



FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF YARMOUTH, MAINE



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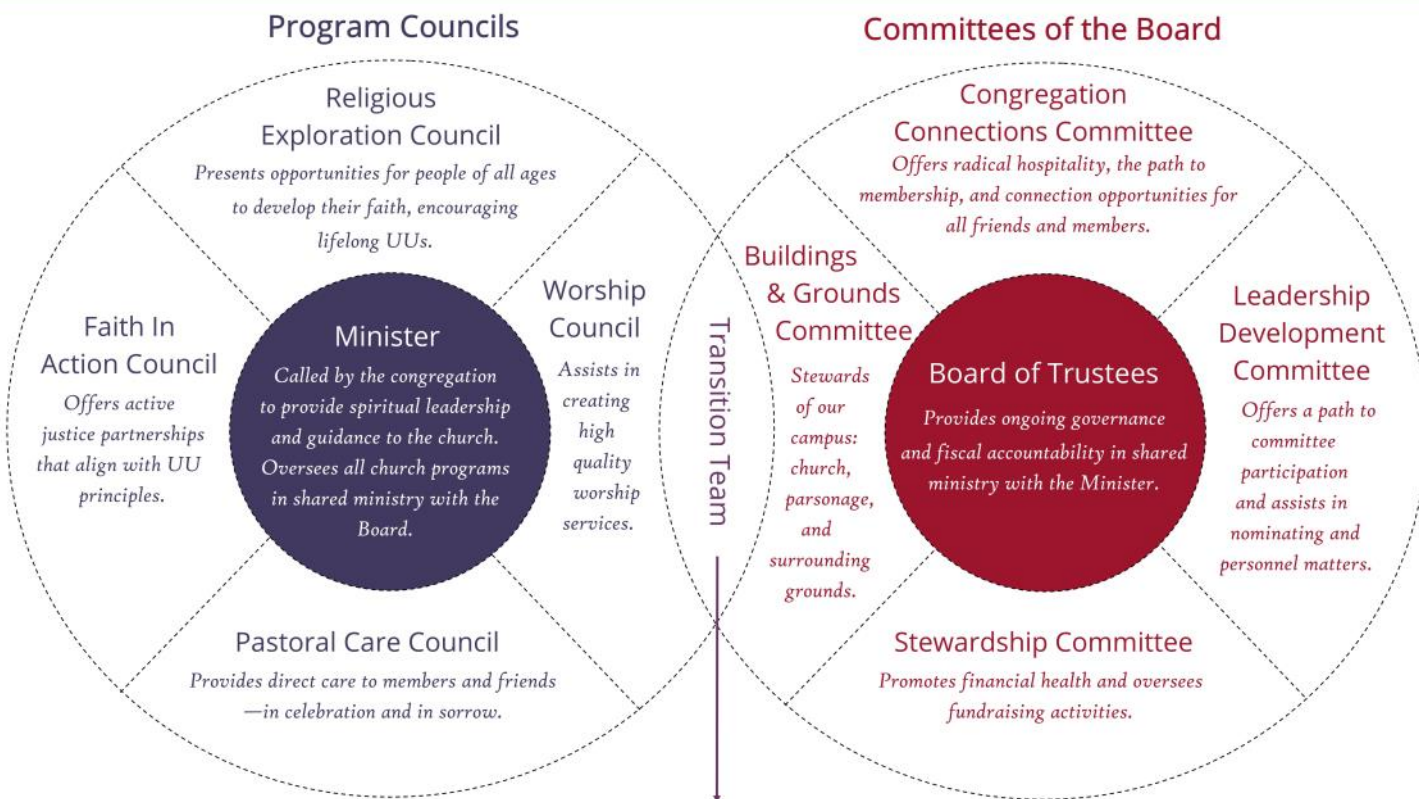
About Unitarian Universalism

Annual Report 2019-2020

FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
97 Main Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096

phone: 207-846-4148
email: office@uuyarmouth.org
website: www.uuyarmouth.org

SHARED MINISTRY AT FIRST UNIVERSALIST



Models healthy communication and behavior and provides proactive education about congregational health and transformative conflict. Considers all relationships and systems in the church, and supports all Committees, Councils, and Teams in acting as adaptive leaders.

