



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Grand Valley



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Annual Report

2019

From Your Minister

Rev. Wendy Jones

The Meeting:

The Annual Meeting is on Sunday, June 2 at 536 Ouray Ave. An informational budget meeting is at 9am. Our service is at 10:30am. We will have a potluck, followed by the annual meeting starting at approximately 12:15pm.



like to give a special thank you to the search team which consisted of: Jan Hyland, Kent Leinbach, Nancy Banman, Kathleen Hedlund & Peg Oswald. Thank you all for your hard work!!!! Mission accomplished!

As we look forward to the upcoming year I am so excited and optimistic for where we are heading. I believe that we are in the perfect position to break through the invisible barrier that has kept us just below 100 members. My hope for the upcoming year is that we will continue to live into the abundance and prosperity that has been created here through the heart and soul dedication of so many people throughout the years.

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This has been such a fun year as your minister! Most of the summer and fall was spent in preparation for my three month sabbatical that started in January 2019 and went through the end of March. I have to say that this congregation was amazing, and our lay leadership and staff did an excellent job of keeping things going while I was away.

And so, I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude for the gift of the time off for rest and renewal. It was much needed, and I did not take a moment of it for granted!

When I returned at the beginning of April we jumped right in to the interview process for a new Director of Religious Education. The DRE search team did an absolutely amazing job with the search process and as a result, we have extended a job offer to a wonderful young woman named Chelsea who will be joining us in August. I would



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Finally, with mixed feelings of sadness and joyful optimism, I would like to say thank you to Shari Daly Miller for her dedication to this congregation for so many years. Shari has been a deeply loved member of this congregation for over twenty years and then she became a valued staff member for six years. Her presence is felt throughout this congregation in the form of her art, her beautiful gardening work and in the lovely space she created for our children downstairs with the children's chapel.

We will miss you Shari, and I am so excited for you to spread your wings!

Thank you for a wonderful 2018-2019 year, and I can't wait to see what the upcoming year brings!

~Rev. Wendy



UUCGV Board

Janet Cummings, President

We have had a full year working together as your UUCGV Board, and I would say one of

our highlights was a retreat we had together in December. The focus was the book "Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership" by Dan Hotchkiss and it helped us explore the role of the board and how to stay "mission driven". Hand in hand with the ideas from this book, work has also been done to implement suggestions from the Long Term Planning Report from 2018. We have worked at clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all aspects of our church organization, including roles of our valued staff members.

The Staff Congregation Relations (SCR) team really did some heavy lifting this year with the work they did with our staff and setting a strong foundation for healthy staff functioning into the future.

We got through Rev. Wendy's first official sabbatical, and were pleased that she could take a well-deserved break while we navigated "on our own" for a bit. I was going to say "survived" the sabbatical, but there was a great amount of preparation beforehand that made it not too scary after all.

There was a successful Town Hall meeting in January, with the focus on visioning for our vital Religious Education program and aiding the RE Director search team with some valuable input.

Another "behind the scenes" task was coming up with a new Project Administration policy to smooth out how we go about various capital (and other) projects for improvement - we will get some practice using this process in the coming year as we hope to address the front canopy and long-awaited outdoor play

area for children.

I do feel the board has grown in how we work together, and we talk a lot about growing up to the next level from a Family-Sized congregation to a Pastoral-Sized congregation. It is exciting to see so many new faces on Sunday mornings, and I like to think we are growing in numbers and in "depth" too. Thank you to all the board members - and really to all the volunteers, leaders and valued staff - as we grow into the potential of our beloved community together.



Children's Religious Education

Shari Daly-Miller, Director of Religious Education

Soul Matters curricula were used in the RE program during the 2018-2019 program year. The themes matched what the adults discussed upstairs in worship services. We studied a new

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theme each month. This year's themes were; vision, sanctuary, possibility, wholeness, memory, mystery, trust, journey, and curiosity. These Soul Matters resources made it easy to teach Sunday school each week. Working with our children makes my heart sing!

This year we were unable to get a middle school program, a high school youth program, or an OWL program off of the ground. Attendance in all age groups (except toddlers) has gone down. This mirrors a trend in churches nationwide, as families have become too busy to add church activities into their lives. This is a huge paradigm shift and something that all church congregations are going to need to consider. How can we best serve families in the modern world? Many families simply don't see the value a religious community can provide to their lives. How can we tell people what we have to offer families?

