

## Annual Committee Reports June 2022

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## Ministers Report

This Spring we find ourselves finishing up the church year, and the second year of the COVID pandemic. In some ways this second year has been easier than the first, in other ways more challenging. I remain, as always, grateful to the Worship Committee for their technical and artistic expertise in helping us all experience meaningful services of worship. I am also grateful to the many other Committee Chairs and Members, Adult Educators, Fundraisers, Music Makers and Small Group facilitators for embracing the technologies that have allowed your good works to flourish. And thank you, thank you, thank you Board members! Your leadership and tenacity during this challenging time has been nothing short of remarkable. I am deeply grateful for your undaunted spirit throughout these past two years.

For the last 6 months or so we have operated in a sort of liminal zone. We are not in the depths of the pandemic in the way we were during the first year, and it is not 'over' either. In fact, the experts caution us all to start getting used to the idea of living with the COVID virus, and to some extent, we have begun to do just that. Our building is again open for rentals and other uses, our sanctuary is again open for in-person worship as well as zoom, or what we call 'multi-platform' worship. But our members have not returned in the numbers we had hoped for.

To be clear, this is not a challenge unique to UUCM. Congregations across the denominational spectrum are all wrestling with this dearth of church attendees. But of course, a dearth of church attendees also translates into a dearth of church volunteers. Again, not a new problem or one that is unique to UUCM. But it is a challenge that has become seriously magnified in the wake of the last two years.

What does all this mean for us going forward? Well, that would be the million dollar question and one we will ALL need to wrestle with going forward, because one thing it means for certain is that changes will need to be made; changes in the budget, changes in programming, and most importantly, changes in our governance structure and by-laws.

Interestingly, the UUA itself is putting a motion on the floor this June at General Assembly (GA) to get approval to re-write the Associations by-laws and for the same reasons we find ourselves confronted by. The landscape of the church has been changing seriously, even before the pandemic, (seriously as in tectonic plate shifting), but now, as we begin to emerge into this new world order, there is no denying the fact that we simply cannot continue to do things the way we used to. We cannot expect the sorts of things we used to, and we sure as hell cannot sit back comforted by the assumption/illusion that someone else will do what needs to be done.

The good news, as I see it, is that we absolutely have what we need to navigate this transition. The depth and breadth of skills in this congregation, when everyone is at the table, is immense. So is the collective imagination, once it is activated. And, while it has been a stretch to balance our annual budget from year-to-year, we have managed deficits with a healthy endowment. Here again, this is not a sustainable practice going forward, but the health of that endowment gives us more room than some to contemplate together a new way forward.

In deutero-Isaiah, chapter 43, the prophet is speaking to a people in exile. It is clear that nothing will ever be the same for them, but rather than throwing the exiled masses a pity party, he audaciously suggests that God is doing a new thing. Whether you are a theist, atheist, or somewhere in between, or somewhere not even on that map, surely you have not gotten where you are by doing the same things over and over, even when life told you those ways weren't working

anymore. Somewhere along the way you learned how to move from what you were doing to the new thing life was putting before you.

The liminal zone of change is rarely comfortable, but without it, no 'new thing' can emerge. So, keep the faith, stay tuned, and if you have found yourself tuning out these last two years...now would be a really good time to tune back in!

Blessings & Shalom-  
Rev. Shayna Appel

## President's Report

The last year has been highly challenging for our church leaders, our minister and our staff members. There have been many overwhelming moments when it wasn't clear how to move forward in a mindful, healthy, covenantal way together. There have been moments of sadness, shared and personal. There have been moments of sheer, unbridled joy and gratitude.

This year we finally felt safe enough to gather together in person in the Sanctuary, while we continued to improve upon our multi-platform worship services. Seeing the need for us all to have the chance to get acquainted with our new minister, the Board extended Rev. Shayna's contract for one more year. I hope every one of you takes advantage of this opportunity to get to know Rev. Shayna better, as well as getting reacquainted with each other and our rituals of community at UUCM. We can't wait to see you ALL in person. The Board and Rev. Shayna spent significant time discussing our updated Mission Statement, and ways to lead the congregation into stronger, purposeful action toward building beloved community within and beyond our doors.

June is a time of transitions. Spring turns to summer, the school year yields to summer vacation, and the end of the church year brings UUCM's Annual Meeting, where we gather as a congregation to vote on our budget and slate of leaders for the coming year. The Board will be transitioning, too. I will be stepping down from the Board, as will three at-large members. Your new leaders will need your patience, support, and energy as we all do the important work of finding the way to UUCM's future. The future of UUCM will not look like its past, and it shouldn't. The world has changed, and so we must adapt if we want UUCM to remain relevant in our wider community.

It has been a humbling, extraordinary privilege to serve as UUCM President during these unprecedented times, and the experience has changed my life. I will always be grateful for the trust you placed in me, and the wisdom you shared with me. I look forward to helping advance the work of the congregation in new, inspiring ways.

Blessed Be,  
Marti Kennedy

## Treasurer's Report

### Introduction:

Fiscal 2021-2022 began during our first vision of "life after Covid", and continued under the newly realized reality of a continuously evolving endemic illness.

Our 2021-2022 budget anticipated a gradual return to UUCM normalcy. With a Pledging target level with the prior year and a resurgence of Rental and Fundraising Income (thought not to pre Covid Levels).