SHARED MINISTRY GOALS

1. Focus on our mission with strong programs in Worship, Religious Exploration, and Social Justice.
2. Sustain Congregational Health through Transition with engaged, joyful ministries.
3. Sustain physical, fiscal, and administrative health through transition and growth.
4. Realize programmatic growth, increased attendance and building use.



MINISTER AND STAFF

Rev. Hillary Collins-Gilpatrick.....	Minister
Gwen Matthews.....	Director of Education & Communications
Sam Chandler.....	Music Director
Andrea Meadows.....	Administrative Assistant
Todd Roy.....	Sexton
Anna Bianconi.....	Children's Teacher

INTERIM MINISTER

An interim UU minister assists a congregation in the transition period between settled, or called, ministers. Interim ministers help congregations to move forward while assisting in the emotional process of transition.

When I began working with you, it was clear that there were stories that needed to be shared and a need to make sense of those stories. There was a commonality of experience that involved feelings of inadequacy and mistrust. You realized that you weren't alone or crazy, that secrets can be shared. That's a big realization and one that has allowed you to reconnect with your fellow congregants in a healthy way. It's also now possible to share with new people what your history has been. And, it has also made it possible to be excited rather than fearful about meeting a new minister. I've been impressed with your maturity and ability to see yourselves and each other. Consequently, it doesn't take much to effect healthy change here.

Even though you are all unique individuals, a church community has its own personality, and I've seen you change from a congregation that is tentative and I would say, fearful, to one that is able to move outside the boundaries of what you've done before to experience something new. I've seen you have successes and failures, and you have moved forward through each. Which is how it should be since there are always some of both in the life of a church.

You are generous with the staff and appreciative of their efforts. You have a great capacity for teamwork on big projects. You are always supportive of each other's initiatives. You have a wonderfully generous culture of hospitality with food. You are a very talented, hard-working, devoted group of people and you appreciate everyone's efforts. Above all, you relate to each other with respect and kindness. I think this culture of kindness and respect is very much a part of the fabric of this community. It's key to its success. If you are to guard against change in any area, I would hope it would be this one.

More than most congregations I've served, you've had an interest in governance and how to organize it effectively. Starting with the ideas of Dan Hotchkiss' *Governance and Ministry*, you've diagrammed the approach you use and have expanded and clarified it over time. I'm sure that will continue.

When I've talked with Rev. Hillary after candidating concluded, I mentioned that she may have to be alert to possible trust issues due to the difficulties that you've experienced in the past. This may or may not show up for a few years even, but all of you should be vigilant in recognizing what this is if or when it arises.

More than anything, I wish for you to be the loving, kind, and intelligent people that you are naturally inclined to be. I hope nothing makes you feel less than or afraid to express yourselves.

Excerpted from Rev. Frieda Gillespie's Final Minister's Report, June 2020

MINISTER

The minister is called by the congregation to provide spiritual leadership and guidance to the church and oversee all church programs in shared ministry with the Board.

Beginning with gratitude - I offer thanks to those who have been patient with my myriad questions this month, those who have made time to talk with me, walk with me, and tell me your stories, those who have been supportive, creative, and kind from a distance, and to our Board of Trustees for the tireless - sometimes joyful, sometimes painful - dedication they have given to our church over the past year(s). I am grateful to be here, grateful to be with you, and eager to see where our shared ministry carries us this strange and wondrous year. All will be well, it just might be a little different.

Typically an Annual Report looks back - it is an archive of the events, teachings, and energies of the past year. In this unprecedented time, though, how fitting that our Annual Report not only looks back but also looks to the present and the future.

On Sunday, May 10th, following a two week virtual candidating "week," 75 First Universalist members gathered on Zoom and voted unanimously to call me as settled minister. I was overjoyed. Days later, the UUA released a statement recommending all UU congregations remain virtual through May 2021. My joy remained but my priorities shifted, connection and creativity would be tantamount to all else this year. Despite (and due to) our physical distance, congregants would need to feel and trust that they belong to a beloved, attentive, and curious community in the months ahead. To build, support, and sustain that connection at a distance would require us/me to get creative and stay creative all year long.

