

**Unitarian Universalist Community Church
Augusta, Maine**



**Annual Report
July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026**

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I. Board & Committee / Group Lists

A. Current Board Members

President:.....Karen Allen
Vice-President:.....Becky Harvey
Clerk:Hilary Neckles
Treasurer:.....Nancy Fritz
Finance:Harry Grimmnitz
Member-at-Large (2026):..Liz Nitzel
Member-at-Large (2027):..Marcus Treece

B. Committees/Groups

1. Buildings & Grounds: Bill Allen and Matt Foust, Co-Chairs
2. Committee on Shared Ministry: Susan Caldwell, Chair; Annie Blanchard, Don Naber, Rev. Donna Dolham
3. Covenant Engagement Team: June Zellers, Michaela Loisel, Rev. Donna Dolham
4. Eighth Principle Task Force: Karen Allen, Chair
5. Finance Committee: Harry Grimmnitz, Chair
 - ❖ Fundraising Subcommittee: Nan Bell and Catherine Palmer, Co-Chairs

Fundraising Event Leaders:

- Auction – Catherine Palmer
 - CLYNK: Stefanie Barley & Kathy Ann Shaw
 - Hannaford Card: Elaine Weaver
 - Holiday Fair: Nan Bell
 - Farmers' Market: Karen Foust
 - Pie Sale: Catherine Palmer and Randi Brown
 - Tomato Babies Sale: Karen Foust and Dale McCormick
 - Yard Sale (Online): Tom Waddell & Marilyn Dunn
- ❖ Invested Funds – Marilyn Dunn
 - ❖ Stewardship – Betty and Terry Cairn, Co-Chairs
 - ❖ Finance Committee Member-at-Large: Marsha Stone
 - ❖ Planned Giving & Legacy: June Zellers, Chair
6. Global Hospitality Committee: Marty Thornton, Chair
 - ❖ Coffee Hospitality: DJ Guzofski
 - ❖ Fellowship Lunch: Marilyn Dunn
 - ❖ Greeter: Denis Thoet
 - ❖ Inquirers: Donna Dolham (for now)
 - ❖ Name Tags: Hannah Faulkner
 - ❖ Path to Membership: Rev. Donna Dolham (for now)
 - ❖ Usher Lead: Andy Birch
 7. History: Richard Bridges, Chair
 8. Leadership Development: Kathy Ann Shaw, Chair; Michaela Loisel
 9. Orchestra: Michael P. Atkinson, Director

10. Pastoral Ministry: Martha Pelletier, Chair
 - ❖ For Pastoral Emergencies, contact: Reverend Donna Dolham; 623-3663 (regular business hours), 701-1581 (for pastoral emergencies)
 - ❖ Caring Cooperative / Meal and ride support Coordinator: Helen Brown
11. Safety Committee: Jim Caldwell, Chair
12. Small Group Ministry Coordinators: Helen Zidowecki and Linda Findlay
13. Social Justice: Debbie Mattson and Mary Kane, current Co-Chairs
 - ❖ Collection Baskets: Susan Shaw and Janet Caldwell
 - ❖ MUUSAN Liaison: Michaela Loisel
 - ❖ Saturday Breakfasts: Debbie Mattson (coordinator)
 - ❖ Representatives of Capital Area Social Justice Coalition: David Gilbert, Mary Kane, Debbie Mattson
14. Website Team: Rev. Donna Dolham and Lynn Smith, Church Administrator
15. Worship Arts Team: Sara Hodgkins, Chair
 - ❖ Worship Tech Leaders: Angie Blevins and Nan Bell, Co-Chairs
 - ❖ Worship Associates: Sara Hodgkins, Coordinator

II. Annual Meeting Agenda and Other Information

A. Agenda for Annual Meeting

**Unitarian Universalist Community Church
Augusta, Maine
June 7, 2026
Annual Meeting**

1. Call to Order.....Karen Allen, President
2. Establish a QuorumHilary Neckles, Clerk
3. Elect a Moderator.....Karen Allen, President
4. Minutes from the 2025 Annual Meeting.....Moderator
5. Report of Committees.....Moderator
6. Report of the Treasurer.....Nancy Fritz, Treasurer
7. Vote on the Proposed Budget.....Harry Grimmnitz
8. Leadership Development Report.....Kathy Ann Shaw
9. Vote on Committee LeadershipModerator
10. Vote on Board of TrusteesModerator
11. Appreciation & RecognitionsKaren Allen & Becky Harvey
12. Adjournment of the Annual MeetingModerator

B. Clerk's Report from June 1, 2025 Annual Meeting

***Draft* Minutes of the
Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church
June 1, 2025***

[Note: this report is a "draft" until approved by the congregation at the 2026 Annual Meeting]*

- ❖ Call to Order.....Michaela Loisel, President - Called to Order at 10:09 am.
- ❖ Establish a Quorum Cheryl Ring
*UUCC has 145 Members and the bylaws require a quorum of 30%, or 44 members, necessary to conduct the business of the Annual Meeting.
Clerk Cheryl counted 67 members in-person and 12 members on zoom, for a total of 79 members attending, or 46% of UUCC's membership, confirming that we have well over the required quorum needed to conduct the business of the Annual Meeting.*
- ❖ Electing a Moderator Michaela Loisel
MOTION: Nominate Nancy Fritz to serve as Moderator. Hal Booth 1st David Rand. 2nd. Unanimous
Moderator Nancy reminded the assembled membership that the Moderator will call on people, asking each to announce his or her name and to wait to speak using the microphone.
- ❖ Minutes from the 2024 Annual Meeting Moderator
MOTION to approve the minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting. David Rand 1st; Don Naber 2nd Unanimous.
- ❖ Report of Committees Moderator

MOTION to accept the reports as printed: David Rand 1st. Cindy Hodgkins 2nd. Unanimous.

Played Video: A Year in Review – very well received

- ❖ Report of the Treasurer Nancy Fritz, Treasurer

Treasurer Nancy discussed the FY 24-25 budget update through May 31, 2025, noting that UUCC is "...in excellent shape" and noting that, as of May 31, UUCC has \$22,359 more in income than expenses.

Line items noted:

- *"Fundraising Total" is 137% of what had been budgeted for this line.*
- *"Offering (Sunday Services)" line is 118% of the amount budgeted*
- *"Rentals (Use of Space)" is 281% of the amount budgeted for use of our church spaces*
- *"Facilities / Occupancy Total" expense costs are at 102% due to sewer system repair and the costs of refurbishing the Drew house in preparation for incoming tenants.*
- *"Miscellaneous" expense line exceeds what was budgeted due to the \$5,000 gift approved by the Board to the United Community Living Center Housing Project which was charged to this account.*

In summary, even with a month remaining in the fiscal year, we project that we will finish the year in the black, by needing to use only a small portion of the \$22,000 in the "From Surplus" line to cover UUCC's operating expenses.

No motion needed for Treasurer's Report

- ❖ Vote on the Proposed Budget Harry Grimmnitz

Finance Chair Harry Grimmnitz discussed the Proposed Budget for FY 2025-26 (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026)

MOTION to adopt as printed. 1st Marty Thornton. 2nd David Rand. Unanimous to approve budget as presented.

Discussion:

On the income side, the budget projects:

- a slight increase in donation income, which is money given to church outside of pledges and rentals.
- steady income from investments
- an increase in income from pledges of \$12,500, totaling \$193,000.
- an increase in income from rentals of UUCC space of \$1,740
- a decreased reliance “From Surplus” to cover operating expenses. Finance Chair Harry explained that the “From Surplus” income line consists of funds that have not been expended in prior budgets, much of which accumulated during the pandemic when we received pandemic funds and also had low expenses because the church was not open.

On the expense side:

- the four categories constituting Technology are reported as one amount, to better track UUCC’s total expense for technology and enable better management
- There is a slight decrease to the UUA Annual Program Fund, which is due to a new formula used by the UUA to determine the amount due from each member church.
- The Rainy Day savings fund was created a year ago and is funded again this year, for the purpose of growing a reserve to cover large unforeseen expenses.
- The Buildings & Grounds Contingency Fund is funded to be able to cover unforeseen expenses to maintain our facilities
- Personnel Expenses:
 - Health insurance reserve is funded to enable UUCC to fund its obligation to pay for employees’ health insurance, should that be needed. Currently, the two employees who are contractually eligible for UUCC payment of health insurance are able to provide their own health insurance by other means, but maintaining the Health Insurance Reserve fund is prudent fiscal policy, given our obligation to pay for health insurance if needed
 - This budget funds a 3% salary increase for three employees
- The budget funds a slight increase expected for property insurance
- The Board approved a \$350 subsidy for up to 4 delegates to the General Assembly and the “UUA/GA support line” funds this action

Question: Why has the UUA Annual program fund decreased?

Answer: Because the UUA uses a more precise formula to calculate each church’s Fair Share than in years past, including size of budget, church’s net worth, number of members, and other factors and the UUCC’s Fair Share amount reflects the UUA’s adjustment

Question: Why have heating expenses gone down?

Answer: primarily due to the Heat Pump in FH and Sanctuary, so don’t need to rely exclusively on furnace. Electricity expenses have also gone down because of our share in a solar farm

Question: Why has the allocation for Sunday Morning Nursery Coordinator decreased?

Answer: this is a new position that has not yet been filled. The Board reallocated some of the funds from this position’s precursor to redress inequities with current staff. We anticipate that the new position of Sunday Morning Nursery Coordinator will be filled this year as an hourly position.

Comment: *pleased that we have increased the stipend for our orchestra director.*

Question: *Why is it important to have a surplus fund account?*

Answer: *had allocated \$22,000 to balance this year's budget to cover our expenses. Our income comes from pledges, fundraising, investments, and miscellaneous other income sources. Our surplus is different from cash reserves which constitute our savings, like CDs and cash in the bank. This budget had originally included \$22,000 from the surplus "savings" account, which would have consumed the entire amount. Maintaining a surplus account is important to enable UUCC to deal with unexpected expenses, so we are pleased to present this 25-26 budget relying only on \$15,000 of the surplus "savings" account, so that account will continue to have funds available in it.*

❖ Leadership Development Report

Hilary Neckles & Kathy Ann Shaw

This slate draws from new members to the UUCC. In addition, the Leadership Development team encouraged people to consider taking a leadership role in the future, even if they could not do so for this year. The Leadership development team discussed the nature of leadership at the UUCC with each candidate in order to ensure that all leaders are willing to conduct their work according to UUCC values and principles.

Leadership Development began this work early in the year to generate discussions about leadership throughout the church year.

In some cases, this slate includes co-chairs for committees in order to deepen connections of the committee to the work of our community, as well as at times helping Committee Chairs to find additional people to help the Chairs' accomplish the committee's objectives.

This year's slate of nominations are included on page 12 of the 24-25 Annual Report

MOTION *to adopt committee chairs just presented: 1st David Rand. Martha Naber 2nd. Unanimous.*

MOTION *to adopt Board of Trustees slate as presented . 1st David Rand. 2nd Clair Curole. Unanimous.*

❖ Vote of Committee Leadership Moderator

❖ Vote of Board of Trustees Moderator

❖ Wisdom Story.....Rev. Donna Dolham & Michaela Loisel

Paraphrased remarks from President Michaela: "Serving as President for the past three years has been a labor of love. We have something so very special here. Our values are centered in love, like those who make music, feed our unhoused neighbors, make or share meals, serve Saturday breakfast, participate on work crews to build community, care for B&G, welcome newcomers, and our minister. All has been a soul-filling experience which has made me a better person. To celebrate who we are, Nan Bell and I have made a gift for each family that remind us of love and that is infused with love from us".

Four 4 incoming Board members distributed stained glass hearts of different colors made by Michaela and Nan Bell amidst a quiet and contemplative atmosphere in the congregation.

