



FIRST UNITARIAN SOCIETY

Where Spiritual Curiosity and Conscience Connect

2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT

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THE CONTINUING BOND OF UNION

We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, desiring a religious organization in the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth, which shall make integrity of life its first aim, and leave thought free, associate ourselves together as the First Unitarian Society of Madison and accept to its membership those of whatever theological opinion, who wish to unite with us in the promotion of truth, righteousness, reverence and charity among all.

*Formulated by the Founders of this Society in 1879,
adapted and reaffirmed in 1980.*

2011 - 12 BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Sandy Eskrich, President
Emily Cusic, Secretary

TRUSTEES

Will Salvi
Gary Leisman
Patricia Reardon
Lisa Munro
David Weber

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David Weber, chair
Personnel Committee
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FROM THE PARISH MINISTER

In looking back at the past year, two developments strike me as especially noteworthy. One reflects a major accomplishment while the other foreshadows future challenges.

First, the accomplishment. At the June Parish Meeting the congregation voted to proceed with a new model of governance. This signal event followed nearly a year and a half of research, writing, consultation and communication by a Board-appointed Governance Task Force. Meeting every other week and with valuable input from Dan Hotchkiss, our Alban Institute Governance consultant, the Task Force slowly but surely crafted policies designed to rationalize decision-making and make the experience of our members more meaningful and less frustrating.

Throughout this lengthy process, the Task Force took pains to keep the FUS Board, Committees and members at large informed about both the underlying logic of policy-based governance and the specific changes that would need to be made for it to succeed. As a working member of the Task Force, I can attest that transparency was an overriding concern for all of us. Information was freely shared, important questions raised, suggestions heard and duly considered. Ultimately, the new model was accepted and we now have entered a “trial” period during which it will be tested and, if necessary, further refined.

In recent years many UU congregations have attempted a similar transition, some more suc-

cessfully than others. That FUS seems to have managed the process so deftly testifies to the robustness of our democratic culture and to the patience and integrity of the members of the Task Force itself. This exercise is hardly over; implementing our new policies and adjusting to some significant by-law changes will require good-will and forbearance on all our parts. Nevertheless, those who served on the Governance Task Force with me – Brian Hellmer, Lorna Aaronson, Kathy Luker, Susan Koenig deserve great credit for their faithful and effective service to the Society.

A second development, not completely unforeseen, is more troubling. Although many of us realized that servicing the debt on our new and upgraded facilities would place a considerable strain on the annual operating budget, we had hoped that previous growth and giving trends would continue, allowing us not only to meet our mortgage obligation but to increase congregational opportunities for involvement as well. Unfortunately, five years ago (when the commitment to expand was made) there were few obvious signs of a deep and lengthy economic recession that would create adverse conditions for faith communities and non-profits of all descriptions.

Financial insecurity has led to austerity, as people scrutinize their commitments and cut back on discretionary spending. While FUS weathered the first two years of the recession reasonably well (thanks to careful monitoring of expenses and some unexpected bequests) the day of reckon-

ing came this June. Staff layoffs were avoided for the time being, but to balance the budget significant cut-backs in health insurance premiums, denominational support, community outreach and member resources all had to be made. And, unless revenues increase significantly next year, payroll reductions will likely come into play.

The leadership of the Society plans a thorough study of our financial situation. While it is indeed true that many current and prospective members have experienced (or anticipate) loss of family income, this may not fully explain why FUS has failed to raise sufficient funds for its operations. I happen to be one who believes that generosity is the inevitable but indirect result of meaningful engagement with, and appreciation for, the spiritual community to which one belongs. If stewardship is lagging, it is probably because not enough members have made the Society and its interests a personal priority. That has to change, or difficult years will surely follow.

On a more uplifting note, I would like to commend a hard working group of people, including Claire Box, Lorna Aaronson, Janet Swanson, Kelly Crocker and Karen Gustafson on publication of the QUEST curriculum – a tremendous achievement requiring countless hours of writing and revision. QUEST sets a new standard for adult spiritual deepening in UU congregations and now it is available to everyone.

On a personal note, I would also thank my ministerial colleagues, Kelly Crocker and Karen Gustafson, as well as Church Administrator Susan Koenig, for their excellent work in my absence. It is because I retain unqualified confidence in our senior staff that I was able to step back from my normal responsibilities to pursue some wonderful sabbatical projects. This break from parish ministry allowed me to prepare a General Assembly sermon heard by 4000 attendees, write and deliver a lecture on Ethical Eating for another GA audience of 400, flesh out a major historical article to be published next year and conduct extensive research on the topic of religious authority. I hope that eventually a new book will flow from the latter.

More immediately, however, I look forward to serving the good people of First Unitarian Society for a twenty-fourth year during which my colleagues and I plan to pursue new initiatives in family and theme-based ministry and appreciative inquiry. Your interest and support are welcomed!

In hope, faith and affection,

– *Michael A. Schuler, Parish Minister* ■

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

After several years of discussion and pondering, in the spring of 2010 the Board hired Dan Hotchkiss, author of *Governance and Ministry* (available in the FUS Library) and embarked on changing FUS governance to a policy-based model.