I officially began my ministry at First Universalist on August 3rd and by August 12th had co-facilitated retreats with both the Worship Council and the RE Council. During our many hours together we developed a plan for Worship, Religious Exploration, and Fellowship that we hoped would carry us through the year. The plan involved multiple spiritual and educational virtual offerings throughout the week, each with a slightly different feel. We want to meet people where they are at this year - whether folks need some gregarious conversation, a grand Sunday service live from the sanctuary, or a quiet space to gather and pray. We based much of our planning on three foundational tenets: simplicity, connection, and accessibility.

Looking to the present moment - as I write this report, we are in the midst of trying out this grand plan/experiment for the first time. Our Tech Crew is troubleshooting live stream options, our RE Council is scheduling courses, our Worship Council is considering new definitions of "church," and Sam, Gwen, Andrea, and I are putting the finishing touches on new webpages and Orders of Worship. It is an exciting, overwhelming, strange, connected, creative, and important time. I am endlessly grateful for our staff and our Tech Crew.

MINISTER

With joy I am happy to report that Gwen Matthews, previously First U's Program Assistant, is now our Director of Education and Communication. The title that aptly describes Gwen's role at church and is extremely well deserved. Congratulations, Gwen!

Looking ahead, I am, more than anything, eager to just experience the unfolding of it all. I'm curious which elements of our programming will become part of folks' weekly rhythms, what will grow and expand this year, and what will fall away. I also look forward with hope and trust to the imminent formation of my Committee on Ministry. The CoM will serve in an advisory capacity for me, helping me acclimate to First U and brainstorm through the conundrums, challenges, and ideas that may arise this year.

Above all, I look forward to getting to know you.

Again, I am so grateful to be here, grateful to be with you, and eager to see where our shared ministry carries us this strange and wondrous year.

And, so with all that, let's get started, shall we?

Yours connection, creativity, and care,
Rev. Hillary

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The President of the Board of Trustees coordinates church activities, presides at meetings of the Board and of the church, and represents the church.

The church year that extended from July 2019 through June 2020 in many ways feels like 2 completely different years. What a study in contrasts. July through February, we were conducting church business as usual – lots of gathering, fundraising, volunteering and planning. We were happily worshipping and singing together in our beautiful sanctuary. We were, as expected, preparing to say farewell to our interim minister, Rev. Frieda Gillespie, and methodically working our way through the search process to find our next settled minister. Then March – and Covid-19 – came, just as our ministerial candidate had been identified and the candidating period was about to begin. On a dime, we pivoted and learned how to meet, to worship and to candidate – all virtually. What a challenge we faced in a time of such uncertainty! But with thanks to SO MANY OF YOU, we did it and learned a great deal in the process.

The church year ended, and a new one has begun. Although our Mission remains the same – **Explore, Embrace, Engage** – we are fulfilling that Mission in ways we never imagined 6 months ago, now with our new minister, Rev. Hillary Collins-Gilpatrick, having joined us.

To help us fulfill our Mission, First Universalist's 4 major goals for calendar year 2020 continue to focus on maintaining our overall 'health':

- Goal 1 (Councils): Focus on our Mission with Strong Programs in Worship, Religious Exploration, and Social Justice
- **Goal 2 (Board): Sustain Congregational Health through Transition with engaged, joyful ministries**
- Goal 3 (B&G and Treasurer): Sustain Physical, Fiscal and Admin Health through Transition and Growth
- Goal 4 (Congregation Connections and Director of Education & Communications): Realize Programmatic Growth, Increased Attendance and Building Use

Here are the highlights of **Goal 2**, specifically owned by the Board:

Faithfully Execute our Board Responsibilities

- We continue to enjoy a full, well-functioning board with no turnover from last year
- We facilitated Mid-year and Annual meetings
- We assisted the Search Committee during the candidating and negotiating process
- We helped guide us through the pandemic response, adjusting to the financial impact and developing reopening/building use policies
- We participated in virtual General Assembly

