

**Coordinating Team
Report to the Board of Trustees
August 2022**

Due to staff transitions and reassignments, the Coordinating Team (CT) is now comprised of Rev. Lisa Bovee-Kemper, Minister; Alesia Hutto, Director of Administration and Kelly Greene, Director of Member Relations. In addition to the financial and membership reports, the CT brings the following items to the Board for your attention and awareness:

Transition Team Report

The members of the interim search team and Rev. Lisa Bovee-Kemper (LBK) met last week for an initial convening of the Transition Team. After some discussion of the scope and role of the team, it was decided that Paul Wilson would not serve on the team, since as a board co-chair, he will already be working closely with LBK and has significant other responsibilities. Melissa Vullo, Megan Van Fleet, and John Burns will remain as the initial members, and one additional member will be recruited from the congregation. Five people (including the minister) seemed like a good number. Megan will work to identify some potential members for the team to review. Once the full team is on board, meetings will be scheduled monthly. The five areas of interim focus (Heritage, Mission, Leadership, Connections, Future) were reviewed, and LBK reported on her first weeks.

Board Monitoring Report for August: Stewardship Summary for 2021-2022

The Stewardship Team for 2021-2022 was comprised of Franklin McClelland (chair), Erica Blake, John Burns, Elaine Camp, Chris Clark, Gwynne Movius, Mike O'Sullivan and Julie Smith with Kelly Greene, John Herrick and Alesia Hutto serving as staff liaisons. The canvassers included Lincoln Baxter, John Burns, Shelagh Gallagher, Ellen Holliday, Jane Kusterer, Debbie Marr, Cyndi Martinec, Franklin McClelland, Gwynne Movius, Mike O'Sullivan, Julie Smith, Jinny Sullivan and Paul Wilson.

The Stewardship Team encouraged generosity at the 5% level across the board through direct messaging in stewardship materials, peer-to-peer canvassing efforts, messaging through monthly stewardship captains who act as "cheerleaders" by offering testimony and encouraging financial commitment, through recorded and live monthly stewardship messages for Sunday services and regular notices in *Currents*. We thanked members who pledged with a letter from the congregation signed by the minister and stewardship team chair, and a handwritten thank you note was sent from the team and with a handmade craft from our CYRE youth to those who pledged generously.

The team tried to increase engagement with the campaign through intentional messaging, new marketing tools, creative thank yous and celebrating. We created ad hoc groups within the team that focused on this engagement. The messaging group worked on intentional language varying monthly with the hopes to encourage members to be more attentive to our pleas. The marketing group has been seeking creative ways to push these messages which included a "Share the Plate" campaign.

The "**Share the Plate**" initiative began in February with a soft roll out on February 13. These ongoing monthly campaigns stipulate that we share half of our plate contributions (not payments on pledges) with organizations creating positive change in the broader community. To date we have partnered with Black Lives of Unitarian Universalist (BLUU), GreenFaith, and Reentry Housing Alliance (RHA). We were able to raise \$1,583 for BLUU, \$1,153 for GreenFaith, and \$1,194 for RHA. STP campaigns will continue throughout the year at regular intervals.

The goal was to move the needle forward amongst those not considered our largest pledgers. Despite our best efforts, this year's campaign proved difficult due to low engagement by members and the lingering effects of the pandemic. One bright spot is that we had higher than expected New Member pledges totaling \$25,000. Existing pledges are down, but that reduction is offset by new member pledges which equates to a total loss over last year of \$76,000 as of June 30, 2022.

In summary:

- We netted an 12% loss for 2021-2022; in 2020-2021 it was 3%.
- We had an average response rate of 58%, which is much lower than last year's response rate of 67%.
- We canvassed 68 units in 2021-2022 vs. 90 units in 2020-2021.
- We had 9 fewer pledge units in 2021-2022 vs. 2020-2021

Strategy for 2022-2023

The strategy for the 2022-2023 congregational year is to focus on connections. Building on our tagline of "Cultivate Courageous Connections," the goal is to get members to connect more with the congregation by not only attending events and gatherings, but also through generosity. To allow for more time to build these connections our stewardship process will transition from monthly to quarterly.

Our quarterly approach will combine the months of September, October and November as the "Fall Pledge group," December, January and February as "Winter Pledge Group" and March, April, May and June as "Spring Pledge group." Each three-month group will

consist of messages and canvassing in month one, return of pledges, follow-up and celebration/appreciation in month two and a “Share the Plate” campaign in month three. This new process allows for three major goals to happen: giving the canvassers six weeks to speak with members, more follow-up time with those who don’t respond and celebration/appreciation in a more intentional way.