This made 2010-11 the year in which the Board operated under old rules as we developed and started operating under new ones. It required patience and flexibility, and was a valuable exercise.

More than half of each Board meeting was devoted to discussing, modifying, and ultimately affirming policies that were brought to us by the Governance Task Force. Often the Task Force would present us with an unfinished policy that needed Board input before it could be fully developed. We would revisit it the next month.

The Governance Task Force: Lorna Aaronson, Brian Hellmer, Kathy Luker, Michael Schuler, Karen Gustafson and Susan Koenig performed yeoman service developing policies.

The most significant change is that the Board takes a broader view of its fiduciary responsibilities, discerning and defining the Vision of Ministry while shifting its involvement in operations to the policy level.

The more we discussed how what we do related to our Vision, the more the Board found energy and excitement, and a new sense of purpose.

At the Leadership Retreat in January the Board and lay leaders brainstormed a groaning board of needs, dreams, visions and goals. The Board then distilled it to three simple visions:

- To motivate members to live the UU Principles;
- To strengthen inter-generational ties;
- To implement the new governance structure.

Quoting Dan Hotchkiss:

“The congregation is owned by its mission. The Mission is a unique answer to the question, “Whose lives do we intend to change and in what way?” A Congregation that limits its vision to pleasing its members falls short of its true purpose. Growth, expanding budgets, building programs, and such trappings of success matter only if they reflect positive transformation in the lives of the people touched by the congregation’s work.”

These will be our guideposts for 2011-12. We will revisit our Vision of Ministry annually, after congregational meetings at which we as a faith community will work on why we are here.

The first exercise in implementing this approach was in developing the budget. The FUS senior staff found having grounding principles defined by the Board to be a great help in developing the 2011-12 budget.

How does this affect life at FUS?

- It will be much easier to get a go-ahead to pursue a new project.

- Staff will be more available to advise, because they will be spending fewer hours in evening meetings.
- In the Vision of mission Staff members have clearer parameters of where their work fits into the larger picture.

Looking Forward

- In the coming year there will be Open Question discussions involving the congregation.
- Ministry teams will foster our spirit of volunteerism and community.
- The Board will revisit the Vision of Ministry with the intention not of deleting , but of developing and refining it using what we learn at open question discussions.

– David Weber, President,
Board of Trustees, 2010-11 ■

MISSION AND VISION OF MINISTRY

Mission

First Unitarian Society is a place where curious seekers gather to explore spiritual, ethical and social issues in a safe and nurturing environment. Unitarian Universalism supports the freedom of conscience of each individual as together we seek to be a force for good in the world.

First Unitarian Society: where spiritual curiosity and conscience connect.

Vision of Ministry

Starting in 2011-12, the board will annually discern how the energy of FUS can best be spent to further its mission. This Vision for Ministry will guide all of us – members and staff – as we do the work of ministry on behalf of FUS.

In the next 1-3 years we will:

- Motivate members to live the UU principles
- Strengthen ties among generations
- Successfully implement the governance model

■

FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Motivate members to live the UU principles...

Our musical year began auspiciously as FUS hosted the annual summer conference of the UU Musicians Network last July. 250 UU musicians from around the country, representing music programs large, small and in-between met for a week of activities that culminated in the largest gathering that our Atrium Auditorium has seen on a Sunday morning. Attendees were favorably impressed with FUS – our community, ministries and facility. Many FUS members worked as volunteers, interacting with musical professionals and participating in workshops and concerts.

Highlights of the year include a Renaissance mass sung by an 8 member vocal ensemble, a November Sunday with a hot Jazz trio, an All Music Sunday that featured the Madison premiere of a major contemporary work, and a magnificent Winter Solstice concert featuring UW baritone Paul Rowe singing a complete Schubert song cycle. Sunday after Sunday the musical offerings have included music by choirs of all ages, talented singers, and instrumental soloists ranging from recorders and marimba, to string quartets and didgeridoo. Our rental “payback” program has brought to our worship services fine Madison artists including the Madison Bach Musicians and Lou and Peter Berryman. The Ancora String Quartet celebrated its 5th year in residency. Our Friday Noon Musicales series continued to attract artists of a higher caliber and a loyal following of attend-

ees. Our adult choirs continue to attract new members, and it is routine to see choir members appearing on the new member rosters. Assistant Music Director Linda Warren, in addition to her many musical offerings, continues to nurture small group ministries such as the FUS String Band and Chime Choir.

The above I believe reflects the appropriate relevance that a spiritual organization of our size should reflect within the community. The Noon Musicales series occasions weekly appearances of First Unitarian Society in local media. Our All Music Sundays attract new members for our choirs. Exceptional music in our worship services contributes to worship attendance. The list can go on, but it all adds up to creating a program necessary for continued growth and relevance. Of course, this level of ministry is dependent on current staffing and budgetary support.

Strengthen ties among generations...

The 15 year tenure of Heather Thorpe as Director of the Children and Teen choirs has nurtured a ministry that is the model for a children and youth music program for churches of our size. Heather has built this program from the ground up, creating new choirs as the children grew up through the program. Hundreds of young people have participated in this ministry and the percentage of retention among members is truly amazing, creating parent-children-music program ties that continue through the years. The Teen Choir routinely attracts non-member youth creating another doorway from the Society to the com-

munity. Heather and Kelly Crocker routinely collaborate in cross programming between the children and youth music and RE programs.