Despite continued financial support from UUCMs committed Membership, we did miss our pledge target. And despite truly heroic efforts from those on and supporting the FundRaising Committee, we will miss our FundRaising and Rental income targets.

Fortunately, aspects of our expenses that could be controlled were kept lower. These included Worship, Property, Maintenance and Religious Education.

The difference between our substantially reduced income and modestly reduced expenses, were made up with additional Paycheck Protection money carried over from our prior year disbursement, and with a slightly higher than forecast Special Investment Disbursement from the Endowment.

By all forecasts our 2022-2023 fiscal year will be even more fiscally challenging than our current one. Our intention is to enter the 2022-2023 fiscal year with a little more than one months of expenses in our Operating Account, to meet payrolls and preserve the sanity of the Treasurer.

### Income:

Our income this year consisted of Fulfilled Pledges, Standard and Special Distributions from our Endowment, the remainder of our Paycheck Protection Loan funds (PPP2) and Fundraising/Rentals. Our second round of Paycheck Protection Loan was preliminarily forgiven by the US Government.

Our budget for FY 2021-2022 was based on a target of \$141K, but actual pledging was short at \$137K....We currently have received \$117K of pledge payments against our \$137K commit i.e. 83% of actual Pledges received with 92% of the year spent.

We do need those who have not fulfilled their prior commitments for this year, to send checks to the UUCM Office, to allow UUCM to begin next year in a reasonable position.

### Expenses:

At the time of this report I am expecting to close this year, undershooting our budget by 6 or 7%. This will be primarily due to frugal spending by the aforementioned budget areas of Worship, Property, Maintenance and Religious Education. Personnel wages and benefits account for 80% of our spending and are tracked to the Budget.

### Summary:

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Milford NH is emerging to a new normal. The 2022-23 CY shall be a pivotal year as we either rise and grow to overcome these new challenges or we decide our current issues are with us for the foreseeable future and make internal choices/changes that accommodate our current situation.

As I reread my Summary from last year I see that my view has not changed much over the past year, so I'll include it again..... "We are in the enviable position of having capable and committed Staff in all positions as well as capable and committed leadership in our Board and Committees. We also have a Congregation that genuinely loves and cares for each other.

Many in our Congregation generously support our church with their time, talent, and finances. And I thank you all for your generosity.

We were helped this fiscal year with additional funds from Government Stimulus and Extra Ordinary Endowment money. These income streams are not expected to continue.

My concern for our future is that our combined Pledging and Plate, as a percent of our budget, significantly undershoots what the UUA recommends for a healthy church. The UUA recommends, "We expect that those who benefit from the church and participate in activities will share in its financial upkeep. Some members are able to pledge more, others less, but we can all share in supporting our church".

To those in a position to pledge, I recognize that UUCM does not discuss what a member should give in support of the church. The UUA, however, has published a 'Suggested Fair Share Contribution Guide' on their website.

Our Congregation has voted to follow UUA guidelines in areas that influence our budget; Compensation, Benefits, Hiring and Church Policy. It seems reasonable that individually we should support that prior vote by personally following the giving guidelines the UUA suggests in support of our church. Please consider where you believe you are in the linked matrix.

[https://www.uua.org/files/pdf/f/fair\\_share\\_contribution\\_guide.pdf](https://www.uua.org/files/pdf/f/fair_share_contribution_guide.pdf)

Many Thanks to all of you who currently support our church financially, and support our church with your action, energy and skills. If you do not currently support the mission of UUCM, please ask a Board member or any long term member about how you can contribute.

Alan Shirey  
UUCM Treasurer

## Finance Committee Report

### Accomplishments This Year:

- Monitored Balance Sheet and Budget vs Actuals monthly
- Presented information to the congregation for vote to take a maximum of \$60,000 from the endowment next year (and end the 5-year plan to take \$108,000 from the endowment)
- Worked on having UUCM finances more visible and transparent
- Worked with Committee on Congregational Development (CDC) to find a new finance Chair and new members
- 2021-22 Budget Process:
  - Created 2021-22 Budget with the challenges of facing a deficit.
  - Held joint meeting with Personnel to recommend benefits and salaries for budget
  - Held 2 conversations with the congregation on the state of UUCM finances and the 2022-23 budget
  - As year-end approached, monitored estimates to complete the year so that there were no surprises, and we knew how much money was needed to complete the year and if there would be any surplus.
- Fundraising This Year:
  - Pumpkin Festival led by Dona Eaton
  - Holiday Fair (virtual) led by Nancy Danzinger, Barbara Smith & Sharon Verrill
  - Trivia Night: Not held due to COVID
  - Auction (virtual) led by Dona Eaton
  - Spring Rummage Sale & Craft Sale led by Nancy Danzinger, Barbara Smith & Sharon Verrill
  - Holiday Appeal for the UUA led by Alan Shirey
  - Looking at a Brainstorming Session on Fundraising in June with Dona Eaton, Debbie Maloney, Marti Kennedy & Sandy Frades
- Rentals: Sandy Frades will support Jamie Ferrier in advertising our facility and finding ways to get more rental income.

### Plans for Next Church Year:

- Continue to perform our roles and responsibilities in the UUCM community.
- Transition to a new Finance Chair as Sandy Frades is retiring from this position.

Thanks to this year's treasurer, Alan Shirey, for supporting us this year.

Thanks to Jamie Ferrier, our amazing Church Administrator and Bookkeeper, who kept things going all year.

Welcome to our new Finance Committee Members Debbie Maloney and David Harris.