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lead Ministerial Transition

- We conducted an exercise during the Fall Leadership Retreat to assess our readiness to call a new minister. We concluded that we were ready!
- We completed the final interim minister evaluation which we submitted to the UUA
- We celebrated and said our 'good goodbye' to Rev. Frieda – virtually
- We concluded our search process with a congregational vote where we unanimously agreed to call Rev. Hillary to First Universalist! We celebrated!
- We worked diligently to prepare for Rev. Hillary's arrival in August, and to welcome her with open hearts and minds

Establish Committee on Ministry

At the conclusion of our 2-year interim engagement, both the Search Committee and the Transitions Team disbanded as prescribed, and we embarked on our course to create what we've dubbed the Committee on Ministry. After much research, deep thought and discussion, the Board, with Rev. Hillary's input, has developed what we believe is a healthy model for this committee, whose primary focus will be in the areas of *Ministerial Advisement* (helping the Minister acclimate to First Universalist and better understand the dynamics at work in the congregation) and *Conflict Engagement* (helping the congregation to live the spiritual practice of learning to engage conflict and disagreement well). More details about the COM will be shared during the Annual Meeting on Sept. 27.

In this last year of my Board presidency, please know that my commitment to this church, and to all of you, will continue. I am all in and with you. Which reminds me - perhaps one of the most important yet unwritten goals we have is to maintain our connection with each other, something that is made even more important in these pandemic times. I hope you feel that connection as strongly as I do.

Respectfully submitted,
Joanna Landsman, Board President

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Joanna Landsman, *President*
Marge Titcomb, *Treasurer*
Joe Dreher
Nancy Dix

Jen Civiello, *Vice President*
Sarah Witte, *Clerk*
Stew Guernsey
Andrew Tonks

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship promotes the goals of financial health and growth and oversees fundraising activities in dialogue with the Board of Trustees.

All was going well ~ until the Ides of March ~ a portent of doom? March 15 brought the Pandemic Shutdown, which changed life for all of us, and changed church life too. Your Stewardship Committee certainly had some nervous moments, but we met our CHALLENGES with gratitude to all, even as we continued to make progress on our GOALS.

CHALLENGES MET! We UUs are a creative, resourceful, generous people!

- Successful Search. Our 2019 Fall Harvest Fundraiser yielded \$10,300 (recommended by UUA) to fund our ministerial search. The Search was a SUCCESS, and \$4000 remains, which will be moved to the depleted Building Fund.
- Successfully met the challenge of lost income due to Pandemic – how to keep staff with \$12,000 in lost fundraising and \$6,000 in lost rentals? Thankfully, with 2 gifts we were able to fully meet our obligations. (1) We received \$24,100 from the government's Payroll Protection Program (PPP) through Bangor Savings Bank. (2) A generous donor paid off the balance of our \$75,000 2016 bank loan. In all, we ended the fiscal year with \$2,140 net income, helping to buffer our tight cash flow.
- Together, we will *RISE UP!* this fall to meet the \$30,000 challenge of this year's lost fundraisers due to the Pandemic (Clam Fest, Maine Farm Supper, Holiday Fair, Gala). The January Annual Campaign was a big success planning for all our usual fundraisers, BUT that was before the pandemic. RISE UP! will fill the financial gap while also modelling how we could move from a heavily events-funded church to a stronger community-supported congregation.

GOAL: Review UUA best practices and document financial procedures

- Affirmed that we align with UUA best practices; exploring electronic giving methods
- Streamlining procedures to clearly define the scope of Treasurer responsibilities to ease transition to new Treasurer July 1, 2021 (when current Treasurer term limits).