I have so much gratitude for this Congregation, being your Religious Education Coordinator has taught me so much! I now possess a set of skills that will enable me to serve UU families at another Congregation as I greet the next phase of my life. My two boys went through our RE programs from preschool to bridging, and I am ever grateful all of the teachers and other volunteers that nurtured them to adulthood.



Finance Report

Steve Watson, Treasurer

We ended the fiscal year July 2018 to June 2019 in very good financial condition. We were about \$15,000 net income after expenses. But we have some capital projects such as replacing the canopy over the front door and providing shade for the patio on the east side of the church, which will be expensive. Replacing the canopy which is structurally weak could cost \$15,000. Plus we have increased salaries and hours for 3 employees. All our staff is part time but as our church grows it takes more time to do the required work. We are adding a new religious education director starting in June. We are also adding hours for the administrative assistant and the facility manager. We are starting fiscal year July 2019 to June 2020 with a deficit budget of about \$17,000. We can do this for one year but we need to increase the church's income to pay the additional expenses. We are putting forth efforts to bring in additional money and help people understand what it costs to keep a church flourishing.

Membership Team

Bill Conrod

Members: Bill Conrod (chair), Peg Oswald, Cheryl Roberts, Sue Brown, Kate McGinnis-Feinzig, Barbara and Laird Millburn, Robin Cyr

Our Membership Team continues to be active welcoming guests and guiding the path to becoming full members. Over the past decade that I've been involved, we've tried various ways to provide contact, information, and encouragement. But you know, I think it boils down to personal contact and engagement. The information on our core values flows from there. While the membership team is officially tasked with this function (plus some administrative tasks) in our bylaws, I can't overstate the importance of each of us giving a warm welcome to new people standing around at coffee with hand-written, stick-on name tags. Sure, we love to catch up talking with our friends over coffee, but our future lies in new member growth. And that depends on something as basic as are we outgoing to strangers?

Accomplishments

Six meetings were held during the past 12 months.

Six weekly ads were placed in the GJ Sentinel Faith Directory Saturday column during August-September 2018.

A "Welcome" card was produced for the chair back pockets in the sanctuary.

Guests get a welcoming letter from Wendy.

Coffee meetings are arranged with returning guests.

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Information packets are mailed out to returning guests, instead of waiting until joining.

Membership roster was revised for our annual count to UUA.

Periodic prompts were placed in the newsletter to remind us to welcome guests at coffee.

A table is now staffed at coffee for guest questions.

A brunch and church ceremony will be held to welcome nine new members (June 2, 2019).

Goals

Begin "Starting Point", a new UUA process for the guest-to-member process, to improve new member depth and retention.

Continue newspaper/social media ads for end of summer church shopping season.

Welcome to our new members: Robin Cyr, Jack and Maggie Eagleton, David Leathers, Nancy Banman, Stanley Scott, Audrey Brainard, Roger Anderson, and Beverly Urban.



Property Team

John Mayo

Video Projection System Project

In September, 2018 we made major changes to the video system in the sanctuary. We moved all the video sources to the podium,

including a DVD player. This put full control of video and audio presentations at the podium. We installed a new Epson projector that has a much brighter image, allowing us to make presentations with full room lighting. We also replaced the wiring system between the podium and the projector with a much more reliable HDMI over Ethernet system. This eliminated the wireless HDMI system that had not proven reliable. All the users, including our renters, are very happy with the new setup. On May 15th, we received a new HP laptop for use with the sanctuary presentation system. Our very old laptop has only been kept operational by the skill and patience of Mallory, who is no longer able to provide that for us.

Rooftop Solar Panels Project

The team met throughout last summer and fall with Wayne Sturm, a new congregant who was promoting a green sanctuary approach, regarding installing a solar power system on the roof. We had bids from Atlas-ta Solar and High Noon Solar, but soon focused on High Noon as their financial proposal was more attractive to the church. It also turned out that during this process Wayne had become an employee of High Noon Solar. As part of the engineering analysis for how to mount the panels to the roof, we took the proposed High Noon Solar panel rooftop design to a local licensed structural engineering firm, Lindauer Dunn, to determine whether our roof could support the weight, wind load, and snow load of the proposed system. The structural engineers at that firm determined that our 1977 roof structure did not have enough reserve load carrying capacity for solar panels. The only way to add solar

panels would be to reinforce the roof substantially by essentially adding a second set of roof joists between the existing joists. This was not practical, as the new joists would have to be 22 feet long, a foot high, and would have to be inserted from underneath the ceiling through the existing wiring, fire sprinkler piping, HVAC duct work, etc. to rest on top of the main roof support beams. The existing ceiling would have to be removed throughout the upstairs to allow these beams to be installed. The property team determined that such an effort could take a month or more to accomplish and could cost many tens of thousands of dollars. During this process the building would essentially be unusable. This conclusion by the property team was a big disappointment to everyone, including the team, but the limitations of our old building could not be avoided.

