

## **Art Ministry**

The art team, as it does every year, found five very different artists to exhibit their art in our sanctuary. Each member of the team helped to shepherd one artist through the process of planning the exhibit, sent notices to the local calendars, made sure the labels and brochures got done, helped to hang and take down the exhibit, and when requested, assisted with a reception.

## **Buildings and Grounds**

Buildings & Grounds continued to improve our campus and reduce the deferred maintenance list, with over a dozen members participating in monthly mechanical and gardening WorkPARTY events. In addition to our faithful Spiritual Mechanics, we are now organizing a new group of Sacred Groundskeepers to take on improving our courtyard and other key outdoor spaces. Two of our Scouts completed their Eagle projects: Zach Johnson led a team installing some new benches at the amphitheater and Levi Henke led a team installing a deck for folks with walkers and wheelchairs at the top of the amphitheater.

## **Building On our Legacy**

During the 2017/2018 church year, our building project (Building on Our Legacy) began in earnest. Co-chairs of four task forces began meeting on a monthly basis and worked towards the project scope as set forth by Board resolution (February of 2017, excerpt below).

“The focus of this campaign is to fund expansion and renovation of the Jones Building to meet the space needs of children, youth and adult religious education as well as adult meeting space and to pay off the current church indebtedness when the note comes due in January 2019.”

The four task forces and co-chairs:

- Communications (Gail McKinley and Sindy Barker)
- Capital Campaign (Paige Smith, Cathy Cole, Ivy Brezina)
- Building (Brad Kosiba, Josh Socolar)
- Finance (Andrew Wright, Laurence Kirsch)
- Ex Officio: Board Liaison (Andy Hencke), Board President (Jenny Warnasch)

This team of ten leaders met throughout this church year and conducted activities with the congregation with two primary focus areas:

- 1: Engagement, education, & feedback on current draft building plans
- 2: Capital campaign fundraising
- 3: Initial town engagement for permitting

The engagement with and feedback from the congregation was substantial and was incorporated into revisions to the early floor plans.

At the time of this report, the campaign is near completion and the congregation has already pledged more support than UUA feasibility study indicated was likely as a stretch-goal.

Heading into next church year, the building project will shift to architect revisions and engineer bids. Final scope and budget decisions are planned for a fall congregational meeting. Construction is anticipated to begin in the first half of 2019.

### **Campus Ministry**

With more than 20 participants and an average weekly attendance of more than ten college students, our campus fellowship continues to be one of the largest and most active UU campus ministry programs in the country. The Campus Ministry led a service in the February, held a retreat at Shelter Neck, and sent six additional members to an anti-racism training with Organizing Against Racism.

### **Caring Ministry**

The CCCM meets monthly to discuss the caring needs of the congregation. Throughout the year, members of the ministry have responded to needs of church members which have included: pastoral/home visits to those who are ill or elderly; transportation to and from church and appointments; food and meal delivery in times of need; sending cards to members in recognition of significant life events; loaning Caring Quilts to church members during times of grief or illness and healing; recording and responding to Joys and Sorrow; and, making arrangement for volunteers to assist with memorial service receptions. This year the ministry distributed a questionnaire to church members asking for their interest in helping with the work of the ministry. Twenty-three church members responded.

### **Children's Ministry Team**

This year we had 101 children 0-5th grade registered in the Religious Education Program. Our average attendance was very strong this year, over 60% of registration which is excellent. We are particularly pleased with the strength of our youth staff program and the greeter program. We successfully increased attendance for pre-k children and children in the 4th and 5th grades which was focus for this year. Our curriculum this year included K-1 and 5th OWL, Nature Spirituality and increase focus on social justice. One of our new initiatives that was particularly successful was Lunch Bunch, a program on Saturday afternoons in the fall that included lunch, a parenting program for parents and a special activity for children. Attendance was strong and the feedback was very positive. The purpose of this program to provide high quality programming for parents and children while also providing a social time for parents to get to know each other.

Special Events Sponsored by the Children's Ministry Team:

Grinch Dinner (Dec)  
Nifty Gifty (Dec)  
Pumpkin Pie Extravaganza (Nov)  
UU Buddy Breakfast (Feb)  
Shelter Neck Family Retreat (April)  
Community Dinners in February, April and May  
Chalice Camp (August)

### **Communications Committee**

In 2017-2018 the Communications Committee continued to fulfill the mission described on the committee web page ([c3hUU.org/communications-committee](http://c3hUU.org/communications-committee)) by working with other committees and ministries to enhance both internal and external communications with the church.