The success of this process will rely heavily on getting members connected and the best way to do this is through direct conversations through canvassing. We hope that members of the UUCC’s Board of Trustees will volunteer this year to join our group of canvassers to help foster these connections. It is a great way to get involved and hear first-hand feedback from the Community.

The plan is to launch the new process with an email to the entire community on Wednesday, August 17 and continue to inform the congregation through *Currents* and Facebook through early September.

A Message from the Professional Staff Regarding Covid-19

As you may be aware, on Friday, July 31, COVID Act Now, the resource your Unitarian Universalist Community of Charlotte (UUCC) staff use to monitor our region’s COVID data, returned Mecklenburg County to the “high” risk category for infection (https://covidactnow.org/us/north_carolina-nc/county/mecklenburg_county/?s=27701658). This rating is based on the number of daily new cases, the infection rate, and the positive test rate. [Click here for more information on risk level assessment.](#)

Based on recommendations from the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, this change in risk status does not currently require a change to the way we operate. Vaccinations are widely available for persons as young as six months and provide significant protection from severe disease.

We recognize that risk cannot be entirely eliminated. We have taken and will continue to take reasonable steps to minimize the risk of infection, including monitoring the resources mentioned above, following local and national mandates for masking and closures, and maintaining MERV13 filtration and safe air exchange rates throughout the building. (The exchange rate in the Sanctuary is 5x/hr., well above the standard 3x/hr.)

Individuals attending in-person services, meetings, and activities on campus must do their own risk assessment and attend at their own risk. Please observe the following protocols when attending events at 234.

- We continue to require persons gathering and/or volunteering on campus to be fully vaccinated and boosted.
- We strongly recommend wearing masks in the building. Even if you are vaccinated, masks are an effective way to limit transmission and an easy thing to do to help others feel more comfortable. As a reminder, masks are always available at 234. They can be found in the office area across from the front desk, in the vestibule on the table, and outside Freeman Hall on the credenza.
- Also, we remind anyone who does not feel well or who has tested positive for and/or has symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home. [Click here to see a list of common symptoms.](#)

We are committed to balancing health and safety with maintaining access to our congregational connections. Our goal is to keep our UU values at the forefront, including putting people first rather than economics or politically based recommendations. We will work together to maintain our commitment to accessibility and hospitality for people of all ages, specifically by providing hybrid and multi-platform access with the goal that everyone who wants to can participate.

Membership/Participation

2022-2023 Team members include: Catherine Covington-East, Liza Pratt, Gwynne Movius, Mary Bruce, Meagan O'Connor, Claire Lukens and Michelle Dillon

Summer is normally a slower time of year at the UUC. This summer was unusual. In June, service attendance was just 582 or an average of 146. This includes just 20 people attending the General Assembly service that was streamed at noon. Just 38% of members participated in some way. We had about 22 visitors, and just four who identified as being first-time visitors. One highlight was a book/puzzle/game swap held in our parking lot on a Sunday morning. More than anything being swapped, the greatest delight seemed to come from interacting with each other.

Approximately 52% of congregational members engaged with the community in some way in July. Two major drivers of participation were the celebrations of minister Jay Leach, who left after 19 years. For the Saturday afternoon celebration, 121 people signed up to attend. Service attendance was 1,133 for the month or an average of 227

per Sunday. For Jay's last service, attendance was 323 – the largest we have had at least since March 2020. During another service, we also had a New Member Recognition Ceremony where we welcomed 13 new members into our congregation. We had at least eight first-time visitors in July.

For new people who have been visiting over the summer, September tends to be a popular time to decide to join. This year, we have already had a handful of repeat visitors express interest in joining. The Membership Team has a three-session new member/visitor class they plan to start offering in September or October to encourage these visitors, to help them get connected and to ensure they know about the community they are joining.

We added three new members and removed 11 members over June and July. Three of those removed members have not been involved for several years. One joined during the pandemic and has since married someone working in a different state. Three said their lives are going in different directions. Two mentioned disappointment with the youth religious education and the culture of UUCC. Another two said they wanted more spirituality and less social justice focus – and that they had not made friends here.

Michelle Dillon has taken on the role of Sunday Morning Volunteer Coordinator, sending emails to schedule Greeters, Ushers and Coffee Servers.

Memorial Endowment Trust

The Memorial Endowment Trust (MET) of the UUCC provides an opportunity for members to contribute financially to the life and well-being of the congregation through legacy gifts, memorial contributions, and other means of celebrating or honoring lives within our community. Members are invited in regular appeals to consider including the MET in their legacy giving. Members of the 2022-2023 MET board include Fred Dodson, Mary Ann Hendrick, Ellen Holliday, Tom Nunnenkamp (chair), Rita Heath Singer and Randy Whitt.