GOAL: Consider financial resources to maintain our buildings

- Wing Project – raised \$12,600 for urgently needed carpentry and painting

GOAL: Ongoing responsibilities

- Monitor and share state of our finances – monthly Financial Times highlighting opportunities, celebrations, and transparency – new format launched Sept 1.
- Evaluate – are the costs/rewards of each of our fundraisers justified? We are phasing out Clam Fest and considering alternate activity more in line with our values

STEWARDSHIP

Marge Titcomb, *Stewardship Chair & Treasurer*
Tom Settlemire
Cindy Guernsey
Jen Civiello
Phyllis Jones
Frank Read
Joe Dreher

Statement of Financial Position as of June 30, 2020

	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>ASSETS</u>	
Bank Accounts	106,747
Giving Winds Loan	10,000
Endowment Accounts	
Building Endowment	17,686
Outreach Endowment	13,453
Spirit of Life Fund	75,983
Total Endowment Accounts	107,122
Fixed Assets	
Church	742,360
Furniture & Fixtures	100,000
Parsonage	183,000
Total Fixed Assets	1,025,360
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	1,249,228
<u>LIABILITIES & EQUITIES</u>	
Liabilities	
Prepaid Rents	8,552
Prepaid FY21 Annual Campaign Payments	19,325
95 Main Security Deposits	1,200
Designated Funds	
Faith in Action Accounts	20,726
Building Fund	1,037
Ken Nye Steeple Fund	1,521
Here for Good Campaign	18,303
Minister's Discretionary Fund	1,061
Youth Congregant Relief Fund	1,500
Music and Worship Fund	68
Religious Exploration Fund	1,702
Total Designated Funds	45,917
Transition/Search Fund	6,929
Loans	
PPP Loan (forgivable) Bangor Savings Bank	24,100
Basement Loan—Congregants	90,000
Total Loans	114,100
Total Liabilities	196,024
Total Equity	1,053,204
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITIES</u>	1,249,228

CURRENT AND PROPOSED BUDGET

	FY20: July '19—June '20		FY 2021 PROPOSED BUDGET
	Actual	Budget	
Revenue			
Annual Campaign and Plate	122,372	126,000	123,000
Fundraising Programs	13,638	30,700	25,000
Other Fundraising (mostly OWL-outside our walls)	6,240	600	1,000
Rental Income	32,651	36,100	33,850
Endowment Income	10,115	9,000	5,000
Other Income (FY21 PPP converts from Loan to Grant)	5,249	2,800	24,160
Total Revenue	190,264	205,200	212,010
Expenditures			
Board of Trustees	14,225	12,412	13,004
Buildings & Grounds	22,522	20,960	26,441
B&G Administration	18,183	21,213	17,883
Minister's Office	76,744	81,967	88,364
Office Administration	14,506	14,590	16,090
Music & Worship	17,427	19,298	19,098
Member Services	385	1,200	1,000
Religious Education	24,132	33,156	27,072
Total Expenditures	188,124	204,796	208,952
Net Operating Revenue	2,140	404	3,058
Other Revenue (Loan Payment & Forgiveness)	73,172		
Net Revenue	75,312		

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Leadership Development Committee has been created and charged by the Board to support the Board on development, including nominating Board and Leadership Committee members, and supporting the Board on personnel matters.

Goals 2019-2020

- Identify and present Slate of Board of Trustees to be voted on @ 2020 Annual Meeting
- Recruit Administrative Assistant, Youth Facilitator, and Sexton positions
- Assist with developing/planning 2019 Fall Leadership Retreat

Work Done

- Consulted with Board Members and confirmed all would remain for the 2020-2021 church year. Board will be acknowledged at the 2020 Annual Meeting.
- Successful 2019 Fall Leadership Retreat held on November 2, 2019
- Filled Administrative Assistant, Youth Facilitator, and Sexton positions

Goals 2020-2021

- Collaborate with Rev. Hillary to develop/plan the Leadership Retreat
- Recruit candidates for committees, councils, and Board of Trustees (to include President, Treasurer, and Secretary of the Board due to term limits)
- Update Employee Guidebook

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEMBERS

Lisa Patterson	Nancy Read	Jeanette Newton
Sue Myers	Tom Carlisle	
Joanna Landsman	<i>as Board Liaison</i>	

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The job of the Buildings and Grounds Committee is to manage our historic church and parsonage facilities and the surrounding grounds.