Accomplishments by the Communications Committee in 2017-2018:

- Implemented a kiosk and remote editing system to display Upcoming Events and activities at the church on a large monitor at the entrance to the sanctuary and online. The kiosk constantly displays slides created weekly which feature upcoming events.
- Managed the church's private Facebook group and public Facebook page and used paid "boosts" to dramatically increase audience reached for key events
- Developed a method to update multiple social media platforms at one time to increase social media awareness of selected church activities and the weekly services
- Consulted and assisted other Church-wide Committees/Projects with internal and external communications by providing direct support for the Stewardship Team, the WomenCircle, Services Auction, Capital Campaign, Outdoor Connections, ECO, Mental Health Ministries, Chalices Softball team

### **Community Service Ministry (CSM)**

Our mission is to encourage, coordinate and deliver services and financial support to the local community with a strong emphasis on hands-on activities. On Sept. 17, 2017, we participated in a Spirituality of Service Sunday which showcased examples of folks in our congregation putting their values into action and we provided information on volunteer opportunities in our wider community. Our congregation generously donated a total of \$18,349 in STP collections which were used to support programs and activities in our area.

Highlights and accomplishments from the 2017/18 church year:

- In partnership with Habitat our church participated in our 22nd build. CSM members provided a Saturday lunch for construction volunteers and celebrated with family members at the dedication of their new home in May. STP donations = \$4840
- Community Church continues to support IFC's efforts to help individuals and families meet their basic needs. Throughout the year we collect shelf stable items for the Food Pantry, organize two Bountiful Bag food collections, and volunteers prepare and serve three meals a month at the homeless shelter. STP donations = \$4089
- In January, 2017, the CSM collected new and gently used tools which were donated to the workers at the Center for Education and Leadership at El Centro Hispano. In September we sponsored a brunch fundraiser and collected \$655 to be used to buy T shirts and ball caps for the workers. STP donations = \$1224
- Through our Holiday Meals STP we were able to provide Thanksgiving dinner for 100 families in our community. STP donations = \$2510
- We filled 168 backpacks with school supplies that were delivered to students in Orange and Chatham counties. STP donations = \$1070
- Our STP collection for TABLE went toward helping them provide emergency food aid on weekends and school breaks for over 650 area kids at risk for hunger and CSM members volunteered for two food bagging shifts. STP donations = \$1873
- CSM continues to try to educate the church about the historical tie between our church and Charles House and the helpful services it provides for older citizens in our community. STP donations = \$1680
- We support OKAY's (Opportunities for Kids and Youth) efforts to support affordable summer programs for area children from low resource families and to provide information to families about these programs. STP donations = \$1063

### **Covenant Groups**

Covenant Group offered 9 groups this year, including 3 parent groups and 1 young adult group. In addition there were 4 summer groups and 2 newcomer groups during the year. These groups served 120 adults in the congregation. Our Covenant Group program supported and improved programs that fostered fellowship and connection, warmly welcomed new people, and helped to develop congregational leadership. In addition Covenant Groups provided service to the church through group bonding events, including ushering at the musical, providing food for youth groups, making care packages for college students and other projects. A particular success this year was a tweak to development of the covenant group session by adding a summer retreat to plan, select, edit and write sessions for the whole year. The sessions created this way were well received. This year in response to a request for more social opportunities for covenant group members, there was a potluck in October. While the event was a success, the leaders are going to experiment with other ways to foster social events.

## **ECO**

This year, ECO continued its efforts to educate church members about ways to take care of the earth, and to provide opportunities to take action at home, at church, and in the broader community. We continued offering monthly recycling collections and providing educational displays during coffee hour. One of our goals this year was to update and revamp our tabling displays, and we accomplished this by creating and showing brief slideshows on themes of food, water, energy, and nature.