*S*uccessfully implement the governance model...

The FUS music program is well-structured, consisting of several distinct groups of member volunteers that are staff led. It thus seems to conform quite naturally to the Ministry Team concept espoused by our new governance model.

To conclude...

Highlights for this coming year include a benefit rock concert by the Barclay Martin Ensemble in August, and a Messiaen retrospective concert with the accomplished Dutch pianist Ankie Foell in November. Our All Music Sunday Winter Choral Festival in December will feature a commissioned anthem by the well-known UU composer Rev. Jason Shelton. In September, I will be instituting a monthly Singing Meditation ministry to reflect the growing interest in spiritual formation work. Most importantly, I look forward to working with the many devoted volunteers that make up our vital music ministries.

Yours in music,
– Dan Broner ■

FINANCIAL REPORT

Summary

Fiscal 2010-11 was another in a series of challenging years for FUS. While funds remain tight, we continue to see a modest upward trend in pledging and in overall revenue. While we did use part of a surplus from 2009-10 to fund programs, outreach, operations and debt reduction this past year, we used less of these funds than we thought we might, allowing us to reduce for 2011-12 the amount of one-time funding of our programs.

2010-11 Financial Highlights

Pledge revenue increased 3.3% over last year, continuing an encouraging trend of modest increases in this area. The number of pledges themselves was also up 8% for 2010-11, after two years of decline. However, income from our general offering was down 12.2%. Service collections and revenue from Children's RE enrollment was also down, as we saw a decrease in enrollment. After the receipt of a few large bequests in 2009-10, our revenue from special gifts has returned to a more normal level. Going forward, the board's policy is to divide bequests evenly among debt reduction, funds for on-going capital needs, and the Foundation as we increasingly attend to our future needs.

General expenses increased 78% over last year, which was also 6.6% over our budget. The planned increase in this area included a \$100,000 increase in the portion of our construction loan paid out of our operating budget. While our office staff has become quite adept at finding cost savings, it cannot control snow, the plowing of which last winter was the other significant contributor to increased spending in this area. This increase was more than offset by one-time savings in our staffing expenses, which were down

8.2% over last year and came in almost 5% under budget. While the decision to address the unfortunately timed departure of our Development Director by hiring a very part-time campaign coordinator was primarily a strategic one, it also resulted in significant cost savings as did our decision to use existing staff to address our volunteer coordination needs. Given the increasing costs to the operating budget of debt repayment, we were unable to provide staff with general raises, and also had to decrease the FUS contribution to insurance coverage for staff members.

Program expenses were down 9% over last year, after rising the year before. This reflects cost cutting efforts in RE, as well as the judicious use of restricted funds, particularly the Quest program's use of grant funding and the Music program's use of dedicated revenue from All Music Sunday offerings, to help offset certain program expenses.

Pledging for 2011-12

We continue to receive pledges from new members during the year, but by the end of June the annual campaign to fund FUS programs and operations for 2011-12 had shown encouraging signs that our pledging is on an upward trend. By the end of our fiscal year, we already had more pledge cards returned than for all of the previous year, and nearly 100 more pledges made than at the same time last year, in part because FUS now requires that CRE families pledge in order to register for a second or later year of classes.

The total dollar amount of pledges made so far for 2011-12 also shows a 3% increase over all of 2010-11, though we have so far seen a slight (5%) dip in average pledge.

FUS members and staff continue to work hard to control expenses while maintaining the quality of our programs, working together to realize our mission now while safeguarding our future.