Followed by a meditation led by Michaela about the love we each receive from this community and which fill our hearts.

Hymn # 131

Love Will Guide Us

❖ Commissioning of Church Leaders Rev. Donna Dolham

Minister: *These are the people we have called to serve us. Will the Congregation please rise in body or spirit and join in the ritual of Commissioning?*

Congregation: We, the members of this congregation, charge you to be guided in your work by the vision we express in our Congregational Mission, Covenant and by the Unitarian Universalist Principles and values we affirm in common.

Right Side: We charge you to affirm the dignity and worth of all persons and to champion the rights of children, youth, and adults; straight, gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, asexual, transgender and queer; old and young; all abilities, races and ethnicities that this might indeed be a "free church, open to all people."

Left Side: We charge you to cherish our spiritual diversity and to help us to live together so that we are strengthened rather than divided by our religious pluralism, so that we might truly "cherish the integrity of each individual and search for truth with reason as our guide."

Right Side: We charge you to honor our past without being bound by it, that we might be mindful of our past yet draw on modern knowledge as we respond to the spiritual needs of persons.

Left Side: We charge you to hold in your hearts the needs of the wider community in which we live, so that we live out our call to "the common good in community, nation, and world."

Minister (to the Board & Congregational Committee Leaders): Members of the Board, you are charged with keeping sight of "the Big Picture," holding our vision, honoring the Unitarian Universalist Community Church's past, and guiding this congregation toward the future. Are you ready and willing to accept this charge? [We are.]

Minister (to the Congregation): Do you, the members and friends of this congregation, affirm these leaders as volunteers who need your support, your participation, and your appreciation as well as your care and concern? [We do.]

Congregation: Grateful for your willingness to take on these responsibilities of leadership in our community, we affirm your calling and vow to support your ministries in every way we can. We encourage you to take care of yourselves as you do this important work and remember that you are part of this community even while you lead us. We commit to engaging in the opportunities and activities you invite us into. We commit to supporting and nurturing you and your families as you serve in your roles over the next year.

Board Members & Congregational Committee Leaders: We thank you for your faith in us, and vow to do our best to live up to the charge you have given us. We promise, also, to remember that the ultimate responsibility for our Church lies with all of us, for this is our community. May we all do what we can to make it a congregation of growth, health and radical welcome.

❖ Appreciation & Recognitions Karen Allen & Michaela Loisel

Recognized and thanked Hilary Neckles; Susan O'Keefe, Karen Foust; Nan Bell; Kathy Kellison; Helen Zidowecki, Lynn Smith, Eric Zidowecki, Cheryl Clukey,

Thanked those who are leaving the Board: Jim Caldwell; Hal Booth; Cheryl Ring; Michaela Loisel

MOTION: Adjournment of the Annual Meeting . 1st: Susan O'Keefe. 2nd: Marty Thornton. Unanimous.

Submitted by: Cheryl Ring, Clerk

C. Treasurer's Report

The FY 2026-27 proposed budget (and any notes) will be provided with the Call to Meeting email packet. The FY25-26 budget update through May 31, 2026 will be provided at or before the Annual Meeting on June 7, 2026.

D. Nominees for UUCB Board and Committees for Church Year July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027

BOARD MEMBERS

Terms are for the most part identified by the Bylaws.

KAREN ALLEN: Board President (term 2027)	KAREN FOUST: Board Vice President (term 2027)
HILARY NECKLES: Clerk (term 2027)	MARSHA STONE: Treasurer (term 2027)
MARCUS TREECE: Member at Large (term 2027)	BETTY CAIRN: Member at Large (term 2028)
FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR (<i>ad-hoc voting, term 2027</i>)	

COMMITTEE CHAIRS / CO-CHAIRS

These positions currently carry no identified term limits.

BILL ALLEN & MATT FOUST: Buildings and Grounds Co-chairs	HARRY GRIMMINTZ: Finance Committee Chair
RICHARD BRIDGES: History Committee	MICHAELA LOISEL: Leadership Development Committee Chair
BECKY HARVEY AND MARTY THORTON: Global Hospitality Co-Chairs	KATHY ANN SHAW: Pastoral Ministry Team Chair
HELEN ZIDOWEKI AND LINDA FINDLAY: Small Group Ministry Co-Coordinators	DEBBIE MATTSON: Social Justice Committee Chair
SARA HODGKINS: Worship Arts Team Chair	

FINANCE COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRS

These positions are outlined per UUCB Bylaws and currently carry no identified term limits.

LIZ NITZEL: Fundraising Subcommittee Chair	JOHN PELLETIER: Invested Funds Endowment Subcommittee Chair
TERRY CAIRN: Stewardship Subcommittee Chair	JUNE ZELLARS: Planned Giving and Legacy Subcommittee Chair
JIM CALDWELL Member at Large	

E. Proposed Budget for Next Year: July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027

approved by the Board May 2026, for consideration by the congregation at the Annual Meeting

	FY 25-26	FY 26-27	\$ Change	% Change
INCOME				
Annual Appeal	\$ 15,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 1,000	7%
Donations	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -	
Fundraising				
Auction/Work Crew	\$ 6,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 1,500	
CLYNK	\$ 850	\$ 850	\$ -	
Hannaford Cash Card	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ -	
Holiday Fair	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,700	\$ 1,200	
Misc. Fundraising	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ -	
Pie Sale	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ -	
Tomato/Plant Sale	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	
Yard Sale (online)	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,000	\$ 500	
Fundraising Total	\$ 18,150	\$ 21,350	\$ 3,200	18%
Investment Income				
Adams Trust	\$ 2,375	\$ 2,800	\$ 425	
Ballard Trust	\$ 9,300	\$ 9,300	\$ -	
Endowment (UUACEF)	\$ 16,500	\$ 10,000	\$ (6,500)	
Endowment (MCF)	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	
Rev. Carie Johnsen Social Justice Fund	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,500	\$ 150	
Investment Total	\$ 29,525	\$ 27,600	\$ (1,925)	-7%
Other				
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ -	
Offering (Sunday mornings)	\$ 6,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 2,000	
Pledges/UUA Member Contributions	\$ 193,000	\$ 212,000	\$ 19,000	10%
Rentals (use of space)	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ -	
Rental to MUUSAN	\$ 600	\$ -	\$ (600)	
Rental of Drew House	\$ 15,600	\$ 15,600	\$ -	
Share the Plate	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ -	
From Surplus*	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 5,000	
From Reserves**	\$ -	\$ 14,150	\$ 14,150	
Total Other	\$ 240,400	\$ 279,950	\$ 39,550	16%
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 308,075	\$ 349,900	\$ 41,825	14%

* Unexpended money (currently in our operating account) from the current budget year "carried over" into the next budget year.

** Money from our "savings", currently in a CD at Kennebec Savings Bank.

EXPENSES

Administrative

Bank Fees	\$ 120	\$ 120	\$ -	
Copier Lease	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,600	\$ -	
Copying/Printing	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ -	
Equipment Maintenance	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,600	\$ -	
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	
Office Supplies	\$ 750	\$ 750	\$ -	
Postage	\$ 700	\$ 700	\$ -	
Publicity	\$ 700	\$ 700	\$ -	
Rainy Day Savings	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400	\$ -	
Technology/Website/Database	\$ 1,700	\$ 1,700	\$ -	
Boxcast	\$ 2,388	\$ 2,650	\$ 262	
Telephone/Internet	\$ 2,700	\$ 2,700	\$ -	
UUA Annual Program Fund	\$ 13,010	\$ 14,311	\$ 1,301	
Administrative Total	\$ 28,868	\$ 30,431	\$ 1,563	5%

Facilities/Occupancy

Building Maintenance/Supplies	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 1,000	
B&G Contingency Fund	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -	
Electricity	\$ 2,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 1,000	
Heat	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,450	\$ 450	
Property Insurance	\$ 7,070	\$ 7,070	\$ -	
Snow Removal	\$ 2,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 1,000	
Solar Farm Self Loan	\$ 2,865	\$ 2,865	\$ -	
Water & Sewer	\$ 3,600	\$ 2,000	\$ (1,600)	
Facilities/Occupancy Total	\$ 32,535	\$ 34,385	\$ 1,850	6%

Personnel Expenses

Contractual

Payroll Service	\$ 2,100	\$ 1,560	\$ (540)	
Bookkeeping/Accounting	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ (5,000)	
Cleaning	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ -	
Health Insurance Reserve	\$ 8,000	\$ -	\$ (8,000)	
Pianists	\$ 9,200	\$ 9,200	\$ -	
Pulpit Supply (Worship Leaders)	\$ 2,730	\$ 3,200	\$ 470	
Sabbatical Fund	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	
UUCCO Director	\$ 2,400	\$ 3,000	\$ 600	
Visioning Consultant	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	
Contractual Total	\$ 46,430	\$ 35,960	\$ (10,470)	-23%

Minister: 12 months

Health Insurance	\$ -	\$ 17,600	\$ 17,600	
In lieu of FICA	\$ 6,304	\$ 6,395	\$ 92	
Insurances	\$ 1,620	\$ 1,620	\$ -	
Professional Expenses	\$ 8,240	\$ 8,360	\$ 120	
Retirement	\$ 8,240	\$ 8,360	\$ 120	
Salary & Housing	\$ 82,400	\$ 83,600	\$ 1,200	
Ministerial Total	\$ 106,804	\$ 125,935	\$ 19,132	18%

Music Director

Professional Expenses	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ -	
Salary	\$ 14,879	\$ 15,325	\$ 446	
Music Director Total	\$ 14,979	\$ 15,425	\$ 446	3%

Church Administrator

Health Insurance	\$ -	\$ 17,600	\$ 17,600	
Insurances	\$ 1,170	\$ 1,640	\$ 470	
Professional Expenses	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ -	
Retirement	\$ 4,017	\$ 4,413	\$ 396	
Salary	\$ 40,170	\$ 44,133	\$ 3,963	
Church Administrator Total	\$ 45,657	\$ 68,086	\$ 22,429	49%

Sunday Morning Nursery Coordinator

Professional Expenses	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ -	
Salary	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ -	
Coordinator Total	\$ 6,800	\$ 6,800	\$ -	

Other Personnel Expenses

Family Medical Leave	\$ 720	\$ 748	\$ 28	
FICA	\$ 4,708	\$ 5,046	\$ 337	
Workers' Comp	\$ 1,300	\$ 1,300	\$ -	
Other Personnel Total	\$ 6,728	\$ 7,094	\$ 365	
Personnel Total	\$ 227,398	\$ 259,301	\$ 31,903	14%

Program Expenses

Coffee	\$ 600	\$ 720	\$ 120	
Community Breakfasts	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	
Congregational Engagement	\$ 250	\$ -	\$ (250)	
8th Principle Task Force	\$ -	\$ 400	\$ 400	
Finance & Stewardship	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	
Flowers/Worship Items	\$ 500	\$ 800	\$ 300	
Fundraising	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ -	
Global Hospitality	\$ 1,300	\$ 930	\$ (370)	
History	\$ 100	\$ 200	\$ 100	
Leadership	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,200	\$ 200	
Lifespan Faith Formation				
Adult RE	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ (100)	
Children/youth	\$ 300	\$ -	\$ (300)	
Soul Matters (1/3 curriculum)	\$ -	\$ 174	\$ 174	
Our Whole Lives	\$ -	\$ 1,300	\$ 1,300	
Classroom/Supplies	\$ 600	\$ 1,100	\$ 500	
Background checks	\$ -	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,250	
Minister's Discretionary	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ -	
Music(choir,orchestra,piano tuning)	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,600	\$ 350	
Copyright services	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,550	\$ 300	
Piano Regulation		\$ 250	\$ 250	
Pastoral Care Associates	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ -	
Rev. Carie Johnsen Social Justice Fund	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,500	\$ 150	
Small Group Ministry	\$ 150	\$ 400	\$ 250	
Social Justice	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	
Greening/Habitat Project	\$ -	\$ 600	\$ 600	
Share the Plate	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ -	
UUA GA Support	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400	\$ -	
Worship	\$ 500	\$ 1,380	\$ 880	
Program Total	\$ 19,600	\$ 25,704	\$ 6,104	31%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 308,401	\$ 349,821	\$ 41,420	13%
INCOME MINUS EXPENSES	\$ (326)	\$ 79	\$ 405	

III. Reports of Officers, Staff, and Affiliates

A. Minister's Report

Life at UUCC is vibrant, creative and reflective of [Unitarian Universalist values](#). Our growth is evidenced by beautiful traditions and innovations. Long-loved programming continues while new programming and events unfold.