Members of the B&G Committee are stewards of our church campus in conversation with the Rentals and Aesthetics teams.

B&G Functions: Oversee Church and Parsonage buildings and grounds. Coordinate inspection and maintenance of elevator, fire alarm system, fire suppression sprinkler system, and 4 heating systems. Provide technology support for church sound systems, Internet, Wi-Fi, office computers, and telephone service.

Appreciation: Thanks to those who pitch in to help with mowing, documentation, bell rope repair, brush hauling, streaming, etc.

New Sexton: In February, Russ DuPree retired and Todd Roy became our new Sexton.

Exterior Restoration of Wing: Much needed restoration of siding and painting was completed in July.

Sanctuary Window Restoration: The final two large Sanctuary windows are being restored.

Fire Suppression System: An air leak was fixed and the compressor was replaced.

Computer Technology Upgrade: New desktop and laptop computers were acquired and configured for the office.

Streaming Sunday Services: We now have a "tech team" working with Rev. Hillary and Sam to live stream Sunday Services from the Sanctuary.

Seeking: Building & Grounds Committee members.

Respectfully submitted,
Peter Titcomb, Buildings & Grounds

CONGREGATION CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE

The Congregation Connections Committee assists the Board in growing the congregation through radical hospitality and new member recruitment.

The CCC also offers connection opportunities for current members and friends and leads good good-byes when necessary.

Our primary goals for the 2019—2020 church year were:

- to build and embody a welcoming friendly church.
- to create easy family-friendly events open to both First Universalist and the wider community, growing the visibility of First Universalist as a place where good things happen
- to work with the Board and leadership in outreach to friends and members who had left, exploring each story for a deeper understanding of our collective story.
- to provide child care as a matter of course for all events.

In support of these goals, we hosted one Healthy Family Workshops (on gun safety in the home), numerous First Sunday NewComer Welcomes with cookies and coffee, and a three-part course about Unitarian Universalism and this church in advance of a Sign-the-Book Sunday and Membership Recognition which was held in time for the new members to be eligible to vote in May on the calling of a new minister. We also updated the Directory, no small feat.

We had 9 new members, a super turnout in the second of our transitional years with Rev. Frieda.

Response to COVID-19: To keep our congregation healthy and comply with local and state and UUA guidelines, we stopped gathering in March. All our programming and plans for Congregation Connections work were put on hold. We continued to meet via Zoom. We worked with Rev. Frieda to make sure that friends and members had regular contact and friendly calls.

We discussed a mailing to the wider Yarmouth Community about the new minister, and then decided to wait until she was here to work on publicity WITH her.

We also collaborated with the Worship Council and Board on the logistics for fellowship hour, the Annual Meeting, and summer gatherings. Rev. Frieda held a last round of daytime meetings at which congregants were invited to brainstorm ways to stay connected without live gatherings. People suggested affinity groups, reading circles, family and movie and game nights (virtual). We agreed to put rocks with messages of peace at the church as a gesture of love and hope.

This church year, 2020—2021, plans are still shaping up, but include:

- (1) monthly newcomer coffees—first Sundays of each month?
- (2) spiritual autobiography class—to be collaborated on with the RE Council
- (3) a good death and dying class—to be collaborated on with the RE Council
- (4) pathway to membership and new member recognition.

CONGREGATION CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE

This church year, we continue to explore using social media to reach out and share good news about what is going on. Appreciation to Gwen Matthews for all the ways she makes our communications read well and look great.

Most critically, we need to reach out to ALL friends and members throughout the year, both to groups and to individuals. If people drift away, we need to reach out. When friends leave, we need to notice, and have a conversation with them about their decision. And because the work is so varied, and so congenial, we would warmly welcome more members to our committee at any time.

CONGREGATION CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sarah Witte, *Chair*
Martha Hutchinson
Brenda McKee

Cindy Guernsey
Jerry Myers
Val Gifford

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & COMMUNICATIONS

At First Universalist, the role of the Director of Education & Communications is multi-faceted and includes coordinating and implementing children and youth programs, producing print and electronic communications, including social media, and supporting the Congregation Connections Committee.