Front Canopy Project

The canvas cover for the front canopy failed in the fall, and the team returned again to considering how to replace the entire front canopy. We had been discussing replacing the front canopy for several years, and had already installed temporary safety supports under the front of the canopy. There is rotting of the wood on both of the main support beams and the hanging canopy roof. We were worried that the canopy roof could break free of the 4 steel rods that hold up the entire structure and fall. Jan-ver Derrington, an architect in the church and member of the property team, created an elegant curved design for a replacement canopy, but the team felt that this could cost in the neighborhood of \$30 to \$40 thousand

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dollars to construct. As a result, Gary Poush worked up a lower cost alternative design. In April, the team presented to the Board a proposed cost range of the new design between \$17,000 and \$25,000. To get a more precise cost, the existing beams will need to be inspected and Gary's design will need to be analyzed by the structural engineers. The Board authorized the expenditure of \$1,500 to \$2,500 for Lindauer Dunn to do this work. As part of the expenditure we will receive detailed engineering drawings and the engineering stamp of approval for the design, which will be needed to get a building permit for the project. As of mid-May we are waiting for Jeff Dunn to begin his work. The property team wants to do part of the construction work ourselves where possible.

Patio Shade Project

The team has been discussing how to provide shade for the patio for several years. We tried canvas tents, but these were easily damaged by people and by high wind. A sail shade system was considered, but we determined that we don't have the expertise to design a safe and successful sail shade system without a professional firm to help. We have also considered an aluminum patio cover which several companies in town could install. A rough cost estimate for an aluminum patio cover is in the range of \$12,000, depending on size. We are waiting for further requirements to be given to the team, by Wendy and Sterling, as to how much of the patio should be covered and where. We will study several alternatives to present to the Board once we have those requirements. In the mean-

time we still have one tent that can be setup for special events but not left up.

Playground Project

The team has been considering various designs for a playground in the rear of the church for as long as we have been in this building. We have never gotten a clear definition from the Board of what such a playground should consist of, what the age of the users would be, and how the playground would fit into the RE program. We know a lot about various ways to construct a playground, and now are waiting for a further clarification of playground needs from the Board and the new RE Director. There are serious issues of safety barriers from traffic in the alley to be considered, as well as the loss of parking capacity in the rear of the building (a practical and possible legal issue for the church). Zoning restrictions need to be determined. The asphalt paving will have to be removed, and a suitable surface will have to be provided. We are ready to proceed with planning again once we get a better definition from the Board of what the church wants and what the city will permit.

Safety and Security Projects

The team considered several security proposals from the Dave Miller Safety Team several years ago and some of them were implemented, such as gates to prevent access under the stairs and windows in the main sanctuary doors. Safety and security issues will naturally involve the property team, and we are ready to support the efforts of a new Safety and Security team once one is constituted. We feel strongly that the security of the congregation should be a high priority, espe-

cially if we are planning to raise the social action profile of our church in the community this next year. Also, as our congregation increases in size and becomes older we need to address our plans for response to fires and medical emergencies. We understand that security is complicated by our UU principles of openness, but we need to have a plan and training for how we will respond to each of the incidents



that our modern culture may present to us.

Staff Congregation Relations (SCR)

Richard Hyland

Mission: The Staff-Congregation Relations (SCR) Committee reports to the Board and oversees the hiring, evaluation and performance of the paid staff of the Church. It mediates issues among staff members, between staff members and supervisors, and between staff and members of the congregation on a confidential basis. It serves in

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an advisory role to the Minister in her/his role of staff supervisor. It seeks to achieve and maintain a healthy balance between the need for skilled professional staff and volunteer involvement in the growth and evolution of the Church.

Members: Richard Hyland, Joanie Leinbach, Monte High and Carmine Nugent.