The MET announced seven grant awards for the 2022-2023 community year at the Congregational Conversation that took place on June 5. Our leadership submitted compelling and well-researched requests and the trustees were enthusiastic in approving the following:

- Membership Team requested \$5,500 to produce a 2-to-3-minute video to help visitors learn more about our community.

- Our Professional Staff requested \$2,500 to develop an audio/visual design plan for the sanctuary
- Building and Grounds Team requested \$4,400 to add subtle lighting to our landscape to increase visibility for evening events
- Building and Grounds Team also requested \$4,800 for awnings over the main entrance doors
- Open Door School and CYRE Teams requested \$18,000 for 3 new outdoor sheds replacing deteriorating and unsafe current storage
- CYRE Team also requested \$3,700 to provide shelter in inclement weather and life-saving devices in case of emergency
- The Intersectional Justice Team requested \$5,000 to aid our community partner The Reentry Housing Alliance

Our grants this year totaled \$43,900

These grants not only improve our experience here at 234, but also support our community outreach mission. And they wouldn't have been possible without the foresight and generosity of many who made provisions in their estate planning to benefit our community. If you have not already included the UUCC in your final documents, please consider doing so.

Ongoing Activity

This report includes some changes to our teams. Family Ministry and Community Building are now combined. Our goal is to have mostly intergenerational events rather than to regularly segregate those for families. Also included in this report is a new team: Denominational Relations. Our preliminary goal is to strengthen UUCC's connection to Unitarian Universalism.

•Adult Religious Education/Spiritual Development

We welcomed Linn Martin to the role of Contracted Coordinator of Adult Religious Education/Spiritual Development (ARESD) on July 1, 2022. Since joining the UUCC in 2018, Linn has been on our Membership Team, participated in a spiritual writing group, participated in and then facilitated our Discovery Circles, had served as a Coming of Age mentor, has been on our Congregational Care Team, was a volunteer in the office and had participated in our Economic Justice Core Group.

With the July retirement of the former ARESD Coordinator, Sharon Baker, as well as three other team members, the months of July and August have been a period of recruiting, team building, and for Linn, a lengthy learning curve. The 2022-2023 ARESD Team now consists of two veteran members and three new members: Althea Clark, Joan Kelly, Cyndi Martinec, Laurie O'Sullivan and Carol Webber. Rev. Lisa Bovee-Kemper will serve as staff liaison to the program area.

The Team has been meeting weekly during August to define itself and to identify new programs for the coming year. The goal is to be fully up and active by the month of September. In addition to coordinating a variety of presentations, we are the umbrella for four affinity groups, credo logistics, Discovery Circles, and the possible resurrection of *Writing Your Spiritual Journey*, a much-loved program in previous years. Overall, we have developed many exciting programs to offer the community; however, if we have one obstacle, it is finding facilitators who are willing to lead discussion groups.

•Building and Grounds

The Building and Grounds Team for 2022-2023 is comprised of Tom Beggs, Charles Pilkey (chair), Rocky Hendrick, David Johnson, Judy Love, Dan Maples, Tom Moore and Jinny Sullivan with Alesia Hutto serving as staff liaison.

In the month of June, the team said goodbye to members Roy Smith and Judy Love and in August welcomed new members Tom Beggs and Rocky Hendrick. For the month of August the team coordinated opportunities to work on minor tasks which include, moving the old pulpit to a new location, maintenance on the playgrounds, removal of items from the sheds on the playgrounds, fitting our congregational banner for poles and identifying contractors for upcoming projects.

The team submitted two grant proposals to the MET for installing awnings over the entry ways and adding more lighting to the Memorial Garden side of the building. Those grants were awarded at the Congregational Conversation in June. Over the next few months, the team will work on completing these projects.

•Children, Youth, and Families

The 2022-23 CYRE Team is comprised of Joe Argent, Kendra Dixon (co-chair), Jeannie Fennell, David Flynn, Nathan Hackenberg, Janan Jones, Kristie Lauderbaugh, Heather Simpson, and Valerie Vickers, with Melissa Schropp (co-chair) and Lisa Walls, Program Co-Coordinators, and Belinda Parry, Staff Liaison.

The 2021-2022 Coming of Age program officially concluded with a successful trip to Boston from July 7-12.

Camp 234, our summer elementary programming, has had good attendance, with classes ranging from about 10-15 kids each week. We've had good success with our different guests presenting and leading a variety of activities each week – a puzzle solving adventure based on Alice In Wonderland, two music Sundays featuring singing and instruments, and a culinary exercise where the kids chose and cut up various fruit to assemble their own "rainbow" salads.