Finance Committee Members: Jamie Ferrier (Bookkeeper), Sandy Frades (Chair), David Harris, Debbie Maloney, John Reagan, and Alan Shirey (Treasurer)

## Stewardship Report

Stewardship 2022 was done through a series of online meetings where participants were asked to develop a vision for the church: a vision of how the church community would be a “beloved community” and what priorities would flow from that vision. Participants, which totalled approximately 40 congregants over 3 meetings, discussed their visions from an internal perspective, that is, how church members would interact and work with each other, and also how the church would act in the wider community, what difference UUCM might make in the Souhegan Valley, according to participants. The Stewardship Drive culminated in a skit performed on video and shown on Stewardship Sunday.

Approximately \$113,000 has been pledged as of May 13, 2022, missing the goal of \$142,000 by \$29,000.

Suggestions for 2023: Stewardship should be an ongoing activity, not confined to our annual drive. Legacy giving has created opportunities for the church to more effectively realize its vision - Legacy giving should be prioritized and stewardship should be part of active discussions throughout the year.

Thank you to those who contributed their considerable talents and valuable time to the meetings, to the skit and to the tallying of the pledges. It truly does take a village!

Committee members: Rev. Shayna Appel, Jackie Davis, Jewel Griffin and Michael Conley



## Trustees Report

The Trustees thank all who have made gifts to the endowment over the years. The existence of a healthy endowment has made it possible to continue operating the church with all employees and rich programs even as the pandemic forced the building to close and our regular income to fall. The endowment has allowed us to live our values in these times of uncertainty.

At the beginning of this church year (July 1, 2021) the endowment was \$1,080,450, and at the end of the most recent quarter (March 31, 2022) was \$1,146,022.

During the year we received a wonderful bequest of \$112,169 from the estate of Sherri Conyers which is dedicated to maintenance of the building. We also paid out to the church operating budget a standard policy distribution of \$32,581 and also \$32,419 from the six-year plan voted by the congregation.

Of the 3/31/2022 total endowment, \$1,002,316 is in the General Fund portion and \$143,706 is in the Building Fund portion. Within the Building Fund portion, there is a \$6,177 emergency maintenance reserve, a \$6,046 organ maintenance reserve, and \$756 remaining from the most recent capital campaign.

Our currently targeted asset allocation remains 75% in equities and 25% in fixed income. Each allocation is distributed among highly rated Mutual Funds and Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs). We do not invest in the stocks of individual companies. Where possible we invest in socially responsible funds, now often called “environmental, social, governance” (ESG) funds.

Moving forward, the Trustees are committed to continuing work with the Treasurer, Finance Committee, and Board to provide a balance between using funds now for needed operations and saving funds for later needs.

Respectfully submitted by your Trustees:

Scott Bennett, Richard Danzinger, Sandy Frades, Marti Kennedy, Eric Soederberg

## Congregational Development Committee Report

The Committee on Congregational Development (CDC) for the Church Year 2021-2022 consisted of Amy Blanchard and Michael Conley as Co-Chairs, with Mark Schwartzburg, Brenda Perry, and John Reagan. Marti Kennedy, Church Board President for 2021-2022, is the liaison to the Church Board.

In early October 2021, The Board requested the CDC help find a new member or two for the Finance Committee, as Sandy Frades announced she is stepping down as Chair of that committee at the end of this church year, and other existing members were not able or interested in stepping into this role. The CDC spent several meetings online via Zoom discussing together, as well as with Treasurer Alan Shirey, and Sandy herself, gathering information about the types of tasks involved, how duties could be spread out among its members, and who might be good candidates to reach out to. It was a difficult search, but in February of 2022, Deb Maloney agreed to join Finance and has since been attending monthly meetings, getting acquainted with tasks involved and the general distribution of duties among the committee. She is not specifically interested in chairing the committee, but we feel confident that the committee will be able to work out amongst themselves how various responsibilities are handled.

Largely because of the difficulty the CDC experienced in landing on the right candidate for the Finance Committee, we realized that we really needed to canvas the congregation to find out what individuals were interested in and in what ways they felt they would be excited to and interested in volunteering for UUCM on different committees, activities, etc. To that end, the CDC devised a 6-question survey and distributed it electronically to our UUCM friends and members. 37 individuals answered the call and, with that, we obtained detailed and pertinent information on what people want to do for and with the church.

In Spring of 2022, when the Board tasked the CDC with finding a nominee for the open 3-year Trustee of the Endowment position, it was easy to see a couple members who specifically listed Finance as an interest on our survey. We were much more easily able to focus on particular people to approach, and we, in fact, got the positive results we were hoping for. This also was true in our search for the 3 2-year Member-at-Large open positions on the Board for the 2022/23 church year, and the 1 1-year Member-at-Large position vacated mid-term by Dax Mattson, as they have accepted the nomination to the Executive Board.

The CDC intends to nominate the following persons at the June 5, 2022 Annual Meeting:

Amy Blanchard for her 3rd and final 1-year term on the CDC  
Mark Schwarzburg for his 3rd and final 1-year term on the CDC  
Brenda Perry for her 2nd full-year 1-year term on the CDC  
John Reagan for his 2nd 1-year term on the CDC  
Marti Kennedy for her 1st 1-year term on the CDC

Michael Conley for a 2-year term as a Member-at-Large on the Board  
Jackie Davis for a 2-year term as a Member-at-Large on the Board  
Sandy Frades for a 2-year term as a Member-at-Large on the Board  
Josh Koehler for a 1-year term as a Member-at-Large on the Board

David Harris for a 3-year term as Trustee of the Endowment  
Alan Shirey for a 1-year term as Treasurer

Dona Eaton for a 1-year term as Clerk  
Dax Mattson for a 1-year term as Vice President  
Scott Blanchard for a 1-year term as President

## Children and Youth Committee Report

Due to Covid-19, Children's Circles did not meet until May.

