

**Coordinating Team
Report to the Board of Trustees
January 2023**

The Coordinating Team (CT) brings the following items
to the Board for your attention and awareness:

Board Monitoring Report: Church Mutual Insurance

submitted by Alesia Hutto, Director of Administration

Please see information included in the board reports for details.

A Message from the Professional Staff Regarding Covid-19

submitted by Alesia Hutto on behalf of the professional staff

Recently, [COVID Act Now](#), the resource your Unitarian Universalist Community of Charlotte (UUC) staff uses to monitor our region's COVID data, [returned Mecklenburg County to the high category for COVID-19 Infections](#). We acknowledged and responded to this change in status in the most recent issue of *Currents*, the member Facebook page and through direct email.

This does not require a change in how we operate. We recognize that risk cannot be eliminated. We have taken and will continue to take reasonable steps to minimize the risk of infection, including monitoring available resources, following local and national mandates for masking and closures, and maintaining MERV13 filtration and safe air exchange rates throughout the building. Individuals attending in-person services, meetings, and activities on campus must do their own risk assessment and attend gatherings and services at their own risk. In addition:

- We *strongly* recommend wearing masks in the building.
- Anyone gathering and/or volunteering at UUC is required to be fully vaccinated and boosted.
- If you have tested positive for COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or otherwise don't feel well, please stay home. [Click here to see a list of common COVID symptoms.](#)
- If you lead a small group, please consider gathering virtually rather than in person.

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.

Mid-Year Financial Update (July 2022-December 2022)

submitted by Alesia Hutto, Director of Administration

July-December 2022				
	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Fav/ (Unfav)	Annual Budget
Contributions	389,274	465,699	(76,425)	783,500
Other Income	22,306	20,959	1,347	42,718
Total Income	411,580	486,658	(75,078)	826,218
Total Expense	377,476	416,082	38,606	823,796
Net Income	34,104	70,576	(36,472)	2,422

We saw an uptick in income for the month of December, but income remains below budget projections by approximately \$75K due to pledge income. Looking at giving trends over the last three years, by mid-year we have typically collected approximately 54% of our annual income. As of December 2022, we have collected close to 50% of projected income.

Mid-year finds us with a net income of \$34,104. This surplus is only due to underspending. As a reminder our stewardship process increases the uncertainty around the collection of contributions toward pledges since pledge cycles have varying due dates. It is concerning that income continues to trend below budget, but we will continue to do what we can to encourage giving. In the meantime, we will continue to send out statements and reminders to members whose pledges are in arrears based on their due dates. We will also continue to spend conservatively and watch income closely.

Transition Team Report

submitted by staff liaison Rev. Lisa Bovee-Kemper

Team Members: Melissa Visco, John Burns, Shandra Stout

Since our December meetings, the team has been busy with preparations for two upcoming tasks, the listening sessions that will take place in the near future, and the Sunday service on UUC history that the team will present on Sunday, January 29. We expect to have an initial set of dates and times confirmed in time to begin advertising around the service on the 29th, which will include an after-service conversational session engaging more historical memories than just the ones included by the speakers.

It was suggested that in addition to open listening sessions at various dates and times, both virtual and in person, the transition team could offer to visit existing teams/groups at their regular meeting time to do sessions there. We would like to hear from the board whether this seems like a useful way to reach more people.

It was brought up that during the last interim ministry, the board and the transition team read and discussed a book on interim ministry during the interim period, and that there had been some benefit reported by participants. The transition team has decided to read the book *Transforming Conflict: The Blessings of Congregational Turmoil*, by Terasa Cooley, and would like to invite the board to do so as well. While we are focusing on the listening sessions for congregational engagement at this time, we may consider inviting members of the congregation to read this book at a later date.

Members of the transition team will attend the January board meeting for a live report and conversation.

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Here is more information on the book we have chosen to read. The author is an experienced interim minister which is a benefit to us in this transitional period, along with the fact that the book is new enough that it includes insights on pandemic related changes and upheaval.

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/transforming-conflict-terasa-cooley/1140670803>

Overview: Conflict is endemic to congregational life. Because congregations exist to help us find meaning and purpose, we find it difficult to realize that not everyone shares our understanding or approach. Many of us have cultural backgrounds that teach us that conflict is bad or to be avoided. Conflict Transformation, on the other hand, treats conflict as an opportunity to learn and grow, both individually, and institutionally.