— Susan Koenig ■

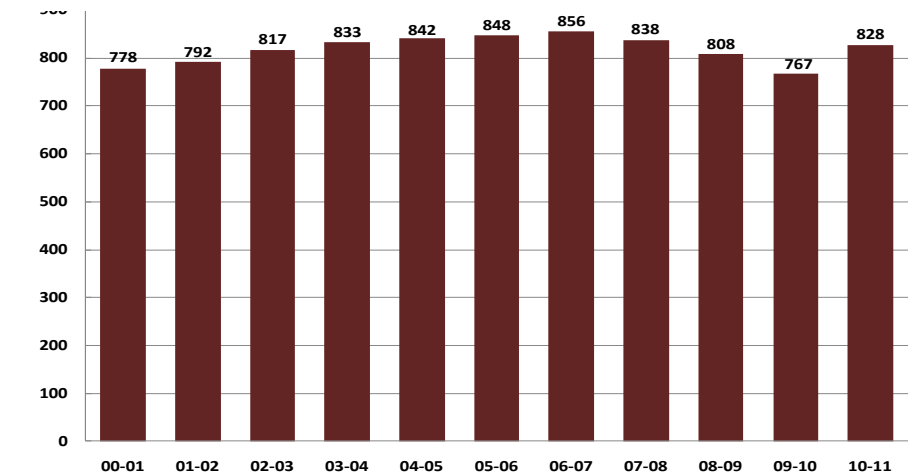
YTD vs BudgetYTD vs Prior
year

	June 2011	10-11 Fiscal Year Budget	YTD as % of Budget	Prior year YTD	Change vs Prior Year
Revenues					
Pledge Payments	1,135,109	1,140,000	99.6%	1,098,717	3.3%
Service Collections & Other Gifts	69,554	50,500	137.7%	135,008	-48.5%
RE - Children	29,208	40,900	71.4%	43,618	-33.0%
RE - Adults	54,709	64,000	85.5%	52,902	3.4%
Foundation	52,696	55,678	94.6%	53,839	-2.1%
Parking	44,051	38,000	115.9%	43,342	1.6%
Events	4,970	1,000	497.0%	2,125	133.9%
Building Rental & Tours	36,206	45,500	79.6%	42,867	-15.5%
Nursery School	49,221	45,347	108.5%	39,699	24.0%
Other Income/Fundraising	47,979	54,500	88.0%	53,040	-9.5%
Transfer from Last Year's Surplus	133,424	133,424	100.0%	-	0.0%
Total Revenue	1,657,128	1,668,849	99.3%	1,565,157	5.9%
General Expenses					
Office	9,578	12,000	79.8%	11,069	-13.5%
Postage	5,246	6,000	87.4%	4,446	18.0%
Computer	7,346	11,000	66.8%	8,454	-13.1%
Insurance	14,149	13,000	108.8%	13,768	2.8%
Building Maintenance	58,311	55,193	105.6%	32,803	77.8%
Other Maintenance	39,828	12,329	323.0%	6,358	526.4%
Utilities	53,151	57,533	92.4%	55,280	-3.9%
Credit Line Interest	6,366	13,500	47.2%	6,386	-0.3%
Debt Repayment	100,000	100,000	100.0%	-	0.0%
Other General Expenses	75,726	66,364	114.1%	68,254	10.9%
Total General Expenses	369,701	346,919	106.6%	206,818	78.8%
Personnel Expenses					
Salaries	729,015	758,670	96.1%	679,527	7.3%
Taxes & Worker's Comp	39,642	44,607	88.9%	40,750	-2.7%
Other Expenses & Benefits	303,516	322,287	94.2%	270,668	12.1%
Total Personnel Expenses	1,072,173	1,125,564	95.3%	990,946	8.2%
Program Expenses					
RE Children	23,460	24,255	96.7%	17,746	32.2%
RE Adults	36,736	52,300	70.2%	47,920	-23.3%
Music	11,954	15,300	78.1%	11,107	7.6%
Denominational UUA	48,315	54,396	88.8%	55,135	-12.4%
Social Justice	12,658	13,160	96.2%	10,289	23.0%
Fundraising/Membership	5,743	8,600	66.8%	4,082	40.7%
Other Programs	11,228	20,800	54.0%	18,690	-39.9%
Total Program Expenses	150,094	188,811	79.5%	164,970	-9.0%
Total Expenses	1,591,968	1,661,294	95.8%	1,362,733	16.8%
Net Income (Deficit)	65,159	7,555	862.5%	202,424	-67.8%

FUS ANNUAL CAMPAIGN DATA

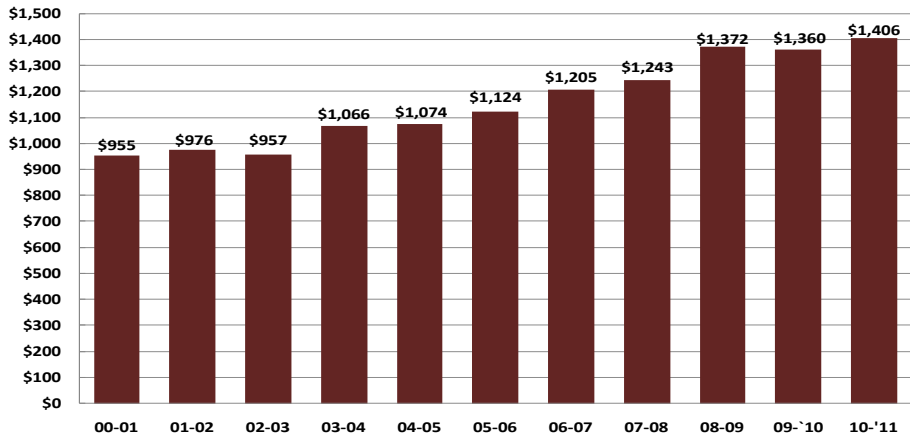
Number of Pledges Made

The number of pledges made increased 8% over 2009-10, reversing our declining trend.