CYC will meet over the summer to discuss plans for the fall and prepare classrooms for when Circles resume.

CYC needs new members. Please email [cyc@uucm.org](mailto:cyc@uucm.org) if you are interested in joining the committee and/or are willing to assist with Sunday morning Children's Circle.

Co-Chairs: Kristin Rounds and Julie Adl-Zarabi.

Members: Karen Crossman, Susan Glazier, Jewel Griffin, Rachel Merrick Maggs.

## Adult Education

Adult Ed has continued smoothly this year, meeting on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Topics are in a wide range of interests such as social and political history, literature, travel, science and personal hobbies or pursuits. We've traveled to China, learned how a millinery shop serves a 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century community, traced the history of famous lesbian relationships, explored the history of the table napkin, and speculated about dark energy and dark matter and many other things. While we learn we bond together and deepen our UUCM relationships.

Beginning in January 2022 the fourth Wednesday of the month became a series called *The Surface of Mystery*. This offers a deeper, discussion-based opportunity once a month. Each session focused around a topic: truth, order, virtue, theodicy (why bad things happen to good people if there is an all seeing and benevolent God), and eschatology (the study of last things). We explored the topic through the lenses of philosophy, world religions, mythology, and art. The sessions were offered on Tuesday evenings as well for those who work.

Nancy Baker, Facilitator

## Small Group Ministries Report

The Mont Vernon SGM met via Zoom throughout the 21-22 year. We had a total of 8 members. Dave Harris

## Multiplatform Team

At the end of the last church year, we started planning how we could do Multiplatform Worship after the pandemic was no longer an issue. We on the worship team felt strongly that virtual worship was here to stay in combination with in-Sanctuary worship. We hired a pair of consultants and began the process. We identified our requirements, and our lead consultant designed a system to meet our requirements. Bob Baker and Bryan Higgs joined us for our early testing, installing electrical outlets, and laying of cables. John Miller built us a beautiful table for our equipment out of one of our old pews. Alan Shirey has helped us with some work as well. We have tested the system with our consultants and are confident we will have an operational system by mid-September. We are currently permanently installing equipment and cables now that we have successfully tested the system.

Over the summer we will do final testing and perhaps some slight modifications. We will document how to use the system and prepare to train others in the late summer and early fall.

To date we have received about \$8,445 in gifts (including almost \$4,700 from our Minister's expense account last year) with more money pledged for this effort. We have spent about \$8,355 to date.

Multiplatform Team: Rev. Shayna Appel, Sandy Frades & Candy Shirey

## Worship Committee Report

In addition to meeting with the Minister each month to plan and debrief worship services, the Worship Team meets weekly to run through the upcoming service, checking the media and assigning roles for the service itself. It also works closely with the Music Director, Elise MacDonald. Candy Shirey serves as a music mixer and sound engineer for our recorded music. The Team covers both of the services - live in the sanctuary and the Zoom virtual component. Team members share the responsibility for creating the media that supports each service. We also create and produce one service each month ourselves and support memorials and other services in the sanctuary and on Zoom. We also act as Producers for services offered by guest ministers.

This year we've continued to work on multiplatform delivery of services and have attended worship services offered by the UUA so that we can share experiences and learn what other churches are doing and techniques that might help us.

Media has supported services for several years now, so we are in the process of setting up folders in Google Drive for planning and archival purposes so that we can easily access past services. Storing recordings and other data that helps in future planning as well as offers a history of UUCM worship. We keep track of attendance on both worship platforms and support the Pastoral Care network and the Comm Team with areas of the service where they have responsibility.

We work more as a Team than a committee and have grown in skills as well as bonded as a group each year since the pandemic began. We welcome those interested in joining our Team!

Nancy Baker for the Worship Team, Lynn Coakley, Sandy Frades, Candy Shirey

## Music Director Report

This year, we continued to pre-record hymns and several other choral music anthems. However, due to progression in the understanding of and treatment options for COVID, a huge improvement was possible over the 2020-2021 year: the choir was able to rehearse in person and record together in the sanctuary, masked and distanced. Meeting in person allowed us to sing synchronously and create our sound together, rather than the complex, extremely time-consuming process used the previous year (when all vocal parts were recorded separately at home by each singer, then stitched together via audio editing).

This in-person rehearsal process allowed for three positive developments. First, choir members were able to return to some in-person socializing during rehearsals – something which had been very much missed. Secondly, the musicality which is possible when singing synchronously quickly returned. Lastly, many hours of editing time were saved each week for choir member and tech volunteer Candy Shirey; her absolutely pivotal roles have continued, but the sheer amount of her tech time involved this year for choir-related tasks has been reduced.

Elise and Shayna met in advance, largely via Zoom, to select hymns for each month. Elise attended nearly all monthly Worship Committee meetings, as well as Thursday evening Worship Committee practice meetings in advance of each Sunday's service.