Other goals which were met this year were to show an environmental movie, promote “green” features in the upcoming building project, and sponsor Earth Day activities and a Share the Plate (Chatham Citizens Against Coal Ash Dumping was the recipient). Several members became active in NC Warn’s Clean Path 2025 plan to speed NC’s transition to renewable energy. Others planted a new native plant shade garden in the courtyard and recruited volunteers to help maintain and expand it. We also purchased new compost bins, supported a nature curriculum in CRE and continued advertising environmental events in the community.

Finally, we continued our work on a project to improve parking and transportation issues at church, by continuing to provide an interactive map of church members for those members interested in carpooling, and by designing parking signs to address the need for more accessible parking.

## **Endowment Committee**

The Endowment Committee met on a monthly basis to administer the Endowment Fund which was valued at \$196,099.36 at end of first quarter 2018...an increase of ~ 12% over this same period in 2017. However, there were no significant member contributions to the fund during this 2017-18 period. We offered a grant application opportunity for up to \$4,425.00 to support the mission of the church and gained congregational approval to fund *Organizing Against Racism* training for church leaders, youth and young adults during the 2018 calendar year. There was sufficient growth in our Endowment Fund to offer a second opportunity for grant applications in Spring 2018 and the committee will recommend congregational approval to fund two grants at \$1,750 each beginning July 2018. One grant will support the addition of internet access and other home improvements for the comfort of our future Sanctuary guest(s). The other grant will support the purchase of an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) and First Aid Kits as well as training for staff and selected members as part of the overall safety plan for the church. The committee is currently developing an in-depth educational and awareness plan for Growing Our Endowment with plan implementation to begin Fall 2018.

## **Membership Team**

Every Sunday, the Membership Team welcomed Members, Associates and Visitors into our church and collected the Offertory. For Visitors, we were usually the first point of contact with our church, and often the primary introduction to Unitarian Universalism. Every Coffee Hour, members of our team staffed a table to help people new to and familiar

with our congregation learn more about our church and deepen their connection to our community. The Membership Team met throughout the year and planned and offered several events for new Members, including our participation in New Member Recognition Services and the planning, promotion and hosting of New Member Receptions for the forty-five new Members this fiscal year (so far!). For the upcoming year, we crafted a survey to help us better serve our current Members' needs and we are planning a Welcoming Training for the entire church community in order to better welcome new Members.

### **Mental Health Ministry**

The Mental Health Ministry works in collaboration with and in support of the Caring Ministry, to make sure that our congregation can *support and care for one another*. (Action Item #3, Strategic Plan.)

This year we have focused on ways to support families in the congregation who are coping with mental illness. Mental illness carries with it significant stigma. It is a long-term illness, one in which families play a key role—a role which often isolates them from friends and others in the congregation. The need for support and information is critical. The MHM has worked to address this need in the following ways:

1. We have organized two "Support is Contagious" events. The first, held in October, focused on an exploration of the issues faced by family members. The second, held in March, featured a Compassion Fatigue session facilitated by guest speaker Carl Clark, MDiv, Staff Chaplain (Psychiatry) at UNC Wakebrook Hospital in Raleigh; and Jodi Simmons (Hospice Chaplain). There were approximately 25 people in each session.
2. Susan Spalt worked with Donna Kay Smith, a local expert on mental illness, to write a "field guide" to mental illness which will be a handbook for families coping with mental illness and the mental health system in North Carolina. A number of church members contributed personal stories and the first Support is Contagious participants provided input into the book.

The Mental Health Ministry also provided educational handouts and other information on mental illness to the congregation and church staff throughout the year to promote awareness of mental health resources.

### **Music Team**

The Music Team connects the congregation and local community through and to musical activities. In the past year, we've coordinated a Durham Bulls outing to perform the National Anthem; produced "Oliver! The Musical", which raised \$1,122 for the Durham Crisis Response Center; and released our church CD, "Within These Walls: Music from the Community Church". Our team regularly brainstorms opportunities for outreach, including performances at the SECU House and potential arts festivals for the upcoming year. In addition, the Music Gala raised \$1,570 towards new assistive hearing devices and through its concessions, \$212 for the ECO team. We work for our events to be all-inclusive, interconnected, and an expressed representation of our UU principles.