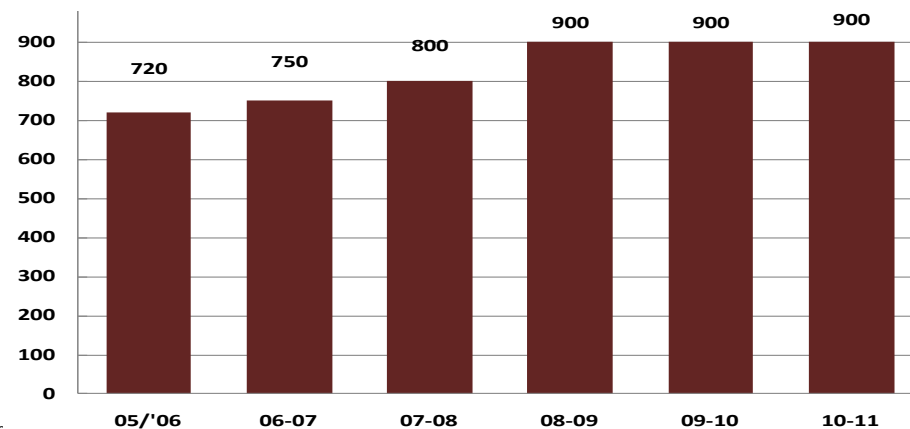
Average Pledge Amount

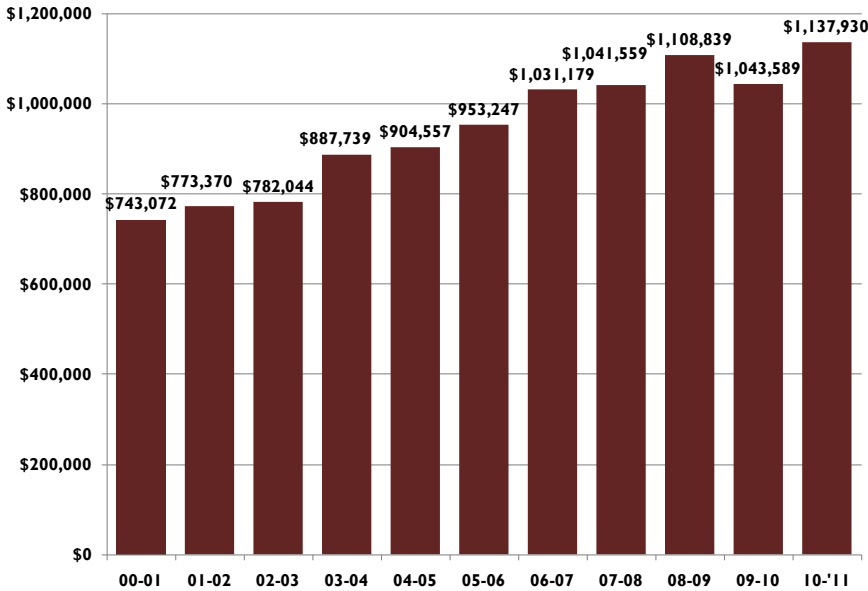
Average pledge increased in 2010-11, though it remained lower than the \$1500 average per household FUS would have liked to see to cover its expenses.



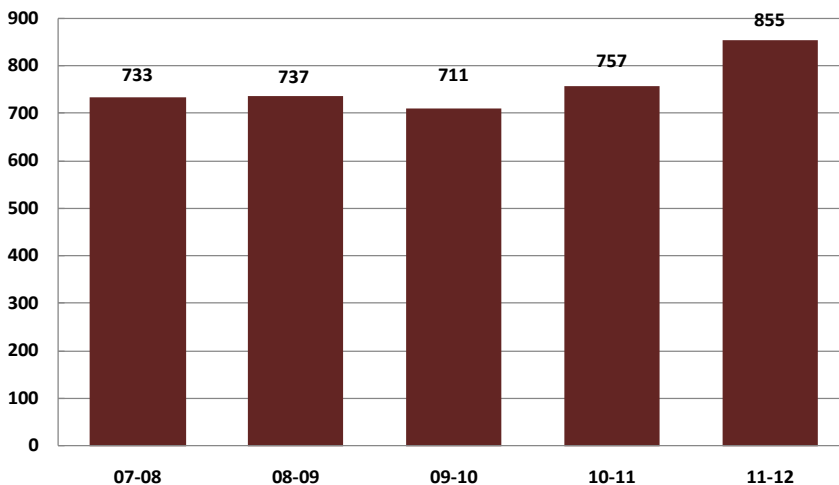
Median Pledge Amount

The median pledge remains at its plateau of \$900.





Total Amount Pledged
After an anxious start to the year, the total amount pledged for 2010-11 also began again to increase.



Pledges for the new fiscal year
By the end of June, 2011, we already were ahead not only of pledges made at the same time in 2010, but of the total number of pledges for 2010-11, continuing a positive trend both in the increased number of pledges and in a more timely response to the annual campaign.

FROM THE FACILITIES MANAGER

Some significant projects involving the FUS building and grounds have taken place during the past year. The Friends of the Meeting House provided us with the funds and the Preservation Committee with the organizational resources to completely remodel the lobby bathrooms in the Landmark Auditorium. This is a major improvement in a place that is often a first impression for guests and visitors.

Previously we had added two speakers to the Atrium Auditorium, but to fully realize the benefit of this enhancement, relocation of the existing large speakers was necessary. This was accomplished earlier this year, thanks to a generous donation from Lee and Sally Hansen, delivering a significant improvement in the sound system and a more satisfying experience for anyone attending events in the Atrium Auditorium.

One of the 5 furnaces located in the B-wing was replaced. This is significant since all of those furnaces are close to the end of service and will need to be replaced sooner than later.