In adrienne maree brown's book, [Emergent Strategy](#), emergent is described this way: "*In the framework of emergence, the whole is a mirror of the parts.*"

UUCC is an exciting community to be a part of and to minister with.

Our year together has been full. We are living in a time where it is vital to be in community while we face demoralizing and dangerous government sanctioned laws, wars and policies that are directly opposed to the values of our Unitarian Universalist faith. We create islands of support, advocate for change and nourish a community so in need of tender care. We do this through small group participation, the mystical and magical moments encountered through music, expressions of self through art, relationship building and acts of resistance!

Our year celebrated new members, while deeply grieving both congregational and personal losses. It is an honor to minister with you through these times and many more. Ministry in a program size congregation includes direct pastoral ministry, teaching, preaching, coaching, supervising and administration.

This year, my administrative role has encompassed supporting, creating and strategizing around congregational growth, transparency and access. UUCC is growing and our practices, policies, and platforms continue to evolve to support growth. Many hours have been spent integrating breeze into the functioning of the various aspects of church life. We have welcome forms that connect to our database which include our eblast lists, individual profiles/directory information with a view to future integration which will include member capacity to access the online directory as well as their own (not others) giving and pledge information.

Our graphic arts program and team at UUCC utilizes CANVA to create our online advertising, video reminders, FB posts and worship slide decks. Systems are increasingly interdependent and we can cross share graphics decreasing duplication as well as volunteer time and energy. If you are someone who wonders why there is a program form (for instance) when you are offering a class or event, here are some of the answers:

- The program form prompts scheduling and coordination with the UUCC calendar which our Church Administrator manages.
- Once the date/s are set, the form prompts advertising. The church calendar guides the reminders videos which are playing every week before and after services. These are created by Nan Bell & Angie Blevins.
- Facebook/Instagram posting which are now supported by Liz Nitzel, is also guided by the calendar and descriptions which the program form has collected.
- The program form is accessible to long term members and new friends of the congregation alike increasing the diversity of programming we offer.
- Each person connected to graphics and advertising has access to the program forms you have filled out.

UUCC's outreach includes weekly updates on our website, a once-a-month newsletter, as well as our new weekly eblasts. As mentioned in the tech team report, reminders slides are created and shown weekly before and after Sunday services. We have started a trial of creating reels of these to be posted on FB and Instagram weekly in addition to regular FB/Instagram posts and event creations.

There is always room for improvement, and I encourage the spirit of support as we continue to move through some of these structural, governance and procedural changes. UUCC has a saving message to share with the world, you are part of this vital ministry in the history that unfolds all around us. I wonder in the new year, how will the many parts reflect the whole of our faith and community?

Love and Light, Rev. Donna Dolham, she, her

B. Church Administrator's Report

Admin – Annual Report FY25-26

Another year has flown by!! I keep thinking that the church cannot possibly continue its pace / path of increased programming and growth and evolve into something new and more each year. Once again, I was wrong.

Rev. Donna continues to move us toward new ways to connect and grow. Michael continues to provide more impressive programming for the joy and enrichment of our souls and the lightening of our burdens. Bridget continues to lead our choir expertly and with grace and charm to present us more and more wonderful choral music.

Changes are happening to allow for the many new programs happening at the church, new committees have developed, we are working feverishly to get safety changes made (handicap access and keypad entry systems) to allow us to get reimbursement from our safety grant in a timely manner. We are also sprinting to finish our fundraising activities for the year. **BOTTOM LINE:** We are super busy!!

I am of course, connected to and supporting all of this in some way or another but the majority of my time is put to the following larger tasks.

Calendar and Rental/Meeting management

There are many happenings at the church (especially this time of year.) There are regular meetings and normal activities, but at this time of year, everything kicks up a notch. There are concerts, special rehearsals, special and new activities and events, end of year fundraising events and other rentals and uses of our space by people and organizations outside our church. These outside events give us good creds in the community and may bring in more visitors, rentals, or just offer more outreach in the wider community.

Each of these require updating the calendar (sometimes many times to hold/release dates until we find the right date), emails back and forth for planning, a walk-thru, paperwork, key issuance, possibly background checks, collecting and returning refundable rental deposits and more....

Accounting tasks

After our bookkeeper left our employ in Jan 2026, I took up a number of her tasks. I have also taken more accounting responsibility as our long-term volunteer Treasurer is finally getting a reprieve as a new volunteer has agreed to accept this very important volunteer position (pending approval by the congregation at the Annual meeting, of course).

This time of year – moving toward year end- we are busier than ever in accounting as we prepare additional reports for the annual meeting and prepare to close our books for this fiscal year – and, of course, be ready to start a new year.

I don't want to minimize the work involved here: there is paying bills, managing requests for reimbursement, requesting W-9 forms for our vendors, visiting ministers, etc. We have to manage and account for our pass thru funds for Share the Plate collections, Saturday breakfast funds, concert fund donations, piano restoration funds, and more. We generate monthly reports to update the fundraising committee (and then the Board of Trustees) on our financial position. The tasks go on

and on.

BREEZE ChMs (Breeze Church Management Tasks.

IMPORT / CLEANUP DATA

The next step in Breeze implementation (reported last year) was to import people/family data to the new database. The initial import has been done for people/family data and is being cleaned up to archive records for inactive people and people/families no longer connected to our community. I am also removing redundant or unnecessary info from the old system.

We have also made several attempts to import financial data and each time have gotten closer to what we need. At this time pledge data is nearly complete while other giving information is still being cleaned up. My task has also been to connect the pledge and online giving data to our accounting system so we all keep in sync. These tasks are ongoing and are being handled one at a time, as needed.

FORMS:

Last year we were using many forms to start connecting us together and keep data in an accessible format that can be shared with committees, the minister and myself. As you may recall, the “Contact Forms” were integrated into publications, inquiries for information and many more places. This allowed us to eliminate the use of personal contact information in our forms. You may not realize but the number of *scam/phishing attempts* **have almost completely disappeared**.

This year “contact forms” have been added as new groups / committees / teams were formed and we have expanded on our forms by using them to:

- collect pledge data
- sign up for events and reserve limited equipment supplies
- submit donations for the annual auction
- and many more...

INTEGRATION

I am currently working to integrate the Contact forms into our Google calendar to allow for direct connection from there (while still protecting private info). I am also working on setting up the automated tasks that could happen when a form is completed – i.e. connect the forms to our people data and allow us to connect better and faster to our ever-growing community.

Network / Computer System Development and maintenance

Systems development and maintenance of network/wiring/computers have become bigger tasks as our systems age.

The admin desktop computer is over 12 years old and cannot be updated to Windows 11, drivers aren't being updated which leaves us with a system that doesn't work at its best and is vulnerable to security concerns. A new computer has been ordered and should arrive by the end of May. This is an expense already included in this year's budget.

- Our network Wi-Fi system is in a similar state. It is also no longer being updated and is vulnerable. I am presently taking a couple of actions to hopefully improve our speeds a bit while we continue to seek out a new network technology company to update our router / switch and access points.

Updating our systems involves developing specifications as to what is available, what is best for us and how can we utilize this technology to our best advantage. I had received a quote and reviewed it in detail and prepared questions when our network company was no longer reachable. So... we start again.

Going through the process was not a wasted effort. This legwork will allow us to get the best update

we can for our needs. Updating our new network also includes reviewing our existing components to make sure components that make up our whole system (laptops, TVs, Cameras, etc. will be able to utilize the new network technologies and make the most use of new speeds. All of this work will help to insure that we will get the best improvement to our network speed and reliability.

In the meantime, I am working on installing an access point in the church committee room which presently has deplorable network speed and reliability for hybrid meetings. I may also be able to set up an access point in Rev. Donna's office as she also has some network speed and connectivity issues. Both actions will help while we continue to move forward with a completely new network.

C. Music Director

As Music Director, I feel so fortunate to have support from our minister, church, community and within the music program. I am inspired by the commitment from our choir and orchestra members. Through their commitment, our music program flourishes. We experience joy, laughter, pride and unity as we create music together in rehearsals, Sunday services, and out in the community.

Music is an intimate form of art that requires that we be present. Music is also an active meditation that can help center ourselves and focus on an attainable goal. A goal that will ultimately be shared with others. I am fortunate to share this experience with all of you.

I am inspired at our weekly choir rehearsals when, as a group, we get closer to achieving our musical goals and enjoy our journey together.

As my eleventh season as Music Director at the UUCC is coming to a close, I reflect on another exciting year of growth within our music community. The choir has gained new members and our numbers remain consistent. With the support of Morgan Lee, our choir pianist, the choir will continue to flourish. Michael P. Atkinson, our UUCC Orchestra Director, continues to bring our orchestra to a distinguished level and I know they will only continue to rise under his leadership.

Our season began with the In-gathering service/Water Communion on September 7, 2025 and will end with Flower Communion on June 14, 2026. We welcomed cellist, Eliza Meyer, to our Water Communion service. She joined the choir on their piece "Silver Rain" by B. E. Boykin, and offered a beautiful rendition of "Shenandoah" arranged by Caroline Shaw. Our choir and orchestra members' commitment to our music program is exemplary. The choir and orchestra rehearse many hours during their ten month season, choir rehearsals are Wednesdays from 5:00pm to 6:30pm and orchestra rehearsals are Saturdays from 9:30am to 11:00am. We are so fortunate to have so many dedicated musicians serving our music ministry that bring so much joy to our worship and community.

On May 9, 2026, we held our UUCC Annual Benefit Concert, which is a high point to our season. The choir and orchestra prepared a fabulous program of music and raised money to support continued maintenance and restoration to our beloved 1912 Steinway grand piano.

The UUCC Music Program is a resilient and positive force within our church and community. We serve our community with grace and our volunteer musicians are truly amazing! We continue to try to be mindful and model our covenant.

D. Orchestra Director and Community Concert Curator

1. UUCC Occasional Orchestra (UCCOO)

This has been another musically fulfilling season for our little orchestra of volunteers - we have played music spanning the great European composers from the Baroque to the 21st Century, along with a focus on women and women of color composers. The variety of repertoire adds a rich dimension to services, and, philosophically, aligns well with the Unitarian values of Pluralism, Justice, and Equity.

This season, I have written at least 15 arrangements for our musicians that account for the difference in skills so that everyone can have an enjoyable and attainable experience of participation. Our

weekly rehearsals have been well-attended, and we have had two new musicians join the group! I firmly believe everyone can improve and grow musically, and the rigor of our rehearsal process reflects this, but it is met with enthusiasm and appreciation by the musicians. I have been gratified to hear compliments from long time UUCC members who have gone out of their way to praise the improvement in the sound of the orchestra.

More than anything, I feel a great responsibility to present performances that are thoughtful, well-prepared, and polished. When we enter the Sanctuary together, we are sharing a space of open hearts and minds, and it is incumbent upon us to honor that space. I have no doubt that our UUCCOO musicians feel similarly, and prove their commitment week after week.