What a year it has been. Below are some of the highlights (from both before and during the pandemic). I look forward to what my fifth year at First Universalist may bring! I'm glad for the opportunity to cultivate more flexibility and responsiveness in myself and our programs.

- A lot of OWL-related things happened! We hosted an OWL facilitator training in October, I helped to coordinate a 7th-9th grade OWL class with the UU church in Brunswick in the Fall, I facilitated a 7th grade OWL class at the Waldorf school in the Fall and got half-way through a 6th grade OWL class at the Waldorf school in the Spring.
- We welcomed and said goodbye to a new youth junior and senior group facilitator, Fred.
- The RE Council was newly reformed and invigorated.
- Senior youth group held two very successful fundraisers that they later decided to donate back to the church as a congregant relief fund due to the pandemic.
- Junior youth group spent time giving back by working at the free clothing closet in Portland.
- I developed and launched a new program for our youngest friends, "Peace Play for Littles" which successfully ran weekly from January—March.
- Children's Chapel was facilitated each week by Anna and explored our seven principles.
- We transitioned junior and senior youth groups from in person meetings to on Zoom.
- I spent a lot of time during the pandemic assisting Rev. Frieda and the Worship Council with the technological aspects of worship.
- I attended the virtual UUA General Assembly.
- We developed and ran a virtual UU road trip over the summer.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION COUNCIL

Last year the RE Council reemerged as an active group with renewed enthusiasm for expanding opportunities for religious exploration for all ages at First U. With artful guidance from Gwen and Joanna, and our new members, we brainstormed a number of ways to attract more families to our RE programs.

In the fall we offered activities for young people on Faith in Action Tuesdays so parents could volunteer at Preble St. In February Gwen began attracting a group of parents of young children with her brilliant "Peace Play for Littles" story time on Wednesday mornings. The Council had also planned on holding picnics for RE families at the beginning and end of the school year. Alas, the pandemic put the kibosh on all these activities, but we hope to resume these and more once we're able to get together again.

As we begin this year, the council is cautiously planning a number of activities to keep young people and families feeling supported and connected to the church even in the absence of in-person services. Sunday mornings will still feature Children's Chapel (at 10:00) and an opportunity for the Junior Youth group to meet at 11:15, albeit online. Final plans for the senior youth group's Coming of Age Program will be worked out at the parents' meeting, but for now we're hoping that Rev. Hilary's enthusiasm and love of the program will attract more teenagers. (Rev. Hilliary has volunteered to lead one meetings per month along with Gwen, Joanna, and Alexis). In addition to these weekly activities the RE council is planning several pandemic-friendly activities this fall, Apple Picking on October 4th and Pumpkin Carving on October 25th.

The RE Council would also like to encourage and coordinate RE opportunities for adults. We are thinking about a regular online meeting after the service for folks interested in discussing the sermon or a given topic of the week. We'd also like to encourage members of the congregation to share their ideas for outings, discussions, book groups, lectures, etc. that we could help organize. Rev. Hillary has offered to lead a sermon writing seminar at some point, and we're sure there are many more great ideas out there. Please reach out to Cathy or any other member of the Council.

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Cathy McKenna, *Chair*

Raj Vinnakota

Jennifer Charrette

Joanna Landsman, *liaison to the Board*

Christy Hayashida

Mika Lentz

Lesli Chambers

FAITH IN ACTION COUNCIL

The Faith In Action Council provides and maintains justice partnerships and welcomes all to join as they seek to “advance economic and environmental justice, working together as a community of faith to nurture your spirit and help heal the world.

‘Explore, Embrace, Engage’ together to advance economic and environmental justice

GOAL: Offer Advocacy Opportunities

Get Out the Vote! With a commitment to UUtheVote, we coordinate with Maine UU State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN) and Maine League of Women Voters (MLWV), participating in Friends-to-Friends, postcard campaigns, phone banks, reaching 100s of new and lapsed voters in Maine and in southern U.S.