### **Peace and Justice Committee**

Charles M. Jones Peace and Justice Committee's outreach for the year included 5 Share The Plate collections that helped others and informed the congregation of issues. Two Schools in San Ramón, Nicaragua: \$2550; Movement to End Racism and Islamophobia (MERI): \$1670.62; NC Commission of Inquiry on Torture: \$3,271; Rogers-Eubanks Neighborhood Association: \$1,594.60; UUs for Justice in the Middle East: \$1870.85. In addition, P & J partnered with MERI Taskforce, Balance and Accuracy in Journalism, UU Justice Ministry of NC, UUJME Leadership, NC Stop Torture Now, Pilgrimage for Peace with Justice of Witness for Peace SE, Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP, Triangle Friends of Farmworkers, Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), Orange County Peace Coalition. P & J continues to support the Sanctuary Ministry of the church. These activities fulfill the mission of the committee "to lead and engage all ages of the congregation in working for peace and justice through study, action, and financial support."

### **Sanctuary & Immigrant Support Ministry**

In its first full year as an official ministry of the church, the Sanctuary & Immigrant Support Ministry had an active and very successful year. More than 30 members of the church participated in the leadership of this ministry and hundreds participated in our programs and activities.

One focus of our ministry was leading the congregation through a discernment process that led to a successful vote (140 in favor, 4 opposed, 8 abstaining) on February 18, 2018, to become a sanctuary congregation. Committee members hosted numerous information sessions in preparation for the vote and invited Rev. Paul Davis from a UCC congregation in Greensboro and Gary Sanders from a UCC congregation in Raleigh to speak about sanctuary. Following the vote, the Sanctuary & Immigrant Support Ministry took on the work of preparing the church to offer sanctuary, including working to help prepare the Manse, secure furniture, recruit and develop training for volunteers, and create a Sanctuary handbook.

Another strong focus of our ministry was supporting immigrants more broadly. Members of our ministry planned and held a successful Syrian Dinner at the church on April 14, 2018, with more than 50 people in attendance. This event offered a connection to and raised awareness and funds for refugees in our community. Our team members also provided opportunities for church members to advocate in support of DACA.

Ministry members attended trainings, including a conference held in September led by the North Carolina Council of Churches. Our leaders attend and participate with the NC Sanctuary Coalition and Orange County Sanctuary Matters. Through our sanctuary work we've developed relationships and direct partnership with at least 7 other congregations in our community including Kehillah Synagogue, Church of Reconciliation, and Binkley Baptist.

### **Sanctuary for Dialogue Team**

The Sanctuary for Dialogue (SfD) team continued its work in service of its Mission to "To facilitate civil and respectful dialogue in which people express their beliefs and ideas, and seek to understand better the beliefs and ideas of others, including why they believe as they do." We held our sixth Dialogue within the church community on "Addressing Income Disparity," with 25 participants including 14 who had not previously participated in an SfD Dialogue. In addition, seven of our members received training by the Better Angels organization, a nationwide group committed to addressing political polarization through organized conversations involving conservatives (Reds) and liberals (Blues). Using this training we conducted two workshops for Church members to enhance their skills at "Talking Across the Political Divide" with family members and friends. These workshops included 29 participants. We also planned Red/Blue workshops that will bring together Reds and Blues for political conversations. We are organizing these at Carolina Arbors residential community and in Durham, and we have been invited to provide moderators for workshops at Davidson College, UNC and Winston-Salem/Greensboro. Also, 1-2 of our members have been invited as delegates to the first Better Angels National Convention at East Mennonite University in Virginia.

## **Share the Plate**

The Share the Plate (STP) Steering Committee consists of co-chairs Jill Baker and Jane Provan and members Bill Rote, Jena Kaizen, Barb Chapman, Maureen O'Rourke. We meet twice a year to review applications for the next half-year, choose recipients, assign guides to assist project coordinators, and refine policies and documents related to our mission.

The STP Committee is proud to report that twenty-three different projects/organizations were served by the generous donations of our congregants in this fiscal year of 7/1/17-6/30/18. The generosity and support for our programs continue to grow. These projects included:

Comprehensive Cancer Support Program at UNC Hospitals

School Supplies Project

Sister Communities of San Ramon

Interfaith Council

Charles House

El Centro Hispano and Center for Education and Leadership

Movement to End Islamophobia and Racism

United for Puerto Rico

Holiday Meals (Via Interfaith Council)

Holiday Gifts for Foster Children

NC Commission of Inquiry on Torture

Planned Parenthood South Atlantic

Habitat for Humanity

Rogers Eubank Neighborhood Association

Center for Ethical Living and Social Justice Renewal

Table

El Futuro

UU's for Justice in the Middle East

Chatham Citizens Against Coal Ash Dumping

O.K.A.Y.