Exploring new understandings of how our bodies and minds respond to conflict, Cooley offers concrete strategies for personal growth and healthy congregational functioning. Anticipating new conflicts that may arise from recent traumas of pandemic response and political division, Cooley offers a way to make painful conversations sources of healing. Drawing on over 30 years of experience as a parish minister and denominational official, Cooley weaves personal reflections with intellectual theory. Each chapter includes discussion questions that make it a valuable resource for group conversation and learning.

Staff Retreat

submitted by staff liaison, Alesia Hutto

On December 20, 2022, the UCC Professional Staff held its Annual Staff Retreat which also included a holiday celebration. In prior years, we have held our retreat in June in anticipation of the upcoming year, but due to staffing transitions and illnesses, the retreat was postponed to December.

The focus of this year's retreat was staffing. We started our gathering with looking at the current Mission, Vision and ENDS and proceed with asking the following questions:

1. Current Climate—What are some short phrases that currently describe the current external/internal culture? Programmatic, physical plant, socially, economically, families, in Charlotte, state of religion?
2. Current Needs—What needs to be done? What are the basics?
3. What resources and support do we need to accomplish our current defined needs?
4. What do we want to see happen that is not happening with programming and processes?
5. What resources and support can we put into place that can accomplish what is not happening within the walls of the UCC and in the larger community?

After having a dialog around these questions, we then reviewed our current staffing configuration and responsibilities. We coupled this information with answers to our questions to discuss our staffing needs. We did determine that we need to add at bare minimum one Professional member to our staff with responsibilities that could include Religious Education with the addition of Congregational Care and/or Intersectional Justice.

We will finalize a proposal for the additional staff member before the February board meeting. More to come.

Membership/Participation

submitted by staff liaison, Kelly Greene

Team Members: Catherine Covington-East, Liza Pratt, Gwynne Movius, Mary Bruce, Meagan O'Connor, Claire Lukens, Michelle Dillon

In December, 905 people attended the six services we had. This was an average of 151 per service. By far, the highest number was 213 who attended the holiday music service. 45% of members were recorded as participating in December. Our small groups, leadership teams and the music program are all popular ways our members stay involved at the UUC. December highlights included the Christmas Eve services and reception as well as Crafts with Santa.

New individuals and families continue to visit though we have not done marketing; it is essential that we find ways to engage these new people. To that end, we offered a newcomer class around how to get involved. We are searching for more ways to connect with these new families.

Kelly has proposed what we are currently calling Community Sundays, borrowed from what another UU congregation has been doing to engage people of all ages and keep members connected to each other and the congregation. Once per month on Sunday morning, we would have a 20-minute service. After service, attendees of all ages would participate in one of 4-5 activities – all in line with our UU values. Possible activities are yoga, discussions of spiritual topics, guest speakers, justice action or education, making crafts, gardening, singing, etc. This has the buy-in from the worship team. Kelly will request that representatives of the ARESD, CYRE, Community Building, Music and Worship Teams gather to collaborate and plan.

We expect that this will address declining attendance at services and the larger cultural shift away from Sunday morning services being the center of congregational life. Almost every person who joins UUC mentions they are looking for community; these activities provide opportunities to interact with others and have a participatory spiritual experience.

On next month's membership report, we will see the removal of members who have not participated or contributed financially in the past couple of years. We recognize that many congregations, UU and otherwise, have experienced reduced membership and

attendance since the pandemic and in recent years. We are researching, connecting with other congregations, and considering ways to reverse this trend here.

Open Door School

submitted by staff liaison, Alesia Hutto

The ODS Managing Team—Jen McGuire, Alesia Hutto (UUC staff liaison), Sheila Locklear (ODS Director), Elaine Peed, Erin Stooddy and Jim Van Fleet (chair).

Our preschool, the Open Door School (ODS), continues to operate safely considering the recent upswing in Covid-19, Flu and RSV cases.

All classes for the 2022-2023 school year have continued to be fully enrolled except for the Monday-Thursday 4/5's class. We have continued to recruit for that class with most families looking for a spot in the coming year. As we begin open enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year, we anticipate that class's enrollment going back to normal levels due to its "feeder class" being fully enrolled this year. Open enrollment for returning families began on Friday, January 13 and enrollment for new families begins February 1.