We had a breakthrough in how we use the space in the Isom House. We had been using the basement for primarily storage while wanting to use the 2nd story for programming. The problem was that without proper egress we couldn't use the 2nd floor. We do however have legal exits in the basement, so we transferred the stored items upstairs and began remodeling the basement with the help of volunteers, led by Sam Lawrence, in June. That project is expected to be completed for use by the fall of 2011.

The Grounds Group, led by Nancy Ragland, continues to keep our planted beds looking great, our garlic mustard under control, and, under the eye of Sandi Wysock, our roof weeded. This year, they also made significant improvements in the rain garden outside the child care room, removing some invading bushes.

Our decision to improve the level of service provided by our snow removal contractor resulted in a major reduction of complaints to nearly zero. This allows us to be more welcoming to the complex variety of users of the FUS facilities, one of our primary, ongoing goals. We look forward to continuing this in the coming year.

—Tom Miskelly, Facilities Manager ■

CAMPUS MINISTRY

First Unitarian Society Campus Ministry

(Madison Unitarian Universalist Young Adult and Campus Ministry – MUUYACM)

It was a fulfilling year (2010 – 2011) for our Campus Ministry group, with good attendance and high energy sustained by the students, particularly the group's co-chairs, throughout the year. The group met each Sunday evening during the academic calendar year. We had numerous first-time students join us as well as a core group of members from the previous year.

The first Sunday of the month we met at FUS, cooking and sharing a meal together and then spending time in worship and/or discussion. The time together on these evenings tended to go longer than our other Sundays as we enjoyed being “home” at FUS. The second through fourth (fifth) Sundays, we met at the Memorial Union, having a light supper catered by the Union. Those evenings included a worship component facilitated by our FUS ministers or guests. Reverend Kelly Crocker continues to be the anchor for Campus Ministry, leading the group twice a month. Our agenda for this year included service at the Grace Episcopal Men's Shelter, preparing and serving dinner on two Saturday evenings.

For the coming year, we will continue to be a presence on campus for our college students, providing a safe and nurturing environment for them where they can freely discuss matters of importance and concern. We will continue the schedule of Sunday evenings as has been followed in the past. Rev. Crocker will be on maternity leave for the first 2 months of the school year. The Rever-

ends Schuler and Gustafson will each meet once a month with the Campus group and we will look to the group's members and guests for additional worship assistance.

We hope to increase the campus students' presence at FUS this coming year. They have been invited to engage with the congregation at our first “Service Sunday” this August. We will again participate in the Grace Episcopal service opportunity, perhaps joining with another FUS group for the evening. And we hope to provide opportunities for the campus group to engage in activities with our youth.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Swanson

Youth and Campus Ministries Coordinator ■

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The 2010-2011 year has been another exciting and vibrant year in religious education. As you will read below we have had outstanding participation in our children's and adult programming, the Quest program was a transformational experience, and many connections and relationships were built between and among the generations. In the coming year, we hope to focus more on these connections, especially those which connect people across the generations, finding ways in which we can all create and explore community together. Deepest thanks go to everyone who has participated in our program in some way, especially those who volunteered to help make our programs happen and to our amazingly talented and dedicated staff – Leslie Ross, Deb Mies, Janet Swanson and Aidan Schmidt.

We had one staff transition this year – Karen Barrett-Wilt left her position as Youth and Campus Ministry Coordinator to pursue other possibilities. Karen brought energy and new life into our Campus Ministry and we were very grateful for all of the ideas and the passion she brought into that position. Her tenure with us helped to revitalize a shrinking program as she forged strong connections with the students. We were fortunate to fill this position with Janet Swanson, a long time FUS member who currently serves as our Quest Spiritual Program Director. Janet, with her enthusiasm and commitment, has been able to continue the community building and program revitalization of both our Campus and Youth Programs.

Child Care

This year we had 47 infants and toddlers registered. A greater effort was made to provide

structured activities for our “older” toddlers, which made for some great wall art! We offered an in-service training for our child care staff on child development. This provided much excellent information that allowed them to offer appropriate child care with confidence.

Children's Religious Education

By the end of this academic year we hit our all-time high enrollment of 600 kids and 112 teachers! Additionally, we had 19 elders who provided more in-depth discussions for our Coming of Age youth. For the first time, we had three sections of Coming of Age offered. 18 of those youth attended General Assembly as the culminating experience of their Coming of Age year. They were inspired and enthusiastic about Unitarian Universalism in ways they had never experienced before! Additionally this year, we created a document outlining behavioral guidelines for children and youth that will promote their safety, respect for others using the building, and care for our FUS campus.

We offered a new curriculum for our 2nd and 3rd graders: *Free to Believe*. Two new initiatives that were a part of that class were to sponsor a young girl in the Philippines through the Partner Church program and to be involved in two worship services. The *Free to Believe* classes raised over \$600 to help 5th grader Jael Rose Lumabit Condez continue school. They also performed two skits as intergenerational messages during worship services. What a joy to see them involved in our services!

