctuary accompaniment and we continue to help mobilize local response to calls for assistance and action.
- **Providing opportunities for our Congregation to learn about Immigrant Justice Issues.** In the spring of 2018, the Task Force organized a series of workshops and panel discussions on topics such as The Dreamers and Religion and Immigration. We periodically table between Sunday services to provide the Congregation with timely information, and we maintain a Facebook Group to share immigration news.
- **Providing information to our Congregation about volunteer opportunities.** The Task Force ends out email “blasts” to supporters about volunteer opportunities both at First Unitarian and in the larger community. We also maintain a “Hotline” list to share emergency calls for assistance or action.
- **Leading a Congregational consideration of offering Physical Sanctuary at First Unitarian.** The Task Force Sanctuary Team has been researching what it would take to offer physical sanctuary at First Unitarian and has been meeting with church members and constituencies about this issue. We are also actively exploring how First Unitarian can offer “expanded Sanctuary” - other ways to support those most in need.
- **Seeking ways to provide support to First Unitarian’s local Immigrant neighbors.** The Task Force Neighbors Team has been working to establish closer ties with our local immigrant communities, most recently through developing a relationship with Montezuma School.

In addition, The Task Force has recently begun supporting the work of Border Servants Corps in Las Cruces which assists immigrant families as they are released from federal detention. We have collected donations and provided volunteers and expect to be continuing this work in the immediate future.

The Task Force is always looking for more members to join its efforts.