Activities: Over the past year, the SCR has continued to grow into its mission, a growth spurred by resolving issues and overcoming challenges as UUCGV continues to grow. Among these are the following:

- Supported staff during our Minister's 3-month sabbatical
- Found and hired three new staff members, including a new DRE
- Improved and standardized compensation for all staff working 20 or more hours per week
- Established and standardized a benefits program including health care coverage for all staff working 20 or more hours per week
- Resolved several serious issues involving staff performance and staff-congregant relations
- Continued to develop and refine UUCGV organizational structure, specifically staff "chain of command" relationships
- Continued to update UUCGV bylaws and policies with our learnings, including the UUCGV Staff Personnel Manual
- Continued to work with the Board and volunteer teams to educate all Congregation members and friends on the roles and responsibilities of

staff and their importance in UUCGV operation

Leadership



Development Team

Duane Carr

Team Members: Bill Hilty, Robin Cyr and Duane Carr

It has been a year of organization as we have worked to better understand our role in the church structure and find ways to carry out that role. We have written vision and mission statements for the Team. Using information from the Long Range Plan (LRP) and the Action Plan set up by Richard Hyland, we set up an Action Plan for our team. We have helped to find leaders for various parts of the church structure and we have a slate of those to be elected at the Annual Meeting.

The church is changing and that promises a lot of work for LDT in the coming year. First of all, we will need to set up a new Action Plan for the year. We will do this using work done this past year and also considering the Long Range Plan. We will con-

sider expanding the team from the present 3 members to possibly 5. This would require Bylaw change. There are other problems with the present Bylaws and so a study of the needed Bylaw changes will be an important part of our work. This year we have paid special attention to the Board, TLC and leaders for the program areas of the church. There are a number of other teams that are of importance that LDT will need to consider. Of special importance will be the Safety Team. Robin has already begun looking at these various Teams and we will continue this. Floyd Joramo will be the volunteer coordinator and we have to figure out how this position will be related to our Team. Another important task will be consideration of training needed for various church positions.

Stewardship

Andrea Tanner



Andrea headed up Stewardship this year and then realized that she was going to miss the actual Stewardship party. After she started the ball rolling Cheryl Roberts agrees to take the helm and took over the party and Bill Hilty took over the Canvassing piece. Many fantastic volunteers put their valuable time into both pieces.

The party went well as did the canvassing.

Unfortunately, the end result showed that we will not make our budget. But, we are moving towards some exciting opportunities to expand our budget in creative and exciting ways that will fill in the budget and create a surplus-stay tuned!

The Leadership Slate for 2019-2020

The Board

The Board is our governing structure and holds the fiduciary responsibility of the congregation.

President	Elizabeth High
Vice President	Laurel Carpenter
Past President	Janet Cummings
Treasurer	Steve Watson
At Large	Richard Hyland
At Large	Herb Feinzig
At Large	Duane Carr

TLC

(Team Leader Circle)

*The TLC is responsible for Worship, Religious Education, Celebrations and Membership
(aka the program of the church)*

Worship	Miranda Richardson
RE	Jan Hyland
Membership	Bill Conrod
Celebrations	Kathleen Hedlund
At Large	Laura Jeffries (Care)
At Large	

UUCGV 2019 Annual Meeting Agenda

- Opening, Janet Cummings, Board President
- Minister's Report, Rev. Wendy Jones
- Staff-Congregation Relations Report, Richard Hyland and Joanie Leinbach
- DRE Search Team report, Jan Hyland
- Green Sanctuary Update, Audrey Brainard and Elizabeth High
- Property Report, John Mayo
- The Slate – Vote, Leadership Development Team
- Budget Vote, Steve Watson, Treasurer
- Bylaws Update (SCR)-Vote, Richard Hyland
- Congregational Guidance to the Leadership
- Closing

LDT

(Leadership Development Team)

Stan Scott
Robin Cyr
Melissa Humphrey

**See www.grandvalleyuu.org/annual-report
for proxy voting and proposed budget**

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We're on the web!

www.grandvalleyuu.org

As a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association, we covenant to affirm and promote:

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

UUCGV Covenant of Right Relations

Each of us, as members of this Beloved Community, do covenant:

- *to live as a caring community, actively supporting each other in our spiritual values as expressed in our UU principles and sources of faith;*
- *to work together respectfully, remaining honest and direct in our communication in order to draw wisdom from both our commonalities and our diversities;*
- *to share our gifts generously in order to contribute to the development and growth of our community;*
- *to live, teach and demonstrate our UU tradition so that we pass a rich inheritance into the caring hands of future generations;*
- *to express sincere appreciation for each other as we recognize our human fallibility, while maintaining a sense of humor as we live through both difficult and joyous times together.*



We are affiliated
congregation of the
Unitarian Universalists
Association and the
Mountain Desert District



Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of the
Grand Valley