We continued to hold our annual events—the

Halloween parade, banner parade, Easter Egg Hunt, and yearly fund-raiser, Art in the Wright Place. The latter event raised \$4565 for our CRE program. Sadly, we had to cancel our Holiday Decorating Party due to a winter storm. In October, 18 of our middle school youth enjoyed a wonderful overnight at Upham Woods in Baraboo, WI, where we hiked, canoed, performed a service project, and played archery. Above all else, we enjoyed each other as a community!

Youth Program

The FUS Youth Group (YG) began the 2010-2011 church school year with healthy numbers. As the year progressed, the numbers dwindled, as has historically been the case. Four adult advisors were actively engaged with the group from the beginning. There was a change in staff assignment mid-way through the year. Karen Barrett-Wilt resigned and Janet Swanson was hired to oversee youth and campus. Staff attended each Sunday YG.

Plans for the upcoming 2011-2012 church school year include re-visioning the youth programming to: incorporate best practices as evaluated in other youth programs; include more social action/ social justice work (including Standing on the Side of Love); have the teens more actively participate in the life of the church and be more engaged with the community as a whole. It is our hope that as we work toward a more vibrant and active YG, we also address the issue of attrition. As teens graduate from COA, we find that parents may stop attending worship services and consequently, also the youth. The focus on multi-generational programming is a step in the right direction to help address this problem.

Adult Education

We saw a large increase in those participating in Adult Education this year. In the fall of 2010 we had 339 people participate and 320 in the winter/spring semester of 2011. Both programs were filled with a variety of courses, workshops and lectures thanks to the talents and energy of our community. Our *Ethical Eats* program wrapped up with a winter farmer's market that brought in vendors selling produce, soap, cheese, flour, meat, yarn and more. It was a wonderful day with music, a keynote speaker, and an absolutely delicious brunch catered by Jennifer Gaber of Nutshell Catering. We hope to make this market an annual winter event. We were also fortunate to bring in Liz Lusk and Bonnie Augusta from the Madison School District to discuss the problems and possibilities for GLBTQ Youth in our Madison community as our 2011 Wartmann Lecture on Human Sexuality and the Liberal Religious Tradition series.

In the coming year, look for some changes to how we run our Adult Education program. After much consideration and a survey to discern the desires of our community, we have decided to focus more on one-time events, workshops, and a theme-based lecture series. We will still be offering a full complement of programming, including two full weekend retreats, a *Friday Night Out* program, and many courses and workshops.

Library

Our Library Committee made fantastic strides in the past year in the collection of new materials and the creation of our on-line catalog. If you haven't been there, check it out at www.fusmadisonlibrary.org.

continues 

M E M B E R S H I P

Quest: A Spiritual Journey

The Quest2 program continued into its second and final year of programming with a full complement of participants (34), facilitators (4), mentors (17) and leadership (seven individuals on the Quest Steering Committee).

In October 2010, the Quest curriculum was published by Huff Publishing Associates. It is an exciting, comprehensive and extensive curriculum of over 400 pages. In addition, the Quest website www.questaspiritualjourney.com was created and implemented, making Quest available to the broader UU community. Website activity and curriculum inquiries continue to be monitored on a regular basis.

Acknowledging the flat nature of membership pledging and, consequently, the necessary budget cuts to programming, the Quest program was charged by the congregation to pursue other avenues of funding; specifically, a dedicated fundraising program to, in combination with Quest3 participant fees, fully fund the Quest3 program.

Quest was required to raise, with one-time gifts, the amount of \$13,500. The fundraising was a tremendous success, with monies exceeding the required amount. Given this, the planning year of Quest3 will begin in September 2011, with the Quest3 program itself starting in September 2012.

– Kelly J. Crocker, Minister of Religious Education
and Leslie Ross, Director of Religious Education ■

In this last year of the Connections Council, we focused on those who enter our doors for the first time. What they see, what they feel, what they hear, and how we will make it a place where they feel like this is the community or spiritual place for them.

- We analyzed and reviewed how we welcome visitors, our New UU classes for curious adults, and our New Member Book Signing.
- We are responding to the challenge of creating different avenues to engage all members in finding their place here at FUS.

We are now into our fourth year of using our full facility and the cycles of events and programs. We have taken our committees in Connections and moved forward in creating Ministry Teams that reflect the full work of what it takes to create an energetic and fulfilling program for all.

Goals from this past year include:

- Enrich the New Member Book Signing experience to reflect commitment to First Unitarian Society
- Develop several avenues of intentional small groups
- Develop a consistent Welcome/Orientation
- Consider Volunteer Coordination and how it can be accomplished in a large congregation.
- Review the New UU course and incorporate changes facilitators and participants have recommended. Make it ready for the fall of 2011.

Highlights and Changes

• **Revision of new member book signing event to reflect more of a ceremony.**

- Changed frequency of the signings to 8 times a year (not April, June, August, or December avoiding holidays and two months of summer)
- Signings are consistently now the fourth Sunday at 12:30 p.m.
- Includes a more formal welcome with a minister and with an intentional conversation about meaningful membership.
- Social time is now built in to get to know one another better.

• **Changes in membership requirements**

Our bylaw revision from June, 2010 requires that in order to sign our membership book new members must have UU background or have taken a New UU class.