GOAL: Offer Education and Action Opportunities

How to be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi, read by 25 members and friends, motivated action to create our Antiracism Working Group with the goal to adopt and implement an 8th Principle: affirm and promote journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multi-cultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

3D: Dinner, Documentary, Discussion offerings: Transgender Children, Palestine, Voting Rights, and, an upcoming Indigenous Peoples film.

GOAL: Continue our Social Justice Programs

Immigrant Community. Our support of our four 95 Main residents is strong!

Preble Street. Much has changed with the Pandemic, but we carry on!

Partner Church. Oct 18 we will celebrate 30 years of our partnership with Gyepes, Romania.

First U Financial Generosity. \$11,241. With the ‘half plates’ we gave \$5432 to 16 organizations in Maine and 2 in Transylvania. In addition, we gave \$2580 to Gyepes as student sponsorships. With our endowment income we gave \$3229 to various Maine organizations.

Special thanks to co-leaders on our projects: Jerry Myers, Andrew Tonks, John Vogt, Ruth White

Respectfully submitted by the Faith in Action Council

FAITH-IN-ACTION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Marge Titcomb, *Chair*
Pete Titcomb
Sue Ellen Bordwell

Jane Makela
Mariana Tupper
Marie Wendt

WORSHIP COUNCIL

The Worship Council assists the Minister in creating high quality Sunday worship services. The Council also schedules guest ministers and speakers to broaden our worship themes.

The new Worship Council includes the following congregants: Anne Turner, chair, Joy Ahrens, Lily O'Brien-Gilbert, Andrew Tonks, and Kai Fast.

Some highlights from the Worship Council for the 2019—2020 church year:

- WC supported Rev Frieda during the 2019-2020 church year by assisting with worship during most services, and planning the monthly worship when she was out of the pulpit. We welcomed guest speakers to the pulpit, and helped to plan lay-led services as well.
- During March - June, WC worked with Rev Frieda and Sam to plan online services, contributing readings, and videos of many of the worship elements.
- WC assisted Gwen in planning for additional online worship through the summer.

Looking ahead to the 2020—2021 church year:

- A two day Worship Council retreat with Rev Hillary in early August allowed us to review all of the roles the WC has had through the past 4 ministers, and to explore ways that we can work with our new minister to present meaningful worship that will be integrated into the lives of the congregation throughout the week while we are reliant on virtual connection to each other.
- The WC includes a sub-group to address all of the technical aspects required to stream online worship. New equipment for upgraded recording will be acquired.
- WC will be collaborating with the Congregational Connections committee as worship and fellowship needs of the congregation overlap considerably during our virtual experience.

WORSHIP COUNCIL MEMBERS

Anne Turner, *Chair*
Lily O'Brien-Gilbert
Kai Fast

Joy Ahrens
Andrew Tonks

ABOUT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM

Unitarian Universalism—What's a UU?

Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal faith. We focus on the spiritual and religious journey of the individual and the family and are open to inspiration from, and exploration of, all the world's religions and many ethical secular sources as well. We are not interested in creeds and commitments of faith, but in right relations with one another and wholistic ways of living on and with our planet. We believe in the power of love and compassion to overcome hate and fear, and we enjoy learning and worshipping with people of every ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and age, and with diverse theologies – Atheists, Buddhists, Christians, Humanists, Jews, Muslims, and Pagans – and individuals from all of these theologies can be found worshipping together in our churches and fellowships.

The Seven UU Principles

While UUs have no creed, we do have values that we use to guide our decisions. The First Universalist Church of Yarmouth affirms and promotes:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
2. Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Unitarian Universalism Draws from Many Sources

1. Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
2. Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
3. Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
4. Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
5. Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
6. Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

These principles and sources of faith are the backbones of our religious community.

The UUA

The First Universalist Church of Yarmouth is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), the central organization for the Unitarian Universalist (UU) religious movement in the United States. The UUA's 1,000+ member congregations are committed to Seven Principles that include the worth of each person, the need for justice and compassion, and the right to choose one's own beliefs.



be a spiritual seeker

FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
97 Main Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096

phone: 207-846-4148
email: office@uuyarmouth.org
website: www.uuyarmouth.org