The new sheds on the playgrounds made possible by a grant from the Memorial Endowment Trust were installed in October. In November, the Building and Grounds team held a workday to install lattices and ramps. Valerie Vickers, CYRE team and gardening group member, presented an opportunity to create gardening space for ODS and CYRE youth. She has offered the UUC/ODS/CYRE an amazing opportunity to upgrade the fenced enclosures/gardening area near the traffic circle playground with an eagle scout and other volunteers. The proposal was presented to the Building and Grounds, CYRE and Managing Teams and it was received with hope and enthusiasm.

Over the next few months, Valerie along with Charles Pilkey, Building and Grounds Team chair, representatives from the gardening group and Cole Gilman, Eagle Scout will work to shore up the plan on what the work entails.

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 UUC's connection to Unitarian Universalism.

Adult Education/Spiritual Development (AESD)
submitted by program coordinator, Linn Martin

AE/SD was somewhat dormant during the month of December, allowing for the various community activities centered around the holidays.

Two final, extra Tai Chi classes were held in early December. We are grateful to Charles Lee (husband of AE/SD team member, Kristin Rogentine Lee) for donating his time to lead this series of classes.

A credo was not presented in December as the fourth Sunday of the month fell on Christmas Day.

As outlined in the December CT report, a last-minute opportunity arose to host a program presented by author H.D. Kirkpatrick and Jimmie Kirkpatrick. Thanks to a great deal of staff cooperation, we were able to pull together a box lunch gathering on December 27, which was attended by about 40 people, almost half of whom were non-member guests. Despite being last-minute and falling in the middle of Christmas week, this program ended up being one of our best-attended events!

Also mentioned in last month's report was a program AE/SD planned to offer in conjunction with the newly formed UUC GreenFaith Circle (Aligning Your Money with Your Values). Subsequent to submitting the paperwork to launch the program, a formal decision was made to transition the GreenFaith movement to the Intersectional Justice Team efforts. Since that time AE/SD has assisted in the transfer of responsibilities for offering GreenFaith programs to our community.

We welcome a new member to the AE/SD team as of this week, Ron Spake. Ron has been absent from Sunday services for some months, and we are pleased he has volunteered to join our efforts.

The entire team met for a planning workshop this week to discuss our intentions for the next six months and to identify potential programs. As evidenced by our team's name, we will look for a balance of educational and spiritual presentations to support the needs of our community. We are moving forward with the UUA Common Read, *Mistakes and Miracles* by Nancy Palmer Jones and Karin Lin, facilitated by Rev. Lisa and Kelly, as well as a few other potential offerings in the works.

Building and Grounds

submitted by staff liaison, Alesia Hutto

Team Members: Tom Beggs, Charles Pilkey (chair), Rocky Hendrick, David Johnson, Dan Maples, Tom Moore, and Jinny Sullivan with Alesia Hutto serving as staff liaison.

The building and grounds team did not meet in the month of January. In place of their monthly meeting, team members were encouraged to volunteer for the memorial service held for our member, Tawana Wilson Allen on Saturday, January 7.

Children, Youth, and Families (CYRE)

submitted by program coordinator, Melissa Schropp

Sunday CYRE Classes: We have had several new families register their children for CYRE classes, at SpiritPlay, Elementary and Middle School levels.

The Elementary class has continued with the world religions curriculum and hopes to organize more visits to other houses of faith, such as St. Gabriel's Catholic Church.

The Middle School class will begin their service planning on January 20 for their spring service, scheduled for March 26.

The Middle School Youth Group met on Friday, January 13 for pizza and an escape room adventure put on by John Burns and Mary Hackenberg.

High School classes are continuing with The Simpsons curriculum.

CYRE Team: The children's Christmas Pageant during the first December 24 service had enthusiastic participation, with many children eagerly acting out the first Christmas story.

The CYRE monthly team meeting is on the evening on January 15, with a focus on finalizing details for February Friends event on February 11 (registration is currently underway) and planning another Operation Sandwich in late February or early March.

Mountain Cons: Spring Cons are scheduled in February & March of 2023. Reminders to sign up have gone out.

Our Whole Lives (OWL): 8th/9th Grade OWL class had their kick-off retreat on January 6 & 7 and will meet on Sundays from January 22-March 26. The 5th/6th Grade OWL class will kick off on Sunday, January 22 and will continue Sundays through April 2.

Community Building

submitted by staff liaison, Kelly Greene

Team Members: Jennifer-Dove McLeod, Althea Clark, Lisa Marie Nisely, John Burns, Justine Busto, Susan Hill, Denise Weldon-Clark, Jeannie Fennell

We continue to consider ways to offer intergenerational activities. On Christmas Eve, we offered a beautiful cookie reception in between services. The room was packed with adults, children, UUCC members, extended families, annual guests, etc.