Elise worked in a sustained manner with the choir on small but important details of choral musicianship, including vowel matching, blend, best practices for breathing, cut-offs, etc. The hard work and increasingly cohesive sound of the ensemble was wonderful to hear! We were very happy to welcome Linda Goodman, Joe Pollock, and new UUCM congregant Reid Cunningham to the choir.

Our tech process this year consisted of Elise pre-recording practice tracks for each vocal part (SATB); sending those tracks, along with scans of all sheet music, to the choir in advance; rehearsing each hymn at Wednesday night rehearsals; recording each hymn, with the aid of Candy's technical assistance and high-quality video recording gear (we only utilize the audio from the recordings); a relatively much faster editing process for each choir piece by Candy, followed by a quick review of each audio file by Elise; uploading of the finished files to Google Drive and addition of each to the Music Schedule, a detailed Google Docs file. At our best, we maintained a 10-day margin in our work, allowing less stress for the Worship Team in putting together each week's service media.

We continued to utilize the same musical benedictions that are the same each week ("Draw the Circle Wide" and "Go Forth") which were used during the 2020-2021 year. For the recent re-addition of separate programs for the children during services, we recently made a new recording of the "Children's Blessing."

Guest instrumentalists and vocalists for special services (including Christmas Eve and Music Sunday on May 29th, 2022) included Ellie Davis, Susan Glazier, Amy Conley, and Jackie Davis. Members of the choir who contributed special small-group pieces for Music Sunday included Bryan Higgs, Susan Glazier, Linda Goodman, Joe Pollock, and Nancy Baker.

Submitted by Elise MacDonald, Music Director

## Membership Committee Report

Another year lost to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through March of 2022, I was able to reach out to some of the new visitors to our Sunday online worship by downloading a report each week of the participants to the worship. If they provided an email:

- I added the contact information to the New Visitors list that Jamie and I maintain on the Google drive.
- I added them to Constant Contact, so that they now receive our weekly and monthly enews. They also received a Welcome email from Rev. Shayna

In March 2022, Zoom stopped collecting email addresses, so we added info to the final slide of worship to tell new people how to contact us.

In November 2022, we started holding services in the Sanctuary.

- Membership began providing coverage to write name tags, chat with new folks and introduce them to others.
- Membership also took over coffee hour

Membership was gratified that Debbie Maloney and Karen Crossman have joined. At a very productive Zoom meeting in the spring, we mapped out a comprehensive plan for the fall.

Membership Statistics for 2021-2022:

- There are 115 people who are UUCM Members.
- Two new members were added – Lisa Murray, Judy Eriksen
- Twenty-two members were removed – seven of whom died (Dorothy Lindon, John Shonle, Sema Minassian, Sandy Springer, Michael Deschenes, Joan Cavoli, Jan Woodman)

Respectfully Submitted,

Dona Eaton (chair), Jane Mika, Linda Pellerin, Debbie Maloney, Karen Crossman

## **Pastoral Care Network Committee Report**

Pastoral Care continues to provide assistance to those in need within the UUCM community throughout the year. Transportation, food, grocery shopping, personal contact support such as sending a card, an email message or a phone call are some of the ways Pastoral Care has provided support to members and friends. This year News Beyond The Pews was initiated by Elise DeMichael in an effort to keep UUCM members and friends apprised of those unable to actively participate.

Nancy Danzinger on behalf of Pastoral Care, Linda Higgs, Elise DeMichael Barbara Smith, Holly Hornor, Karen Walsh and Rev. Shayna Appel (advisor)

## **Property Committee Report**

The Maintenance Team maintains the church building and grounds plus the Shelley property. Most of the work is done by the Maintenance Team (aka Friday Guys): Claudia Everest, Bob Baker, Jack Conaway, Dick Danzinger, Bob Eaton, John Mika, John Miller, Alan Shirey, John Shonle

(deceased), and David Wheeler. This team meets weekly on Friday mornings. Some of the work is done by contractors and supported by the Maintenance Team. During this church year, we performed both major projects and routine care.

### **Major Projects:**

- Removed several dead limbs on trees.
- Removed a large stump left from tree work near the utility pole and planted bulbs.
- Repainted the interior walls of the up and down stairwells from the foyer and the corridor on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
- Hired an electrician and supervised his installation of new 110V outlets for multi-platform AV system.
- Pulled long cables through walls/floor for multi-platform system.
- Built an operator's table for the multi-platform system from an unused pew.
- Replaced broken light on one-side of the wayside pulpit.
- Replaced parking lot flood light at back corner (garden side) building.
- Hired a new snow plowing contractor
- Dismantled the ramp at John Shonle's condo after John died.
- Repaired and repainted the wall at the front of the sanctuary

### **Routine Care:**

- Mowed church and Shelley lawns.
- Maintained church and Shelley gardens.
- Cleared snow from walks and steps.
- Supervised furnace repairs (air handler #1 not always shutting off).
- Managed time interval control programming on 16 thermostats throughout the building; also managed low-heat and no-heat to conserve energy during the pandemic.
- Installed and removed air conditioners for the minister's study and administrator's office.
- Emptied the outside compost bin and took all trash to dump.
- Supported annual fire alarm testing and system battery replacement (contractor and Maintenance Team).
- Supported fire extinguisher testing (contractor).
- Installed and maintained all signage outside of the building.
- Changed lock to Minister's office.
- Adjusted closing of front door and one Barnum fire door.