We have two more summer sessions scheduled on August 14 & 21 (no programming is planned on August 28 as that is an intergenerational service)

Volunteer recruitment for teachers for this fall continues: The High School advisor team and Elementary teams are in good shape; we are still seeking additional Middle School advisors and SpiritPlay teachers.

CYRE Team Advance meeting was held at 234 on July 31 and was well attended. Scheduling for future monthly meetings was decided, and some initial assignments discussed such as providing food for Teacher Orientation. Curriculums discussed were World Religions for Elementary classes and exploring spiritual and social justice topics through episodes of the classic animated TV show "The Simpsons," (titled "D'oh God" book 2) for MS/HS. The official CYRE programming year starts on Sunday, September 11.

We have teacher orientation planned for the morning of Saturday, August 27 and hope to have final teacher assignments settled for each class in the week prior to orientation.

CYRE Registration for 2022-23 is currently underway, and a Parent Orientation for CYRE and Mountain Conference (CON) is planned for September 18, following the service.

OWL: We are sending one person to be trained as an OWL facilitator for the K- 7th grade curriculums in person in Spartanburg in September.

There's also one person on the waitlist for virtual OWL facilitator training for the 8th-12th grade curriculum in September. Hopefully, they will get in so we can rejuvenate our facilitator pool.

We have yet to meet with the new interim minister, but hope to very soon, and would like for her to attend part of our teacher orientation to meet and welcome the CYRE teachers.

Nursery care: We continue to offer nursery care each Sunday, and it has continued to be unused.

•Community Building

2022-2023 Team members include Jennifer-Dove McLeod, Althea Clark, Lisa Marie Nisely, John Burns, Justine Busto, Susan Hill, Denise Weldon-Clark, Jeannie Fennell and Megan Hendler

Our 10 Affinity Groups continue to be a meaningful point of connection for many of our members. With a change in leadership, the new Seniors Share Group hopes to give our seniors a way to share and feel valued. In August, Community Building will partner with the Music Team to offer a potluck and movie screening. We are also asking members to represent UUCG in the two-day festival and Sunday afternoon parade for Charlotte Pride. We are also planning an Activities and Groups fair to be held after a Sunday service. Affinity Groups, teams, etc. will have information, sign-up sheets and volunteers at tables in Freeman Hall. This is an opportunity to connect visitors and members to the many ways to get involved at UUCG.

•Congregational Care

We continue to benefit from the compassionate and energetic involvement of our Congregational Care Team under the leadership of Sheila Lay. Rev. Lisa Bovee-Kemper serves as staff liaison to this Team. Members regularly respond with appreciation to the calls, cards, visits, prayer shawls and meals offered by the members of this team and others. Often unseen until a need arises in a family's life, we owe these members of our community a deep debt of gratitude for the care for all of us.

•Denominational Relations

2022-2023 Team Members include: Karen Bringle, Rob Marcy, Jolena James-Szanton, Donna Fisher, Rebekah Visco (liaison for justice). Kelly Greene serves as staff liaison to this Team.

This year, UUCG will also have a Denominational Relations Team. The focus of the team has yet to be honed, as the team has not yet met. They have, however, agreed to host a

postcard writing party in association with the [Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry of North Carolina](#). We plan to start with 2000 postcards which we will write and send to voters. UU Justice Ministry NC has requested a grant that will help pay for the postcards and stamps. The Intersectional Justice Team was consulted to ensure this effort does not conflict with their efforts, which are focused on partnering with local organizations led by people most impacted by the issues we are seeking to address. There are many justice efforts happening within Unitarian Universalism. Rebekah Visco has agreed to be a liaison between the two teams to help ensure we enhance rather than interfere with each other's work.

- Intersectional Justice

2022-2023 Team members include Dave Walsh, Janet Zick, Emmanuel Allen, Shannon Maples and Rebekah Visco. Kelly Greene serves as staff liaison to this Team.

The Intersectional Justice Team and its Engagement Group are working with five community partners: Erika's Closet, Mis Amigos, Compassion Closet, Reentry Housing Alliance and GreenFaith. They are currently collecting children's clothes for Compassion Closet. For Erika's Closet, they are hoping to collect backpacks for 300 local children by August 21. They will continue to work with Stewardship on Share the Plate campaigns. The engagement Group is partnering with GreenFaith to start a GreenFaith Circle at UUCC. This team is expected to have changes, as at least two team members have served for four years, and new team members have not yet been added this year.