On January 15, we will participate in the Martin Luther King march and wreath-laying in Uptown Charlotte. On the 29th, we will begin inviting members to a monthly lunch at Koishi after service. We are also planning an intergenerational game night for February.

Congregational Care

submitted by staff liaison, Kelly Greene

This team continues to provide meals, prayer shawls, cards with well-wishes and more to care for our members. In December, they also sent cards to members who have experienced hardship in the last year or who are no longer able to attend.

In addition to their usual activities, this month they assisted with set up, clean up and serving for the repast honoring member Tawana Wilson-Allen.

Denominational Relations

submitted by staff liaison, Kelly Greene

Team Members: Karen Bringle, Rob Marcy, Caroline Webber (liaison for AE/SD), Rebekah Visco (liaison for justice)

To encourage members to participate in UUA General Assembly (GA), we are planning an information session about GA. The session will include resources from the UUA as well as a panel of UUCC members who have participated in GA.

Director of Member Relations Kelly Greene and Rev. Lisa Bovee-Kemper will facilitate four sessions on the UUA Common Read, Mistakes and Miracles, starting on February 9. In addition, the second draft of Article II of the UUA bylaws is expected to be shared later this month. We will hold additional information sessions regarding this draft.

Intersectional Justice

submitted by staff liaison, Lisa Bovee-Kemper

Team Members: Rebekah Visco, Janet Zick, Dave Walsh, Manny Allen, Melanie Greeley

Intersectional Engagement Group or IEG (meetings the second Wednesday of the month) are still working on vetting other potential organizations and documenting them in a shared spreadsheet.

The team set a goal to access OneDrive and centralize all Intersectional Justice Team (IJT) files for better access.

There has been some discussion of managing current partnerships and the capacity for adding more. The group is considering whether we need to create a mechanism for periodically assessing/re-evaluating levels of congregational engagement.

It was suggested that we consider organizations fitting loosely into three buckets:

1. legacy projects that are continuing and, in some sense, never end;
2. finite projects that likely are time bound and will end naturally;
3. ongoing engagement efforts that may ebb and flow, usually part of established organizations with ongoing projects, such as GreenFaith, or get out the vote or Habitat for Humanity, etc.

In light of ongoing concern about the need to get more people engaged, the team agreed that we need a meeting focused on re-branding and improving our communications about social justice to our community. We agreed to devote the upcoming meeting in February to work on this so we will forgo the usual business of organizational updates and jump right into this conversation.

Erika's Closet Updates

- We have committed to pay for six months of a storage unit for clothing donations. Details are being worked out to make that payment.
- Traletta will be doing a job coach training session (approved by CT) with February date TBD based on her availability.

GreenFaith Updates:

- Movie at Myers Park, same time as IJT mtg
- January 23, the align money with values workshop (21 registrations so far)
- Effort to make calls to other congregations to build connections with on Env Justice work

RHA Updates

- Phone call campaign: All rows have been assigned and the goal is to finish calls by the end of January.
- The Lasalle Street house will be at full capacity by the beginning of February, operations are going very well for this first transitional house managed by RHA.
- Last zoom call for RHA had much larger attendance from many different community organizations and it is exciting to see the organization growing and its reach in collaboration, bringing many community partners together to work collectively on the challenges, facing people with criminal records.
- No additional volunteer opportunities on the near horizon.

Share the Plate: Compassion Closet was selected to be the February Share the Plate recipient. Tentatively scheduled in service and after service presentation on February 5 with backup date of February 12

Worship

submitted by staff liaison, Rev. Lisa Bovee-Kemper

Team Members: Sharon Walker, Shelagh Gallagher, Cathy Croy, Rebecca Ransom, Laura Hamilton, Richard Kistler

Worship Workshop is scheduled for February 23, 6:30-8:30. This session is open to anyone in the congregation and will give an overview of worship theory and what happens in a Sunday service. The goal is to increase awareness of the purpose and process of creating a service and to identify potential interested parties to recruit for the Worship Team. We will soon be implementing a Sunday "host" role in which a member of the Worship Team will be present on Sunday morning to support worship leaders prior to the service (particularly on Sundays when Rev. Lisa is not present, they will welcome guest speakers and make sure they have what they need).