Submitted by Property Committee:

Barbara Smith, Dick Danzinger, Bob Baker, Bethany Poulin (chair)

### **Share-the-Plate Report**

Through our plate, we provide money to special appeals, to organizations within our denomination and to local organizations tightly linked to UUCM through volunteering. We began sharing our plate 50-50% with organizations this year.



We support the Unitarian Universalist Action New Hampshire (UUANH) and as a member organization. We pledge to pay \$2 per member which we more than met through the plate.

The last Sunday in November, we opened the Sanctuary after a long hiatus of just zoom worship. We then offered both in Sanctuary and Virtual worship. An interesting statistic is that although attendance may have increased a little, the gifts to the plate increase significantly. Before we were meeting in the Sanctuary, the average plate in total was \$125 (this includes summer services where attendance was less than during the church year). When we were both in the Sanctuary and on Zoom, the average was \$320/plate.

By the end of the church year, we will send over \$6,000 to organizations that need our help. This is an increase over the last 2 years.

Here is the breakdown through the service on 4/24/22:

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Total Plate</i>	<i>To Organization</i>	<i>No. Plates</i>
UUA	\$2,056	\$1,083	8
SHARE	\$1,921	\$1,011	7
BLUU	\$1,137	\$646	5
UUSC - Ukraine Relief	\$1,137	\$619	1
UUANH Bail & Bond Fund	\$921	\$498	5
UUANH	\$734	\$379	3
UUSC	\$660	\$343	4
Nashua Soup Kitchen	\$425	\$238	4
Honor the Earth	\$390	\$220	5
Indigenous Environmental Network	\$240	\$170	1
UUA Disaster Relief Fund	\$275	\$138	1
	<b>\$9,895</b>	<b>\$5,342</b>	

These numbers do not include the plates in May and June. May's recipient is the NH Community Bail Fund (UUANH supports) and in June we will share a plate with our neighbor Bridges and a plate with Family Promise of Southern NH.

Share-the-Plate Planners: Rev. Shayna Appel, Sandy Frades, and the Worship Committee

## Communications Team Report

In 2021-2022, the Communications Team served as a key communications vehicle during the COVID shutdown with updates via the UUCM.org website, monthly newsletters, and social media. Without in-person contact at UUCM, it was more important than ever to deliver socially distant communication.

**Website:**

- Made some enhancements to our responsive website (uucm.org):
  - Completed redesign of Member Resources section to simplify access. Increased the amount of content available without logging in.
  - Supported the quite active RJTF, which required frequent and extensive updates.
  - Made Rentals much more prominent on the site.
  - Nimble made revisions to the Upcoming Worship content, since we received quite different types of information month to month – sometimes just weekly titles, sometimes weekly descriptions, and sometimes just the theme of the month. Challenging to say the least.
- We started receiving numerous requests for online accounts from unknown individuals. We believe that individuals were trolling for secure content, so we removed the ability of individuals to request an account. When a new member joins the church, we create an account for them and send an email introducing them to the content now available with the new account.
- **2021 Holiday Fair Online**
  - This was a major effort by Bryan, who responded to numerous large and small requests for changes to the selling site that had been used the previous year.
- **2022 Auction Online**
  - Bryan installed and customized the WooCommerce Auction software.
  - Dona secured the donations and created all of the auction item product pages.

#### **eNews:**

- Comm team continues to produce the Monthly newsletters.

#### **Social Media (Also see Addendum for statistics):**

- Twitter and Instagram – Though links to these accounts are still on the website, we've done little with them during the pandemic. In recent months, Pat started making posts to Instagram about the monthly themes and Sunday services (if we had information about them). Our Instagram account has 203 followers, including UUA and UU affiliates around this country and others.
- Facebook (515 people have Liked our page; Likes for posts can vary widely, depending on visibility.)
  - Pat creates images and makes posts about the monthly theme, Sunday services (if information is available), and other events of interest to the general public (fundraisers, speakers, etc.) on our public Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/uucm.nh/>).
  - Sharing posts of public fundraisers like the Holiday Fair and Spring Sale to local town Facebook pages for Milford, Amherst, etc. definitely raises the number of people who see them. The public Pouliot event attracted 19 people from outside the UUCM community, though some of those may be Pouliot followers who learned about it through other sources.
  - Pat has suggested we might generate more attention (and possibly attract new members) by making other posts that represent our UU values, but this effort has been put on hold pending Board approval of a Facebook policy to be integrated with a policy on "Who Speaks for the Church?"
  - Since we established 4 other interactive UUCM subgroups on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/uucm.nh/groups/>), a variety of people continue to share items of interest to members of those groups, which helps build community.

Respectfully submitted,

Dona Eaton (chair), Bryan Higgs, Pat Nelson, Julie Adl Zarabi, Christine Polonsky

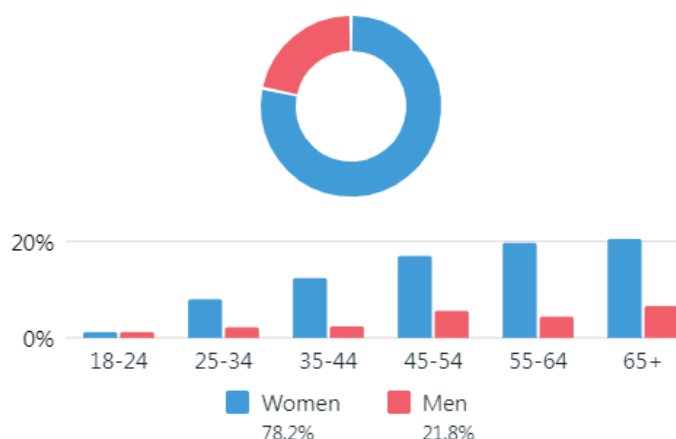
## Addendum

We have gotten feedback that Instagram reaches more young people, and the pie charts and graphs below appear to bear that out, but most UUCM Instagram posts get only about 3 Likes. Facebook posts get much higher numbers, as shown in the Results snippet following the graph.