2. Community Concert Series

This has been a season of expansion for the Series - we went from one concert last season to two! In November, we celebrated Maine composers and culture by featuring Songs From Here, the collective spearheaded by our own Bridget Convey, soprano Sarah Tuttle, and composer Erica Ball. In April, I curated and performed on a program of rarely heard chamber music treasures under the theme "Winds of Change" which drew nearly a capacity crowd. However, this season's fundraising has not expanded compared to last season, despite the generosity of audience member donations at the door. This is a challenge I will continue to address.

I am optimistic for the future because it is clear to our community that these concerts add another valuable layer to the robust social infrastructure of UUCC Augusta. The policy of free admission has expanded awareness of the church and the mission beyond our community, and we regularly see new faces in the audience, which carries with it great potential for connection and discovery. Stay tuned for some exciting news about next season...*Michael P. Atkinson*

E. Affiliated Community Minister

This serves as an update on my ministry in the community since my last annual report (submitted two years ago, in 2024.) I continue to serve as a board certified health care chaplain, providing pastoral ministry to patients, families and hospital staff. As many of you know, last summer (2025) my position with CMMC in Lewiston was terminated, and I subsequently accepted a position with MaineGeneral Healthcare at our local hospital here in Augusta where I currently serve 30 hours a week.

Per my agreement of affiliation with the congregation's board, I remain in covenanted relationship with our settled minister, Rev. Donna Dolham, and have had the privilege of sharing our pulpit once a year. I led worship last summer (July 2025) using the tools in a toolbox to demonstrate diversity and interdependence, and more recently on creatively exploring puzzles that have multiple solutions, titled "Putting the Pieces Together" (April 2026.)

* * *

Covenant is that which holds us accountable and calls us home; as a minister (still) in preliminary fellowship with our UUA I have an obligation to participate in the fellowship renewal process. Having deferred that obligation for a variety of personal and professional reasons, I intend to begin again - with love - that process in the upcoming year. I will be seeking thought partners to participate in a Ministerial Fellowship Team for that purpose, with the intention of completing my third and hopefully last preliminary fellowship renewal.

I have been working at or near full time in health care chaplaincy for eight years, a point at which most congregation-based ministers would be planning to take sabbatical leave, if they hadn't already done so. While sabbatical leave is not the norm in chaplaincy, I am clear that it's time to pause and reflect on the direction of my ministry in the years to come. My hope is that this fellowship renewal process will also support my professional discernment. So much has changed since I graduated from seminary back in 2018!

At the time I write this, I am in the current online cohort of the Moral Injury Certificate Program, a ten-week continuing education course now housed at Brite Divinity School. We are exploring the emerging interdisciplinary field of moral injury and moral distress, related to (but not the same as) PTSD and similar issues. I hope to integrate this with my practice of pastoral ministry, but I am already seeing possibilities for other applications. I am immensely excited about this academic work even if I am very much out of practice.

Rev. Claire L. Curole, BCC, Chaplain, MaineGeneral Health, Augusta

IV. Reports of Board of Trustees

A. President's Report

This year the Board welcomed four new members: Becky Harvey, Vice-President; Hilary Neckles, Clerk; and Liz Nitzel and Marcus Treece, Members-at-Large. I moved from the office of Vice-President to President. Nancy Fritz, Treasurer, and Harry Grimmnitz, Finance Chair, provided continuity, as did Rev. Donna Dolham, who as minister is a non-voting member. I enjoyed working with this wonderful group and discovering what gifts each person brought to the Board.

Our Board retreat in August gave us an opportunity to get to know each other in our new roles. We enjoyed an introduction to church administration from our fabulous administrator, Lynn Smith, who accomplishes a truly astonishing variety of work. We also talked about the coming year and set the following goal: "Encourage and support a variety of vibrant, inclusive community activities, ensuring that they are supported with policies and infrastructure."

One of the ways we pursued this goal was by strengthening Board connections within the church community and beyond. Board guests from the wider community included Betsy Williams of MUUSAN (Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network), who thanked UUCC for being MUUSAN's fiscal sponsor for 12 years; our sponsorship concluded in June. At-Large Augusta City Councilor Stephanie Sienkiewicz spoke about the Augusta community's response to ICE. Rabbi Erica Asch of Temple Beth El shared information about a local broad-based organizing initiative, which Rev. Donna has also been involved with. We continued our partnership with CANMP (Capital Area New Mainers Project). CANMP rents Drew House, subletting to an immigrant family. Many thanks to Hilary Neckles for serving as Board liaison to CANMP, and to the Finance Committee for assistance updating the Drew House lease.

Other Board guests included representatives from the Safety, Personnel, and Social Justice Committees. The Board authorized the establishment of a Community Garden and Habitat Team, a.k.a. "Green Team," as a project of the Social Justice Committee, and we reviewed new or updated policies and procedures from the Personnel and Safety Committees. We had a productive joint meeting with the Finance Committee to consider the stewardship goal and draft budget. Board representatives attended Appreciative Inquiry sessions held by the Committee on Shared Ministry with various church groups. The Board also named liaisons to church committees to encourage increased communication. We are still finding our way toward support of programming for children, although we have made progress. Rev. Donna asked for Board assistance in recruiting a committee.

We spent considerable time early in the church year on overall church safety and specifically on our response should ICE come to our doors. We designated private spaces within the church, which are marked with appropriate signs. We continued the practice of locking our doors ten minutes after the beginning of services, with a greeter remaining available to admit latecomers. The greeter role expanded to include other lay leaders in addition to Board members. The greeter welcome table was moved into the Fellowship Hall during coffee hour for improved accessibility for newcomers.

The Board's support for "inclusive community activities" included some basic physical improvements to infrastructure, such as:

- new chairs for the Fellowship Hall (much more welcoming!)

- accessible doors at the Summer Street entrance (with thanks to Jim Caldwell and the Safety Committee), paid for in part by a generous anonymous gift
- acceptance of the donation of a larger refrigerator for Saturday breakfast (yet to be installed)
- a new outside door in the Fellowship Hall
- new locks on the Winthrop and Summer Street doors (in progress as of this writing)

The Fellowship Hall door and new locks are among the projects covered by a grant for safety improvements that UUCC received two years ago. Work was suspended for a time when the availability of grant money became uncertain, but we were able to proceed this year after receiving assurance of reimbursement. Becky Harvey as Vice-President took on the task of overseeing completion of the grant security work.

Finally, the budget is a major responsibility of the Board. While the Finance Committee does much of the basic work of drafting the budget, the Board is ultimately responsible for presenting the budget to the congregation. We have had a number of discussions about the most responsible way to balance our hopes and commitments with our financial capacity. As noted in the Finance Committee report, we are making it a priority in 2026-27 to fully fund health insurance for eligible employees, and to add dependent coverage the following year. Sustaining this may be a challenge – the costs of health insurance are a concern everywhere – but we are committed to being just employers.

At Annual Meeting the Board will say good-bye to our stellar treasurer of many years, Nancy Fritz, and to Becky Harvey and Liz Nitzel, who each embraced their year on the Board with energy and enthusiasm, and are moving on to other roles. I am so grateful they chose to spend time on the Board in support of our church.

What most inspires me? This amazing church year! Eighteen new members welcomed on New Member Sunday. An ambitious stewardship goal not just met but surpassed. Thoughtful conversations at the Committee of Committees. Great turnouts from UUCC at events in support of democracy and justice. The continuing Saturday breakfast ministry. A full calendar of "inclusive church activities." An incredible slate of leaders for the coming year. So much glorious music! And new people to meet virtually every Sunday. We will surely have challenges ahead. However, our community is committed, generous, and compassionate. The ministries and community UUCC offers are valued and needed. The Board is committed to ensuring that UUCC remains healthy and vibrant well into the future.

Karen Allen, UUCC Board President

B. Vice President: Committee of Committees

One of the responsibilities of the Board VP is planning and leading three annual Committee of Committees meetings designed to orient, develop, and connect church leaders. These meetings bring together committee chairs, lay leaders, the Board of Trustees, and any congregants interested in deepening their engagement. Each meeting offers space to share insights, build relationships, and explore topics relevant to church life, time of year, and the broader world. I have been so moved by the attendance at these gatherings, and the warmth and richness of the sharing.

- October 19, 2025, 'Leadership in Time of Transition. We celebrated the growth and vibrancy of our church, demonstrated by seven-days-a-week activities, a full sanctuary for worship services, an increasing number of visitors, and UUCC's presence in the larger community. Rev. Donna shared highlights of research "Size Transitions in Unitarian Universalist Congregations," which explored the changes in governance styles as church membership grows. Smaller churches usually rely on informal decision-making, with leadership shared among a few trusted individuals. As a church becomes larger, governance tends to become more structured, with clearer roles, formal policies, and committees or boards to support accountability and effective oversight. We named certain changes, including new roles like

Ushers and Leader Greeters, and increased use of digital tools, such as Boxcast streaming, online pledging, QR codes, and Breeze forms. Successful transition requires considerable congregational learning. This involves embracing new ideas aligned with UU values and maintaining a calm, grounded presence. As structures evolve, patience and a focus on relationships are essential. While communication is never perfect, the Board's steady leadership and UUCC's commitment to the covenant can help navigate frustration with curiosity and compassion. Our covenant is a reliable guide and continues to unify and support the congregation.

- March 19, 2026, "Committees in Community." In our brief time together, we shared about how we saw service and shared ministry, and how meaningful relationships developed and grew through committee work and group activities. Small groups met to share more deeply about 'the work' that calls us (what gives meaning and vibrancy to our lives), and together, we connected stories of the ministries represented in the group. Finally, imagination sparked about what could be possible when one's ministry engages with other ministries or groups in the church community.
- May 3, 2026, "Navigation through Opportunities and Challenges: A UU Theology of Adaptive Leadership." Unlike traditional leadership, which often relies on fixed structures and clear hierarchies, the adaptive leadership approach thrives on flexibility, creativity, and collaboration. It fosters environments where we value diverse viewpoints and co-create solutions. According to Heifetz and Linsky, who developed adaptive leadership, it is important for leaders to spend time both **on the balcony** — the big picture of an organization and its goals — **and on the dance floor** — the daily operations and everyday activities— to be an adaptive leader. Spending time on the balcony allows leaders to identify patterns and reevaluate assumptions. Being on the dance floor allows leaders to build relationships with staff, practice emotional intelligence, and gain credibility. Small groups worked together to guide a fictional congregation through a series of scenarios — challenges and opportunities — and to decide upon a response. Groups reported back ways that as leaders, they leaned into UU theology such as interdependence, pluralism, transformation, shared ministry, covenant, and hope. Leadership isn't about having the right answer — it's about staying grounded in values, relationships and shared responsibility, especially when things get complicated.

Leader Greeters

When our Board President, Karen Allen, was Vice President, she created the framework for the Leader Greeter role. Since then, a "checklist" of greeter tasks and a longer document with backstory and more detail, is available. These "working drafts" are subject to clarifications and refinements over time.

A valuable suggestion was raised during the October 2025 Committee of Committees meeting: **expand the greeter role beyond the Board of Trustees so more church leaders can take part.** This suggestion beautifully reflects our commitment to shared-ministry and our desire to create a warm, welcoming experience for everyone who walks through our doors. Even in a community as warm as ours, greeters have a specific responsibility to see that no one is overlooked.

Leader Greeters are 'on duty' from about 9:30-11:30am. There are some 'administrative' tasks to carry out (such as locking/unlocking doors, watching for latecomers, counting the number of people in the church building, and adding some data to the Log Book). However, **the most important work** of the Leader Greeter is **holding space at Welcome Table for greeting and connecting during Coffee Fellowship.** "How did you hear about us - what inspired your visit today?" "Have you attended any events or programs at UUCC, or been to a UU church before?" "Would you like to connect with our minister, or hear about the activities and programs in our church and the larger community?" Guide them to the church website, encourage them to complete a Welcome Form, promote the Inquirer's Series — share your experience being part of this UU community. Introduce them to others during Coffee Fellowship, and ask the others to introduce them to still others.