Straley Fund

Shelter Neck and Sarah Insch Funds

Minister's Discretionary and Benevolence Funds

While we continue to serve a large number of groups on a regular basis (e.g. Habitat for Humanity, IFC, El Centro, etc.), we also continue to attract new projects in which church members participate and in which they have a vested interest in supporting (e.g. Chatham Citizens Against Coal Ash Dumping, Comprehensive Cancer Support at UNC Hospitals). We also had flexibility this year to add in United for Puerto Rico as a response to the environmental and human disaster caused by a virulent hurricane last Fall. We continue to support outreach projects within the church ministry (e.g. Straley Fund, Shelter Neck, Sarah Insch Fund, Minister's Discretionary and Benevolence Funds), at a local level (e.g. Habitat for Humanity, O.K.A.Y., Table, Charles House, El Futuro, El Centro), at the state level (e.g. NC Commission of Inquiry on Torture), and internationally (e.g. United for Puerto Rico, UU's for Justice in the Middle East, Sister Communities of San Ramon).

At this writing, our donations total \$43,415.07 for the fiscal year. Two more STP's will be held in June. Individual amounts for specific projects are listed on the Share the Plate webpage under Justice and Service.

## **Spiritual Exploration for Adults**

The Spiritual Exploration for Adults Program served nearly 200 people in the congregation 16 courses covering a wide range of subjects including the classic Building Your Own Theology, Meditation, Qi Gong and Voluntary Simplicity.. We were particularly pleased to offer Wellspring 1, a year long spiritual deepening course again this year after a hiatus of several years. The SEA Program continues to develop programming that meets the need for communal connections and spiritual development. Lasting, supportive friendships have been realized through SEA programming, new church members become part of a loving community and expand their awareness of the possible connections realized via vibrant adult religious education experience at Community Church. Along with Covenant Groups, SEA is often one of the first places for connection for visitors and new members.

### **Worship Ministry**

Three new members were added this year: Thaddeus Dombrowski, Joy Mermin, and Judy Leinhas. Continuing members are: Becky Waibel & Bonnie Nelson, co-chairs; Barb Chapman, Bill Rote, Eric Conrad, Linda Thompson, Kathy Putnam, Ruth Leopold, Larry Ross, and Jenny Nelson (Insch Leadership participant).

Summer services offered a variety of people from Thom's Preaching Practicum class. Worship Associates coordinated services with the "preachers".

December brought the "Greening of the Church" coordinated by the WM team. Activities included decorating the sanctuary and Commons, wreath making for doors, kid crafts, baskets for the Homestart women's shelter in Chatham Co, plus the annual chili supper and carol singing. Over 100 people attended the event.

During "Thom's Time" at our monthly meetings, we have learned about how a sermon and prayer are prepared. We have also provided feedback on sermons as well as suggestions for upcoming sermons.

### **Youth Ministry Program**

The youth ministry program continued its strong tradition of providing our church's sixth through twelfth graders with opportunities for fellowship and growth. Youth participated in middle and high school youth groups, Sunday morning middle school religious education, middle and high school Shelter Neck retreats, middle and high school lock-ins, and family dinners. They also took part in Our Whole Lives for eighth graders, Coming of Age, and the Insch Leadership Program. Youth helped host the capital campaign kick-off dinner and raised money for the capital campaign by selling basketball game parking and seats to a rousing night of Fishbowl. High schoolers attended General Assembly and, for the first time, a regional Mountain Youth Conference in Highlands, NC. As part of our ongoing efforts to work against racism and build relationships with youth across our local community, a group of our high schoolers participated in an area-wide Racial Equity Institute anti-racism youth

workshop. Also new to this year's program was the very popular Harry Potter-themed Hogwarts on the Hill weekend, where youth assisted in the training of our church's young witches and wizards. The youth ministry program includes 79 registered youth, and average attendance for youth programs is healthy (over 50%).