Facebook Page likes ⓘ

515

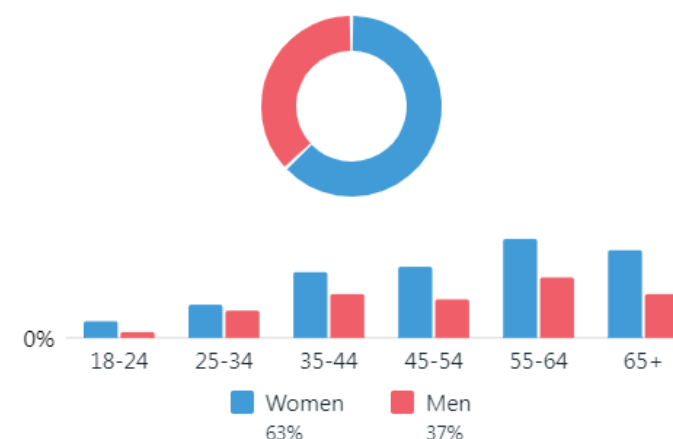
Age & gender ⓘ



Instagram followers ⓘ

203

Age & gender ⓘ



Here is a sample from April 28-May 24:

Results [See what's new](#)

Facebook Page reach ⓘ

365 ↑ .73.8%



Instagram reach ⓘ

20 ↓ .39.4%



## Racial Justice Task Force Report

Another year of Zoom meetings commenced in September with meetings twice a month among our 8 members.

Oct 19, Met with Rev. Michael Crumpler, Multicultural program director for UUA, who helped advise us of possible programming for the UUA report, Widening the Circle of Concern.

Nov. 9, Met with Rev. Michael Crumpler from UUA.

Dec. 7, Hosted Rev. Michael Crumpler via Zoom to discuss Hospitality and Inclusion, part of Widening The Circle of Concern. Over 50 members and friends attended and it was an interactive

discussion of assessing our own ideas of the word Hospitality and the terms "insiders" and "outsiders" as they might affect our biases and actions.

Dec. 14, Met with Michael Crumpler, courtesy of the UUA, to discuss the Dec. 7 event and future ideas.

Jan. 18, Hosted UUCM Zoom#2 with Michael Crumpler to discuss Widening The Circle of Concern, about 50 people attended, well-received.

Feb. 1, Hosted Michael Crumpler for our third UUCM Zoom program, courtesy of the UUA, discussing Widening The Circle of Concern.

Mar. 1, Hosted Denise and Paul Pouliot, head speakers of the Cowasuck Band of the Abenaki peoples. This was an enlightening public Zoom program (Saving Our Food Ways and Sacred Spaces) and there were over 30 UUCM members and friends present, plus 19 people outside UUCM (\$350).

Mar. 10, Began a four-session series of Zoom discussions on the UUA publication "Widening The Circle of Concern," co-led by Rev. Shayna Appel and Amy Conley.

Apr. 3, Hosted a PBS documentary film via Zoom, *Bring Her Home*, about murdered and missing Indigenous Women, and the negative impact of US Federal Indian Policies. Open to the public. Low attendance. Learned how to get a PBS film onto zoom.

ONGOING: Research and discuss the creation and installation of a marker/plaque to acknowledge the land under UUCM as being stewarded by the Abenaki peoples through history. Met with the Maintenance and Property committees, local sculptor John Weidman, Comm Team and others.

FUTURE PLANS: Book discussion, Knotty Conversations (UUA), Installation of Land Acknowledgment plaque, Speakers or Training programs, Film Nights, trip to Black Heritage Trail of NH.

Committee Members: Amy Conley, Sandy Frades, Erna Johnson, Brenda Perry, Sally Sennott, Ann Sobel Shaw, David Wheeler.

## Coordinators' Annual Report (Formerly Known as The Holiday Fair)

Last September a meeting was held with all of the various groups involved with our annual Holiday Fair. We discussed whether or not we would be able to hold an in-person fair or would it need to be virtual again. A decision needed to be made by mid October at the latest. Following that meeting, the coordinators made a decision in early October that an in-person fair would continue to present too many difficulties due to the increasing CoVid numbers.

It was decided to break the fair up into various components. In December, we would hold a virtual bakery and wreath sale, advertising among UUCM members and friends. (There are questions from NH-DHHS regulations as to whether we could or could not advertise to the general public.) We planned on a virtual soup for supper and sandwich sale in February. Ritzy would be moved to the spring and be called a rummage sale. We would not sell any crafts at Christmas this year - supplies of made items were limited due to CoVid - but we would include a craft component to the spring sale.

Cammie Opre agreed to chair the bakery event. Her work was incredible from soliciting exact sale items to setting up our advertising for the goods and the sale and delivery of sold items. She and her daughter designed a beautiful sales catalog on the web with the help of Bryan Higgs. A very successful part of this sale was the decision to deliver the sold items to the buyers rather than having a pick up day. Many drivers were solicited for the various towns.