I am a perfectly imperfect, joyful volunteer Leader Greeter, and you can be, too! Contact any Board member if you have questions, concerns or suggestions, and if you can take on this important role on an upcoming Sunday. I will gladly offer orientation and support.

C. Clerk's Report

As defined by the UUCC Bylaws, the responsibilities of the Board Clerk focus on maintaining records for Board and church meetings and determining the quorum requirement for meetings of the membership. In practice, serving as Board Clerk affords the opportunity to collaborate with other Board members on building beloved community at UUCC. It has been an honor to serve UUCC in this capacity and an absolute delight working with my fellow Board members. As our Board Covenant states, we strive to "have fun, for we are not a glum lot!"

The full Board Meeting minutes are posted each month to the UUCC Governance and Church Life web page. In addition, highlights of the minutes are summarized each month by Kathy Kellison for distribution in the church e-news. Thank you Kathy for distilling church business into salient bullets!

The Board voted to approve the following policy changes during the 2025-2026 church year:

- All cash and checks in the offering plate on Sundays will be opened and counted by two unrelated people, and the total of both cash and checks will be recorded and signed by both counters. (Aug. 14, 2025)
- Update the *UUCC Rental Rate Policy* to increase the Sanctuary rental rate to \$100/hour with a 2-hour minimum; increase the Fellowship Hall + kitchen rental rate to \$50 per hour; remove the Robbins Room from the list of available rentals; and handle the rate for piano rental on a case-by-case basis. (Sept. 11, 2025)
- Update the *Financial Policies & Procedures* as revised and recommended by the Finance Committee. (Sept. 11, 2025)
- As included in the ICE Response Policy of partner organizations, designate "private spaces" in our church: the Committee Room, the nursery, and the Meeting Room next to the nursery. (Oct. 9, 2025)
- Update the *Personnel Policy Manual* as revised and recommended by the Personnel Committee (Nov. 13, 2025), with the clarification that for the purposes of health and group insurance, 35 hours per week be considered full-time (December 11, 2025).

Respectfully submitted by Hilary Neckles, Board Clerk

D. Treasurer's Report

The FY 2026-27 proposed budget (and any notes) will be provided with the Call to Meeting email packet. The FY25-26 budget update through May 31, 2026 will be provided at or before the Annual Meeting on June 7, 2026.

V. Reports of Standing Committees and Work Groups

A. Buildings and Grounds

Work done this year:

1. UUCC Church Building
 - We moved internet cable from the basement to the meeting room for Wi-Fi availability.
 - Harry Grimnitz added wiring in the storage room, to add a plug for the refrigerator.
 - We installed new vertical blinds in the sanctuary.
 - With help from Augusta Fuel, we thawed out frozen pipes in the sanctuary.

- A volunteer crew replaced the fluorescent tubes in the church with LED tube lights. Thanks to Hal Booth for ordering the lights. Matt, Lou Faust, Bill, Jim Caldwell, Angie, and Dennis Maddi helped Hal install the lights.
 - We ordered a new fire door for the fellowship hall, and hired a contractor to install it. We will get reimbursement funds from a grant.
 - The carpet in the corridor got wet because of water coming from a hose in the utility closet. Hal fixed the dripping faucet, and Matt and Angie dried out the carpet.
2. Drew House
- In July, the sewer line going from the Drew House got plugged. Bill talked to the people at the Greater Augusta Utility District, and they checked the line with a pipe inspection camera. Since the fault was 'catastrophic', they put in a new pipe, to connect the Drew House line to the municipal sewer line.
 - Water was coming into the cellar from the basement window. Matt sealed in the basement window, and installed a drainage pipe to fix the problem.
 - Matt did prep work for installing a vent in the upstairs bathroom.
 - Matt and Bill replaced some ceiling tiles, which had water damage from a leak in the upstairs bathroom.
3. Judd House
- We scraped, primed and painted the Portico, the bump-out walls, and the railings.
 - Matt scraped, repaired, rust primed and coated the Portico and bump-out metal roofs.
4. Garage
- We repaired the entry door to deter rodent entry, and repaired a rotten sill. Marilyn and Andy Birch cleaned and organized the garage.
5. Outside
- Next to the Summer Street entrance, we installed the rehabbed Unitarian Universalist Community Church sign.
 - Bill replaced rotting boards on the picnic table.
 - Thanks to all who helped with the yard cleanup days.
 - Thanks to our lawn mowing crew.
 - Thanks to Marilyn, Becky, and Carolyn Ladd for their work on the garden, and the bushes around the church.
6. Work we want to do and/or plan to continue into the new church year:
- Apply second coat of silicone roofing on Judd House metal roofs.
 - Finish installing Drew House bathroom vent. Get an electrician to do the wiring for the vent.
 - Spray north side of Drew House roof to kill moss on the shingles.
 - Fix or replace floor tiles in fellowship hall.
 - Angie is planning to build a new card rack for our name tags.
 - Fix the drainage on the Summer Street side of the church, to prevent water from entering the cellar.
 - Repair the fence behind the garage.
 - Add new external lighting.
 - Respond in a timely way to special requests or emergencies.

Bill Allen and Matt Foust, Co-Chairs

Committee members: Bill Allen, Marilyn Dunn, Matt Foust, Angie Blevins, Becky Harvey, Caroline Ladd

B. Committee on Shared Ministry

The Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM) members are Rev. Donna Dolham, Annie Blanchard and Susan Caldwell. We are excited to welcome Don Naber in June and are very grateful to Kathy Kellison and Eowyn Levene for their past service. Our mission is to foster alignment and partnership between the various ministries of the church and our shared purpose. We aim to support and strengthen each other by listening, learning, and nurturing relationships throughout our community. The Appreciative Inquiry questions were designed to be used consistently with the aim of creating a space for intentional dialogue and reflection. They focus on exploring what is going well and how to best align with other ministries and our shared UUCC values.

Between May 2025 and April 2026, the CoSM conducted appreciative inquiry conversations with nine ministries at UUCC. These included Worship Arts, Small Group, Finance, Global Hospitality, Buildings & Grounds, Leadership Development, Social Justice, Pastoral Care, and Sewing ministries. Appreciative inquiry conversations for the Music Ministry and the UUCC Board are coming up in May and June 2026. Summary reports from each of the completed conversations are available [by linking to this folder](#). Several interconnected themes emerged.

The Congregation in Transition: A foundational theme is the church's deliberate transition from a pastoral-sized, and in some instances family size church dynamics to a program-sized church with more structured governance. Rev. Donna Dolham is explicitly named as supporting this shift across multiple reports. This transition creates both excitement and tension. Ministries celebrate their growing capacity while naming concerns about sustainability, burnout, and the need for clear systems.

Volunteers and Sustainability: Every ministry expressed concern about volunteer capacity. Worship Arts needs more service leaders and tech volunteers. Buildings & Grounds relies on an aging core group. Hospitality worries about small teams shouldering disproportionate loads. Pastoral Care wants to grow carefully. The Sewing & Craft ministry named leadership succession as an emerging concern. What makes this striking is the consistency: ministries are not asking for more volunteers because they are failing but rather because what they have created is meaningful and beloved, and they want it to last.

Technology as Both Tool and Barrier: Technology appears repeatedly as both aspiration and frustration. Worship Arts wants a second camera for online viewers. Hospitality requests help with group texting and microphones. Pastoral Care needs both digital and analog pathways to avoid isolating those without technology. Small Group Ministry needs help transferring resources to church platforms. The online congregation (30-70 each Sunday) is described as a "second congregation" that is not well integrated. The desire for a hosted online coffee hour emerges as a concrete wish.

Children, Families, and the Future: The absence of children and young families is noted as a concern, particularly in the Hospitality report, which states that families come but do not stay due to lack of programming. A Religious Education committee is named as a needed development. This theme connects directly to sustainability. Without younger members joining and eventually leading, every ministry's volunteer concerns will deepen.

Cross-Ministry Collaboration as a Strength: Despite challenges, ministries consistently report strong informal collaboration. Hospitality works with Worship Arts, Buildings & Grounds and Finance. Social Justice collaborates with music, sewing, and book groups. Pastoral Care partners with small groups and the craft circle. The Worship Arts committee has developed a collaborative process for other ministries to lead services. This is a genuine congregational asset - people know how to work together!

Requests from the Settled Minister: Across all reports, Rev. Donna is valued for guiding without taking over, listening, and supporting lay leadership. Requests are specific and actionable: help with communication strategies, presence at retreats and events, assistance navigating administrative processes, continued financial visioning, clarification of role boundaries, and integration of leadership development.

What Ministries Request from the Board and Congregation: Requests cluster around volunteer recruitment, financial resources for technology and equipment, clear policies, storage space (e.g. sewing supplies), and better communication about completed projects to inspire more participation.

These reports describe a congregation doing deeply meaningful work, by people who love what they do and want it to continue. A central tension is about sustainability and capacity. The church has grown into its mission, and the systems, volunteers, and resources need to grow to match it.

C. Covenant Engagement Team

Background: In 2022, the Board of Trustees empowered a team to implement the recommendations of the Rev. Paul Langston Daley following a congregational dispute. Our church Covenant grew from that effort. Our subsequent charge from the Board was to keep the Covenant alive within our congregation.

This Year: Each month, we match a Covenant promise with the Soul Matters theme for the month. The congregation reads that promise during worship. In addition, our Committees and Small Group Ministries are encouraged to develop their own covenants. Some meeting and gatherings commence their check in by reflecting on the relevance of this month’s covenant promise to their meeting or their personal check-in.

Over the summer, we offered a problem-solving exercise as a follow up to the workshop “How to Say Hard Things”, led by Claire Karl Muller of UU Mass Action. Rev. Donna invited Claire Karl back, into the pulpit this spring, to remind us how to stand up with love.

On In-Gathering Sunday we hosted an opportunity for members to video their answer to this question: “What does it mean to you to be a member of this church?” We posted these videos on our web page.

Board Member At-Large Liz Nitzel joined us for an invigorating brainstorming session, from which several new ideas emerged. Some of these ideas were incorporated into other programming within our church.

Finally, after much reflection and review, we discerned that we have completed the task delegated to us by the Board.