- We held 6 New UU classes with 108 attending.
- 84 have signed the book from July 2010 to July 2011 compared to 91 the previous year.
- A higher percentage have pledged (83% in 2010 /11 to 71% in 2009/10).

• **Welcome Orientations**

Since January, we have hosted second Sunday Welcome Orientations for newcomers and visitors between services. I have welcomed 16 individuals. This is in addition to welcoming people in the library after every service.

• **Visitors**

We have had 90 visitors both physically and from our website since January, compared to 91 in all of 2010. We are clearly attracting more like-minded individuals through word of mouth and through our website.

• **Ministry Teams**

We have created Ministry Teams to replace Connections Council Committees, focusing their efforts more directly on the work to be done. More will be developed as we understand the needs of our congregation.

Teams formed include: New UU, Chalice Groups, and Interest Groups.

Teams in formation include Book Signing Events, Worship services teams (Greeters, Hospitality and others), and Denominational Affairs (putting together delegates for District Assembly and our Phoenix, AZ General Assembly).

• **Neighborhood Groups**

An exciting new initiative underway is the formation of opt-in Neighborhood Groups. Over 20 groups around the area are forming with 120 households. Our hope is this will help them get to know the UUs in their neighborhoods for social interaction and mutual support.

– *Jeanne Sears,*
Coordinator of Member Programs ■

SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Social Justice Program welcomed in a new staff member in 2010 and continued to work on Economic Justice, Peace & Justice, Welcoming Congregation, Environmental Action, and Human Rights Initiatives. Additionally, the Social Justice Program officially ended the committee and council structure and formed our work into Ministry Teams of which there will be 21 in the 2011-2012 church year.

In considering Economic Justice, the Second Chance Apartment Program faced some challenges that led us to decide not to provide further financial support. There was success in providing shelter staffing and meals as a part of the Interfaith Hospitality Network and the Porchlight Meals Program. Peace and Justice offered a day long retreat to “Keep Hope Alive in a Troubled World.” The Welcoming Congregation Initiative marched in the Pride Parade, hosted a water station for the ACT Aids benefit ride, held a “Coming Out Day” Service, remembered those who lost their lives due to transgender related bias during “Transgender Day of Remembrance,” and hosted a Happy Dance. Environmental Action studied and acted on the Study-Action Issue of Ethical Eating and held an Earth Day Celebration. Finally, Human Rights hosted an educational event on Immigration, a day-long retreat focusing on Domestic and International Human Rights issues, sponsored a student in Kendu Bay, Kenya, and hosted the Guest at Your Table Program.

All of our Social Justice Initiatives collaborated to host a Social Justice Film Festival. Attendance was small and given the 50% cut in funding for the program, the Social Justice Program will not host a

Film Festival during the 2011-2012 church year. Our holiday outreach efforts were as big as ever and not even a monumental snow storm could keep us from giving back to the Madison Community. In light of the logistical challenges with the heavy snow, we have implemented a new process for gift drop-off.

The Social Justice Program turned 10 years old last year and in reflecting on our past successes, we considered our vision for the future in February by hosting Meg Riley. Through a series of meetings and discussions the program has begun to work towards realizing its vision with the first ever Service Sunday serving as the culminating event that marks movement towards a broader and deeper Social Justice Program at FUS. As a result of the Social Justice Survey, we now have a clearer understanding of the top issues the congregation feels the program should act upon. Those two issues are: Economic Justice and Preserving Democracy.

As we continue to look towards the future, the Social Justice Program will face challenges in the coming year with significantly less funding for its programming with increasing reliance on the Outreach Offering. In the coming church year, a process will be put into place to ensure that the FUS makes the highest and best use of the coordinator’s limited time and limited financial resources of the program. The program strives to be more focused and will move away from primarily offering service and educational opportunities towards a model that works in all five modalities. ■

OUTREACH OFFERING 2010-11

(from September – May, 50% of the offering at our services
is donated to a (usually local) non-profit group)

Community Shares of WI	\$ 576.39
Dane County United	\$ 1159.57
Domestic Abuse Intervention Services	\$ 1,295.86
FUS's Eviction Prevention Fund	\$ 2720.19
Friends of Starkweather Creek	\$ 786.86
FUS Coming of Age	\$ 1,511.54
GSA for Safe Schools	\$ 1,242.43
Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice	\$ 1,119.20
Japan Tsunami Relief Fund	\$ 1,576.95
Kasjiab House, Dane County Mental Health	\$ 468.50
Madison-area Urban Ministry	\$ 925.80
Mann Educational Opportunity Fund	\$ 880.36
MARC of Dane County	\$ 846.70
Native Energy	\$ 1,208.30
International Partner Church Council	\$ 887.84
Planned Parenthood of WI	\$ 1,398.88
Rainbow Project	\$ 713.71
UW Hospital's Reach & Read Program	\$ 1,309.07
FUS's Homeless Meals Program	\$ 777.04
Saint Vincent de Paul Food Pantry	\$ 1,750.53
Urban League of Greater Madison	\$ 1,211.48
UUA-UU UNO LGBT Uganda Fund	\$ 730.09
UUSC	\$ 594.00
WI Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility	\$ 651.75
Total...	\$ 28,822.63



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