The bakery sale was the best in several years with total sales of \$1501.

In January, we reviewed the plan to have a soup sale. Looking at the amount garnered from the previous year's soup and sandwich sale we determined that it was not worth all of the effort needed to create a sale similar to the bakery sale.

Our efforts then turned to the May Rummage and Crafts sale which, as of this report, has not been held yet.

Respectfully submitted,  
Holiday Fair Coordinators  
Nancy Danzinger, Barbara Smith and Sharon Verrill

## **Community Supper Annual Report**

Due to Covid, UUCM Community Suppers were not held this year. We hope to resume them in the upcoming 2022- 2023 church year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Danzinger

## **SHARE Report**

Because of being closed part of the year due to COVID, we did not do as many special collections throughout the year.

We held a holiday appeal for gift cards and money for SHARE. We delivered \$565 worth of gift cards and \$325 in checks to SHARE. Thank you so much for your support!

We collected \$1,011 for SHARE in our plate this year.

We did collect food as well.

Many members continue to support SHARE on their own during the pandemic.

Next year hopefully we can reinstitute pajama, sock, underwear, birthday party items, and school supply collections in addition to the holiday gift cards.

Share Liaison: Sandy Frades

## Partner Church

### Background

Since the early 1990's, UUCM has been in partnership with a congregation located in the village of Szentmihaly, Romania. The village is in the Transylvanian region, where the Unitarian church was first recognized in 1568. Transylvania was previously a part of Hungary, but in breaking up the Austro-Hungarian Empire after World War 1, it was made part of Romania by the Treaty of Trianon. Our partners are ethnically Hungarian and maintain Hungarian language, customs and recognize Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca in Romanian) as their unofficial capital.

Romania shares a 380 mile border with Ukraine, so naturally as attacks on Ukraine unfolded and citizens were fleeing, there were concerns in Milford about if there might be any impact on our friends. Fortunately, they are inland, far away from borders and fighting. For reference, they are 600 miles from Kyiv and 950 miles from Mariupol.

### UUA Update

On March 27th, the UUA hosted a zoom meeting for partnered churches, there were about 35 attendees across the US, Rev. Shayna and Peggy Stokes attended for UUCM. As of that call, they estimated that 300,000 Ukrainian refugees had entered Romania (as of 4/10 NPR was estimating 600,000). Refugees are being met at the trains with food, blankets and diapers. The refugee children tend to speak English, though the parents do not. At the time, the church in Kolozsvár was housing 38 refugees in dorms at their theological university. Any Ukrainian refugees with Hungarian ties are likely headed to Hungary vs Transylvania or Romania.

A note from Rev. Tamas Tofalvi, minister in Szentmihaly (Mihăileni in Romanian)

"As a European, I thought that we have learnt the lesson during the two world wars, but it seems we still haven't. A cruel destruction is happening in our neighbourhood, but if I may say so, thank goodness it hasn't reached us yet. And we really hope it never will. Here, where we live, in the inside areas of Romania, there are no refugees (we saw only some cars with Ukrainian license plates, probably passing through), but there are many refugees in the regions next to the border. It's really difficult to accept the situation because it's happening so close to us. And there is a natural fear in people. The biggest fear is mostly because of the livelihood. The prices went up because of the war, because of the price of the fuel (1 Liter is almost 2 dollars). We hope that not only we won't get involved in it, but also the whole conflict will soon end in the near future."

In other church/village news, Rev. Tamas writes: "In the last 2-3 years we're done nothing but repairing. I'm sure you remember that our church was in a really bad shape. This year we are preparing for the repair work of the inside of the church. Also, starting from spring, there are no COVID-rules and we are working on restarting our programs, to gather the people again somehow. This is a really difficult job to do because everybody got unused of everything and it's hard to pull them out of their homes. And of course, there still is a natural fear in them from the virus."

For any questions about the partner church, please contact Peggy Stokes, [peggystokes603@gmail.com](mailto:peggystokes603@gmail.com), or 603-321-4686.

Submitted by Peggy Stokes

## Women In Transition Team (WITT)

This has been another quiet year for the WITTeam. The concerns over COVID prevented the Team from offering the support that has been offered in the past. Except for a few rides to pick up women being released from prison, there were no rides given. However, during this past year the Team continued to support prisoners and advocate for improved legislation concerning prison and previously incarcerated persons. The WITT Prison Advocacy Team monitored legislative activity and encouraged communication with local representatives in support of prisons. This activity continued throughout the year, not deterred by COVID.

In December, 2021, small gifts (toothbrushes, soaps and socks) were purchased and delivered to the Women's Prison in Concord. Because the prison has many restrictions on what could be sent into the prison, fewer gifts were delivered than had been hoped.

Donations to support this gift project were generous. The WITTeam appreciates the individuals and other faith communities who made this possible.

In January, 2022, the WITTeam had a ZOOM discussion with Laura Day, a prison warden in England. Her connection to Bryan Higgs made it possible to arrange this conference. There was an informative and interesting conversation with each side of the Atlantic sharing and learning.

From time to time during this past year, the WITTeam considered reopening our support to incarcerated and previously incarcerated women, but as of now, that has not happened. There is a need for drivers when the transportation program resumes.

Hopefully this next year will bring a return to support and advocacy for clients. A new endeavor will be to begin a program of community outreach, bringing programs to inform the public about issues concerning the prison population and those who have transitioned to the community.

Submitted by Linda Higgs, chair of the WITTeam