Respectfully submitted by Michaela Loisel and June Zellers

D. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee has oversight of multiple areas of the church’s fiscal health and is composed of:

- ChairHarry Grimmnitz
- FundraisingOpen
- Invested FundsMarilyn Dunn
- Member at Large.....Marsha Stone
- Planned Giving & LegacyJune Zellers
- StewardshipBetty & Terry Cairn
- Treasurer.....Nancy Fritz

Finance As A Whole:

1. Financial Oversight

- A. The Committee renegotiated our rental agreement with Capital Area New Mainers Project for the Drew House.
2. A balanced budget for FY 25-26 was presented to the congregation and unanimously approved at the June 2025 Annual Meeting.
 - A. The budget continued to fund a Sabbatical account. This money will defray expenses the church will incur for ministerial services when our minister qualifies for and takes a sabbatical.
 - B. The budget continues to fund a “Rainy Day” account for sudden, unexpected major expenses.
 - C. The budget funded a reserve account to defray the expenses of health insurance if either of our eligible employees (our church administrator and settled minister) take advantage of this contractual benefit.
3. The Committee completed two semi-annual financial reviews and found no issues.
4. Our Community Solar Farm investment is saving us about \$200 a month on our electricity bill.
5. The Rev. Carie Johnsen Social Justice Fund currently has enough capital to be self-sustaining, so the Social Justice Committee was able to donate \$1,500 (4% of the total) to the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project in January.
6. We held a combined Board/Finance Committee special meeting to discuss our spring Stewardship campaign. It was decided that:
 - A. Funding of our contractual obligation to provide 80% of the cost of health insurance for our eligible employees if they take advantage of this benefit, was a fiscal priority.
 - B. Due to our financial resource constraints, the funding of our contractual obligation to provide 50% of the cost of health insurance for eligible dependents of our employees is deferred until the FY 27-28 budget.
 - C. The FY 26-27 draft budget was reviewed, and the pledge goal was set at \$210,000.
7. The Committee formulated a balanced draft budget for FY 26-27 and forwarded it to the Board for approval. It includes:
 - A. Increased hours for our church administrator and music director.
 - a. The church administrator has taken over many of the tasks previously performed by the volunteer treasurer.
 - b. The church administrator has taken over the functions previously performed by the contracted bookkeeper.
 - B. A 3% cost of living increase for our church administrator and choir director.
 - C. We will be including as income, an anticipated \$20,000 in surplus from the current FY budget and \$14,900 from our reserves (savings) to balance the increased expenses of funding health insurance for our eligible employees (see above).
 - D. We are reducing the drawdown from our endowment to a more sustainable 4%.
8. Fundraising:
 - A. Fundraising has held numerous events this year with a couple more still scheduled. We are predicting that the total will be significantly more than our budgeted expectation of \$18,150. WOW!! Our fantastic fundraising would not be possible without our amazing community of volunteers and participants. Many events are community-building and fun while raising money to support UUCC.

- B. The Hannaford card program has raised over \$4,000 this year.
 - C. Wreaths, Swags and Holiday Boutique – Raised \$5,124 thanks to the efforts of many talented crafters in the UUCC.
 - D. CLYNK – This program has raised \$732 this year.
 - E. Pie Sale –The pie sale raised \$805 through the sale of pies that were generously baked and/or donated by the UUCC community for the sale.
 - F. Auction – The live auction raised approximately \$8,500. Special thanks to Terry Cairn, auctioneer extraordinaire, Catherine Palmer for her creative advertising and an amazing crew of folks making it possible. Many thanks to the people who have signed up to volunteer on work crews, and to those who purchased them. Many hands make light work; the community that is created by working together on a common goal is truly heart-warming and satisfying.
 - G. Tomato/Plant Sale – This great event is still in process and hopes to raise \$1,000 from the sale of tomatoes, peppers, other vegetables, flowers and herbs that are happily growing at the homes of Dale McCormick (tomato queen) and a host of merry planters.
 - H. The UUCC Benefit Concert will take place on May 9th. Proceeds from the event will benefit the restoration project on our 1912 Steinway piano.
 - I. Yard Sale – This virtual event is hosted by Tom Waddell and Marilyn Dunn, who accept items worth >\$50 and offer them online with the proceeds going to UUCC. So far this FY, they have raised \$1,820.
9. Invested funds: - Our return on investments (including the payouts from these funds into our operating budget):
- A. Adams Trust 12.9%
 - B. Ballad Trust 10.8%
 - C. Maine Community Foundation Endowment (MCF) 10.9%
 - D. UUA Common Endowment Fund (UUACEF) 11.3%
10. Planned Giving & Legacy:
- A. The Planned Giving and Legacy sub-committee is collecting a series of stories from the church community about the history of UUCC and its predecessor congregations. These will be curated and available in written and video formats for future services and posterity.
11. Stewardship:
- A. The annual campaign raised \$20,050 (\$5,000 more than our goal) including a \$6,000 match from an anonymous donor.
 - B. The Committee offered the congregation a video Finance 101 session, available to view whenever a community member desired. This was followed by an in-person kickoff event with pizza and “UU Jeopardy”.
 - C. The Stewardship Campaign concluded with \$212,262 (our goal was \$210,000). A nearly 10% pledge increase over the current fiscal year. Our sincere gratitude for our stewardship co-chairs and for the entire UUCC community for making this happen.

E. Global Hospitality

Global Hospitality is happy to report that is progress being made to organize the name tags in the coat room. The solution has come from conversations with several church members and ultimately from Angie Blevins who is currently constructing a wall mounted rack that will allow each tag to be

stored individually with no more tangles in the future. The target for installation is prior to the Annual Meeting.

New name tags will also be ordered with a wider lanyard and with the option to clip on the name tag as well.

The literature in the information rack was updated along with new materials purchased for Rev. Donna to use with new members.

The Inquirer Program was renewed for this year.

An ice cream social is being planned for sometime in June with the goal of increased community relationships and awareness of the UUCC Augusta. – Marty Thornton

F. Global Hospitality Addendum - Submitted by Rev. Donna Dolham

UUCC continues to experience the beauty and vibrancy of community! Some ongoing processes continue to invite engagement for newer visitors, friends and longer-term members.

The Inquirer's Program continues its 9 session rotation, twice monthly. At this time, there is no dedicated team lead coordinating these sessions. The sessions include a variety of subjects encompassing both Unitarian Universalism in general and UUCC specifically. With great appreciation for the volunteer facilitators, the following topics have continued to be offered.

- Faith Development for Children & Adults with Rev. Donna Dolham
- Worship & Liturgical Year with Sara Hodgkins
- Connections within the Church with Helen Zidowecki and Kathy Shaw
- UU History & Values with Karen Allen
- Membership with Susan O'Keefe and/or Marty Thornton
- Q and A with the minister with Rev. Donna Dolham
- Pastoral Care with Martha Pelletier
- Social Action with Debbie Mattson & Mary Kane
- Campus Tour with Susan O'Keefe

Thank you to this year's facilitators! UUCC's sessions are currently scheduled through the end of July and will be rescheduled soon for August through the upcoming church year.

Welcome Forms using UUCC's new church platform began to be integrated March 2025. The previous version of this form was on a google platform that did not integrate into our new church system, *Breeze*. Since the beginning of this church year, 54 welcome forms have been completed. The form asks individuals some basic information including name, pronouns, phone, email, address. It asks if those filling out the form would like to receive our eblast updates. It also asks how individuals found out about UUCC. People note finding out about UUCC through online search and by friends in equal measure. Many noted "other," which at this time does not require clarification.

Every person who has filled out a welcome has received a welcome email from Rev. Donna Dolham.

UUCC's Membership Process has been clarified and advertised more clearly over the last several months. There is now a clear path toward membership (signing the book) that folks can follow which includes, attending 2 or more inquirers sessions, participating in the life of UUCC through attendance at programs, filling out a stewardship form which includes opportunities for financial giving as well as volunteerism. And at this time, a meeting with the minister prior to signing the book is also requested.

At this year's New member celebration and affirmation service, UUCC welcomed 18 new members!

This year we also had 3 members resign their membership for various reasons. It is not unusual for congregations to experience resignations.

Leadership Greeter program is a collaboration with the board of trustees. Leadership greeters are currently scheduled by the Vice President of the board and include board members and other leaders who support opportunities for connection for newer folks visiting on Sunday mornings for service.

UUCC's Fellowship Lunch continues to be a wonderful gathering while breaking bread together. Marilyn Dunn is the coordinator of this shared meal occurring the third week of the month many months (but not all) during the year. Thank you Marilyn and your crew for creating opportunities to offer service and build friendships.

Sunday Morning Hospitality coordinating has been taken over by DJ Guzofski! There is a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall if you are interested in hosting coffee hour. It can be as easy as signing up and offering the items already in our cupboard or bringing something you enjoy sharing. DJ is available to support and train new folks in how things work. Thank you DJ for taking on this role!

Almost every week, UUCC has a new person join us for Sunday services. This is wonderful and reflective of how the values of our faith continue to resonate for people in our community. It is everyone's role to participate in *radical and global hospitality*. If you are wondering how to get involved, please visit the leadership table during coffee hour, attend the inquirers program or reach out to any of the leaders in the community!

Thank you UUCC for creating the kind of community where people visit and want to stay!

Love and Light, Rev. Donna Dolham, she, her

G. History Committee

Organized in 2004, the History Committee collects and catalogs various records and artifacts of the present day UUCC as well as the previous congregations, the All Souls and the Winthrop Street UU Churches, The initial Unitarian Church was organized in 1826, with membership largely drawn from South Parish Congregational Church. Universalism was formally established in Augusta in 1833. Ultimately, the two societies merged in 1992 into the present day Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Augusta.

One of the important and ongoing services provided by the History Committee is providing information for services and programs upon request. Please keep in mind when requesting assistance, the Committee presently has only two active members, therefore adequate time is needed to complete a request. These requests also lead to an area of growing concern, legacy technology or obsolete systems and their use.

At present, records possessed by the History Committee are stored in various means, some readily accessible, others not so. Electronic storage of records, often with no indexing, can result in an inability to locate information when needed. Compounding this is the increasing inability to even access the information. Replacement and updating of systems without retention of the replaced technology or conversion of records to the new system results more information becoming inaccessible. Policies regarding electronic information storage and access are needed.

The History Committee's ongoing projects for the upcoming year include an assessment of the Wayside Pulpit. Angie Blevins has been most capability managing it since 2022. The north side is showing signs of decay and Angie has expressed the need for repair. Informal conversations also have been held with Buildings and Grounds regarding ways to increase its visibility along with its restoration. It is anticipated that a plan addressing those concerns will be forthcoming. A second project that began last year and will be carried over is the restoration of the portrait of Rev. Sylvester Judd. Dirt, damage, mold, and time have all taken its toll on the painting. This comprehensive restoration is expected to be completed in a year from now resulting in the painting's preservation for the indefinite future.

Lastly, it is both the goal and aspiration of the History Committee to continue working with the Congregation in collecting, preserving, and enjoying our shared history as it happens. We invite all to join us in exploring our past and how it will guide us in the future.

Richard Bridges, Chair; Helen Zidowecki

H. Leadership Development

The Leadership Development Committee (LDC) is charged with developing, supporting, and promoting strategies for the congregation to grow into leadership, and ultimately filling a slate of candidates for annual congregational leadership positions. Therefore, Kathy Shaw and Michaela Loisel, this year's Leadership Development team are so pleased to submit the slate of 2026/27 nominees for Board and Committee Chair/Co-Chairs.

Our most recent UUCC Bylaw states that: serving on the Board is significant and membership is to be held with honor and dignity. The Board leads the congregation in accordance with UUCC's covenant and principles to build beloved community. The Bylaws characterize Committee work: as is the lifeblood of the UUCC. Committee members demonstrate commitment to the principles of the church and compassion for our community. Service on the committee is a ministry to the church and is received by the congregation with gratitude.

We have been able to develop a full slate of Board and committee chair/co-chairs in record time. Nominees on the slate represent both new individuals as well as seasoned veterans. In each case, we were able to share meaningful conversations, allowing leaders the opportunity to express their visions, describe their skills and find the right fit allowing individuals to serve the needs of the of church in the most appropriate ways. The days of wrangling a poor member of the congregation at the last minute to create a bad fit in a desperate role are over. And as Rev. Donna has inspired us from day one to believe, it's better to leave a slot open than to make a bad match... and yet here we are presenting you with a full slate of UUCC leaders.

One final word about process. As the role of committee work has changed so has the structure of many committees in two ways:

- In some cases, we now see the Chair, situated at the center, "carrying" the ministry of that community and guiding "leads" to take on unique functions of the committee.
- Additionally, you will see that in some committees are simply led by Chairs when they were previously led by Co/Chairs. Leaders generally stated that the abundance of committed assistance from other members in the congregation made the need for the naming of a formal Co-Chair less critical. An experiment work pursuing

In closing, Michaela and Kathy would like to thank Rev. Donna and President of the Board, Karen Allen, for their constant guidance and support. It takes a village. – Kathy Ann Shaw

I. Pastoral Ministry

The Pastoral Ministry Team exists to assist the minister in caring for congregants as they experience the ups and downs of life. We do this by providing visits, phone calls, cards, meals, and rides. We are ever aware that we do not work alone and appreciate the ongoing ministry that takes place through our volunteers and through so many other groups at church.

This year the Pastoral Ministry Team (PMT) continues to use our online volunteer database, which provides easy volunteer sign-up and an efficient system for providing rides and meals. The Team has been blessed with the addition of a Meals and Rides Coordinator, Helen Brown, who brings fresh energy to this service and is working with another PMT member, Helen Zidowecki, to improve outreach to the UUCC's elder population. Lori Milner and Tracy McNaughton continue their compassionate outreach work, and Reverend Donna guides us in our ongoing work and in new initiatives.

As in years past, in mid-December 2026 we held our annual Quiet Refuge service, which holds in loving community the difficult emotions so many of us experience during the holidays. We also participated in both PMT sessions of the Inquirer Series, explaining our role in the church to

newcomers and others wanting to learn more about the program. Throughout the year, we have reached out to community members through phone calls and visits and have responded to ride and meal requests as resources allow. As we no longer have a dedicated card sender on the Team, we started a new system whereby PMT members alternate months of card writing and sending. We sent out many cards of celebration, support, and condolences to UUCC members and friends this year.

If I may, please allow me to use this report as my farewell as chair of the Pastoral Ministry Team. I joined the Team about nine years ago and have chaired it for seven years, under the guidance of several ministers and throughout the pandemic. As I reflect on my tenure, I find much to be thankful for. With the support of the Team, I improved my leadership skills, definitely learning on the job. As an introvert, I grew into the work of reaching out to others, experiencing both the rewards and challenges of such work. By far the greatest gift, however, has been getting to know so many members of our beloved community on a deeper level. Thank you all for the opportunity to forge deeper relationships and, in the words of Mary Oliver, “to be of use.” Blessed be.

Martha Pelletier, Chair, Pastoral Ministry Team

Members: Reverend Donna Dolham, Helen Zidowecki, Tracy McNaughton, Lori Milner, and Helen Brown

J. Small Group Ministry

Small Group Ministry (SGM) is growing at UUCC! In the last year a new group has started, a group has reconvened after several month hiatus, and several people have joined existing groups. Forty-seven people are involved in six groups of 6-10 people each that meet 1-2 times a month. The focus is bonding and building connections within the congregation and going deeper in spiritual journey. We welcome Karen Allen as the Board Liaison to the SGM Committee.

We are saddened by the death of Kevin Kane, Group Leader. We miss his leadership with his group and with Small Group Ministry program. Our thoughts are with his group.

Small Group Ministry is an integral part of the UU Community. October 26, 2025, was the tenth SGM Sunday Morning Service over the last few years. The theme was “Moved to Compassion”. The services are planned and led by SGM participants in conjunction with the Worship Committee. Look for the date of the SGM Sunday Service this Fall as the SGM participants share from their SGM experience.

The SGM Committee met with the Covenant Engagement Team and the Committee on Shared Ministry. Covenants and Shared Ministry are two significant components of SGM. Groups covenants are consistent with the UUCC congregational covenant. Shared Ministry is part of bonding and connecting within the group and within the congregation. Ministry is what we do together: caring and sharing within our own groups and within UUCC as an inclusive and evolving Beloved Community. SGM Committee Co-Chairs attended the Committee of Committees throughout the year.

Service projects for our church community and the community at large are part of our covenants.

Connections within UUCC include working with hospitality (Fellowship Lunch) and fundraising events. Two services projects that were initiated by SGM groups – CLYNK Bottle collection and Hannaford Cards – have become ongoing services of the congregation. Two services projects recently started by SGM are the Library and the ongoing collection of transparent prescription Rx bottles for Kennebec Valley Humane Society to use with their adoptees.

For more information, please see Small Group Ministry under CONNECTIONS on the UUCC website. This includes the Brochure and Handbook, as well as how to become a part of SGM.

Groups are actively involved with development of SGM and all that it entails, such as:

- Selection of Session Plans, times and locations of meetings, service projects.

- Groups are represented at SGM Committee meetings, through open invitation and designated representation.
- Suggestions to enhance SGM for their group and within the UUCC.
- SGM at UUCC been particularly involved in developing topics available for Session Plans.
- We have over 230 Session Plans written with and for UUCC own groups.
- UUCC is a member of the UU Small Group Ministry Network, and draws from over 1000 session plans, including about a 100 contributed by UUCC. This connects us with the larger UU SGM community.
- UUCC is part of Soul Matters Sharing Circle for congregational materials with topics used throughout the congregation. A session is developed and sent to each group as an option to connect with the monthly theme.

Plans for Next Year:

The Small Group Ministry Committee Continental Breakfast Meeting is Planned for June 21, 2026. Plans for next year are on the agenda. Here are some to start:

- We would like to offer another small group, possibly to start in September for the church year. Look for ways to be part of this venture!
- As the program is growing, we would like to have more people on the Small Group Ministry Committee with a focus on connecting SGM within UUCC.
- We would encourage groups to develop session plans for themselves, and to share with other groups. Session plan development is spiritual practice and community building. The SGM session plan is a unique UU Communication.)

Note From SGM Committee Co-Chairs

We have informed the Leadership Development Committee, as well as Small Group Ministry participants, that we are willing to serve as Co-Chairs of SGM Committee for one more year, until June 2027. After that, we are “retiring” as Co-Chairs. We seriously encourage you to consider a role on the Committee and/or group to ensure an ongoing program at UUCC. Please speak to us at your earliest convenience.

Linda Findlay, Helen Zidowecki

K. Social Justice

The Social Justice Committee promotes social justice, equity and compassion through words and actions. The committee provides leadership opportunities to the congregation to engage in justice building within the congregation, community, state, nation and world. We are also interconnected with Engaging with Our Watershed, Greening the Grounds, and Maine Unitarian Universalist Social Action Network.

We welcome people and their ideas.

Our Highlights:

Saturday Breakfast for Unhoused Neighbors: We are feeding more & more people, we had as many as 90 guests one Saturday. We continue to have great support from volunteers—whether greeting guests as they enter, cracking and scrambling eggs, making muffins and scones, shopping and prepping food in advance of Saturday, mopping floors and vacuuming carpets, cooking and serving nutritious food, washing dishes and linens—everyone’s contributions are welcome and we are grateful.

Green Sanctuary Service: We collaborated with others in developing the September worship



service: “Putting Out the Fire: Building a Green World.” This service followed the previous year’s introduction and work on the UUA’s call for congregations to become more involved with climate action work through participating in the Green Sanctuary 2030 Mobilizing for Climate Justice Program. Following the service, we engaged interested people in considering how we might approach this work at UUCC. After submitting evidence of various projects and work by UUCC members, we were notified in February that UUCC has achieved recognition from the UUA for our good work on the four areas of Transformation, Community Resilience, Justice, and Mitigation for 2025.

See No Stranger: Revolutionary Love was the title of our January service. With this service we introduced the work of Valarie Kaur, who’s powerful work has inspired many people throughout the world to engage in transforming themselves from isolated individuals or communities into people who are open to seeing each person as kin—in other words, to seeing oneself in the “other” and engage in meaningful relationships with a sense of wonder and appreciation. The three broad sections of her practice are 1: See no stranger: loving others; 2: Tend the wound: loving opponents; and 3: Breathe and push: loving ourselves.

The Augusta Area Interfaith Social Justice Group is doing wonderful and important work. UUCC members were instrumental in getting this group together. We are in our second year, and are very excited to have members from the Sangha and Old South Church (Hallowell) join us. Other faith groups represented include 1st Baptist Church of Gardiner, Temple Beth El, Vassalboro Friends Meeting, St. Michael’s Parish, and Christ Church, Gardiner. The Interfaith Group has been an inspiration to us as we discuss the current world issues and find ways to influence those in power, to help those who are in struggling in our midst, and to support each other.

Share the Plate: This year the SJC has chosen the following organizations as recipients of our monthly collection: Maine TransNetwork, Capital Area New Mainers Project, Maine Family Planning, UU Service Committee, Wabanaki Alliance, Augusta Food Bank, Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition, Maine ACLU, Pihcintu Multicultural Chorus, Wabanaki REACH Grandmothers’ Love Fund, MUUSAN, and Jubilee. We are very grateful to our generous members and welcome suggestions for future STPs.

Rev. Carie Johnsen Social Justice Award this year was awarded to the Maine Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project.

Community Involvement: Our presence in the greater Augusta area has expanded in many ways - we were instrumental in the development of the Love is Louder Rally, a presentation by ILAP and CANMP on current immigration issues, and the Interfaith Pride Service last June. UUCC members are joining the many protests and gatherings in support of the immigration communities and in opposition to the current administration and its policies.

The UUCC Donation Ministry serves to donate requested items from local shelters, food banks and the Pet Pantry. The ministry operates using 2 methods: 3 colorful collection bins with posted signs indicating requested items and a large basket to collect specifically requested more expensive donations on the third Sunday of every month during the service. All items are delivered to the various locations on a regular basis. The response to this ministry has been wonderfully positive and the facilities have expressed heartfelt gratitude. The ministry takes a break from July thru August and begins again in September.

MUUSAN- Maine Unitarian Universalist Social Action Network ; Liaison- Michaela Loisel

MUUSAN's co-chairs Michaela Loisel & Betsy Williams led the Faith in Action worship service on January 4, 2026 highlighting UU's in history who have changed and saved lives—for example, Maine's Dorothea Dix.

In addition, they discussed MUUSAN's role in the public policy arena and our presence in the legislative halls and hearing rooms focusing on the importance of advocating from our liberal UU values of justice and love.

We continue to be inspired and committed to our on-going social justice ministries. In addition, we are excited by emerging social justice ministries. Here are the seeds we are currently nourishing.

- Trans Drop-In Group: We are in dialog with Trans Net for the need of a drop-in group for Trans youth.
- Social Justice Banner: We have designed a colorful Social Justice Banner with the message, "Love Leads The Way—Peace, Truth, Justice." It also identifies our church. It will be stored in the coat closet on a shelf making it accessible for anyone to use.
- UU as a gathering place to go to rallies and protests together. This coordinates car pools or walking and encourages attendance at Social Justice events.
-
- We Belong: A photo display of the many individuals who have important relationships with UUCC. This includes members, people who attend worship services, guests and volunteers at Saturday Breakfast, participants in special interest social groups such as sewing and book group. It will be a photographic display of what it means to be a "community church."
- Transportation Study/Work Group: This group will learn more about the barriers to providing some basic transportation needs to Augusta residents, promote a more "walkable" city, and collaborate with the Pastoral Care Team to learn the transportation needs of members and friends attending UUCC events.

Capital Area Interfaith Social Justice Coalition: Actions that we will assist in planning and implementing are:

- *Cuba Teach-In*, a community panel discussion of United States relationship with Cuba including the current oil embargo and its negative impact on medical services and availability of basic human needs.
- *Interfaith Pride Service*, multiple faith perspective affirmation and celebration of LGBTQ community.
- *Sacred Ground: Dialog on Race and Faith*, 11-session curriculum with small groups of people from various faiths.
- *Intervening in Human Rights Violations*: discussions on contributing and participating in actions to bring the public's attention to the human rights violations occurring at the ICE Detention Centers.

Submitted by: Mary Kane and Debbie Mattson, Co-Chairs

L. Tech / Slide Developer Team

The UUCC Tech Team volunteers: Nan Bell, Betty Cairn, Cheryl Ring, Marty Peters, Angie Blevins, Lindsey Wehl (recently stepped down).

The roles of a tech team volunteer are Boxcast Controller and Slide Runner.

- The Boxcast controller sets up the camera, turns on the sound system, monitors, and laptops, having everything ready to go at 9:40 for the announcements. The Boxcast Controller follows the order of service and adjusts the camera to focus on each activity during the service.
- The Slide Runner connects the laptop to the sanctuary monitor and advances the slides according to the order of service.

The Tech Team meets monthly on the third Monday via Zoom. Agenda items are a general check-in, addressing tech issues, sharing ideas on how to improve the Boxcast viewer's experience in watching the service, and scheduling volunteers for the upcoming month of Sunday services.

1. Improvements to the process:

- The remote now has numbers on the back indicating the various views of the sanctuary.
- The pulpit closet was organized and decluttered.
- A lock has been installed on the pulpit closet and the laptop used for the Sunday service is stored there.
- Staging of the pulpit, the pulpit table, and the piano have enhanced viewing experience for Boxcast viewers.
- We continue to seek volunteers to join our team.

2. Inspiring Accomplishments:

- Between June 1, 2025, and June 7, 2026, there are a total of 52 Sundays. The tech team attended every Sunday except three Sundays when the church closed due to inclement weather.
- Our team feels motivated when technology works smoothly for Sunday Service, which are most every Sunday!

3. Slide Developer Team: Nan Bell, Hanna Brown, Angie Blevins

The role of the slide developer

- The slide developer creates a slide presentation based on the order of service for the weekly Sunday service.
- The layout and the design are chosen based on the topic of reflection.
- The order of service (OOS) is emailed on Wednesday each week. Words for the hymns, readings, wisdom story, photos, and videos are copied and pasted on each slide.
- Slide development takes 2-4 hours of volunteer time each week. The slide presentation is saved on a thumb drive and loaded onto the tech laptop for every Sunday service.
- The slide developer also creates an updated Sunday reminder slide video with current activities at the church for the week ahead. This task takes up to an hour.

A. Improvements to the process:

- Notes are put in the slide presentation to instruct the slide runner when to advance to the next slide.

B. Inspiring Accomplishments:

- The video for Sunday reminders is done in Canva and inserted into the Power Point Slide presentation where we learned how to make it continuously play before and after the service.

M. Worship Arts Team

The Worship Arts team experienced a church year defined by growth, flexibility and process shifts as our worship evolved to serve our in-person and online communities.

Our volunteer team consists of two sub-teams: the Worship Associates (WA) team- Nan Bell, Kathy Kellison, Lori Milner, Marty Peters and Sara Hodgkins and the Tech team – Nan Bell, Angie Blevins, Hanna Brown, Betty Cairn, Marty Peters, Sandlin Preecs (newly joined), Cheryl Ring and Lindsey Wiehl (recently stepped down). Our teams and Rev. Donna collaborate to develop and streamline worship service development and management.

Below is a summary of the inspirations, operations and accomplishments that shaped our services.

What Inspired Us

Our WA and Tech teams were inspired by the UUCC community throughout the year, with highlights including:

- **Diverse Participation:** Inviting different congregation members to participate in chalice lightings/extinguishing and readings brought fresh voices to our sacred space.
- **Emotional Impact:** Observing the congregation's reactions during worship services—from wide smiles to tears—reminded us of the impact of our shared ministry.
- **Sacred Sharing:** The depth and vulnerability displayed during Joys and Sorrows and personal testimonies continue to engage and connect our community.
- **Smooth Worship Flow:** The moments of worship "flow" where the coordination between speakers, music, and technology creates a seamless spiritual experience.
- **Cooperative Support:** The flexibility and willingness of the WA and Tech Teams to step up to assist with team roles whenever unexpected needs arise.

Worship Arts (WA) Team Operations & Ministry Overview:

WA Monthly Meetings

- **Meeting Logistics:** The team meets monthly via Zoom to coordinate the shared ministry.
- **Core Agenda Items:**
 - **Team Covenant:** Reviewing a shared agreement developed by team members.
 - **Strategic Scheduling:** Assigning worship associates in advance to maintain consistent coverage.
 - **Knowledge Sharing:** Rev. Donna offers essential updates and expertise to strengthen our team's collective work.
 - **Process Improvement:** Evaluating worship workflows and refining responsibilities to support a growing UUCC community.

WA Worship Support

- **Coordination:** Work with the settled minister (Rev. Donna), professional guest speakers and lay leaders to organize WA roles within the service.
- **Service Review:** Collaborate with all worship leaders to review the Order of Service (OOS) prior to service.
- **Logistics & Setup:**
 - Prepare necessary supplies, including distributing the OOS, the chalice, candles for Joys and Sorrows and Gun Violence Sundays, hymnbooks and water for worship leaders.
 - Post the service script on Boxcast for online attendees.

Worship Arts Team Accomplishments:

We've implemented several changes to improve accessibility, communication, and engagement:

Inclusion & Accessibility

- **Closed Captioning:** Now offered for online services to ensure all can participate.
- **Sensory Sensitivity:** Included stones as well as candles for Joys and Sorrows to accommodate member sensitivities or allergies.

Worship Development

- **Diverse Voices:** UUCC hosted five professional guest speakers (known as Pulpit Supply) who brought diverse perspectives and lived experiences to our Sunday worship.

- Shared Pulpit: Our Shared Pulpit students are stepping up to lead summer services and share their unique stories.
- Service Forms: Launched the Sunday Service Application Form to standardize the process for lay speakers.
- Optimized Order of Service: Reordered service elements to enhance transitions and worship flow.
- Liturgical Elements: Incorporated a monthly "basket focus" and a new chalice extinguishing song used by Rev. Donna.
- Hymn Management: The Worship Arts Chair monitors copyrighted hymn compliance for lay leaders, while Rev. Donna and Bridget Convey, our Music Director, serve as administrators for our online hymn resources.

Communication & Logistics

- Announcement Experimentation: Tested reading announcements both before and after service to find the best flow.
- Multi-Format Outreach: Worship news is shared via the UUCC website, e-blasts and newsletters, reminder slides before and after service, and paper copies posted in the Fellowship Hall.
- Education: Presented "Worship & Liturgy" sessions for every Inquirers series cycle.
- Tech Optimization: Adjusted the path for Joys and Sorrows (walking behind the table) to ensure the Boxcast camera view remains clear for home viewers.

In my second year as Worship Arts Chair, I've settled into the role and feel more comfortable. At UUCC, worship is a living thing—constantly changing to meet our community's needs in the moment. Our WA and Tech teams, in collaboration with Rev. Donna, have built a fantastic, supportive partnership that makes this vital work a pleasure.

To keep this momentum going, we are looking to grow! It's a great way to become involved in the church community and develop deeper connections! If you've ever been curious about joining the WA team, please know that no prior experience is needed. We've developed helpful scripts to guide you through every service, making it easy for anyone to step in.

I am deeply grateful to Rev. Donna, the worship team, and our entire Sunday service team for their dedication and creative spirit. Their commitment to our UUCC community provides the foundation for our shared journey and growth. As we enter the new church year, I look forward to evolving together through continued learning and refinement of our services. Sara Hodgkins, Chair

VI. Reports from Special Focus Groups

A. Engaging Our Watersheds

Our Wabanaki neighbors remind us that water is life.

Engaging Our Watershed was a six-part practice of creating a spiritual connection to the Kennebec River and the life it supports. It was modeled after the groups offered by the Center for Spirituality in Nature and the "Rewilding" work of Micah Mortali. We saw it as part of UUCC's 8th Principal work, inviting participants to move away from selfishness, greed and apathy and beyond our centering of human importance by seeing the Living World as a community of beings rather than things for us to use or enjoy.

We focused our attention on a small piece of the riverbank in downtown Augusta. We met three times in the fall and three in the spring for contemplative encounters with the river and its surroundings. Our intention was to take in and connect with what was happening around us at each meeting. We also noticed changes between gatherings to tune into nature's unfolding. The sharing that was part

of each session reminded us of the unique and limited way we each experience our environment.
Nurturing a deep connection to the Living World serves us all.
Respectfully submitted by Kathy Kellison and June Zellers

B. Goddess / Earth Circles

Goddess/Earth Circles usually meets at 1:00-3:00pm the fourth Sunday of a month, in-person in the Fellowship Hall and on UUCC Zoom, unless noted otherwise. Information about meeting times and topics are available in the E-Blast and announcements.

Participation and diversity in the spiritual journeys with Earth-Centered focus continues to increase. Some of the participants have been part of educational programs, have spiritual practice in various focuses, such as Wicca, in solo or group practice. Common among those who join us is an open mindedness to explore our own personal spiritual journey, a curiosity and willingness to engage in spiritual exploration, a willingness to share and learn from others.

This year we have been feeling the broadening spiritual journeys through earth-centered spirituality throughout the UUCC life and programming. These critical elements include:

--*Freedom and responsibility* for one's own life and beliefs: We encourage the creative potential of all participants, sharing of our own wisdom, receiving the wisdom of others, and increasing diversity in our group interactions. For example, Goddess tradition commonly uses three phases of Maiden, Nurturer and Crone. We added the phase of Sage for wisdom in our changing culture and times. We held a Croning celebration for two participants this year!

--*Cycles of the universe*: Earth centered traditions celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature. We include celebration of the eight points in the cycle of the earth as well as lunar cycles. The Wisdom Book created in March 2026 by and for participants had a dual theme of sharing our own reflections and receiving new perspectives, capturing reflections of Wisdom pieces, and how we relate to seasons. This is our tenth Wisdom Book.

--*Non-authoritarian approach* of Unitarian Universalism historically and currently: Shared leadership and ministry focus creates safe places to be appreciated, to learn and to be connected. We include a covenantal approach with wisdom and beloved relationship. This includes a broad-minded, curious and willingness to engage.

You are welcome to join us in the Earth centered activities. We look forward to next year with the Beloved Community here at UUCC by:.

--Including selections from *Pagan/Earth-Centered Voices in Unitarian Universalism*, from Skinner House Books, 2017, in our gatherings. We would like to broaden discussions within the church community. There are several copies in the Library.

--Offer gatherings and events that are decided with broader diversity and participant involvement. This can expand the inclusion of rituals and music.

--Creating a covenantal approach with wisdom and beloved relationship.

Contact: Helen Zidowecki

C. Greening the Grounds

After some gentle nudging from the Social Justice Committee this fall, a small group has been working to activate a plan to use our church yard as a community garden and native habitat. This is inline with the Green Sanctuary efforts throughout the church, and perhaps reflects our very literal interpretation of that call. This winter we started with a survey to get a sense of what interest there would be: we saw enthusiasm for sharing vegetables and making space for pollinators. It's not too late to share your feedback or offer to volunteer in future efforts!

<https://uuccme.breezechms.com/form/Greeningsurvey>

Bekah Farmer created a GIS map of the grounds and the major plantings, which is helpful for planning our efforts. Did you know that our church grounds include all the space from Judd House to Drew House, not *just* the obvious yard in front of the sanctuary? Katie Stein, Bekah Farmer, Terry Cairn and Matt Foust started some wine cap mushrooms in the wood chips behind the garage-keep an eye out for mushrooms in midsummer. And yes, these are edible!

Eowyn Levene brought in some native plants to start filling in the gardens up front. Our next plan is to build a raised garden bed (thanks Matt!) and put vegetable starts in it. The goal for our first year is to make some visible transformations, and test out what we need to know to expand to more beds, remove invasives and convert more lawn towards food next year. Sandlin Preecs wrote a draft grant to fund further expansion that will likely get submitted in the fall for the funds in the summer of 2027, so this is a good time for us to experiment. This ministry gives us ample opportunity to nurture and celebrate nature right where we are, and to share generously our resources with friends and neighbors. If you have an interest in getting your hands dirty, in learning about the new plants going in, or just talking about your vision for the grounds, please reach out!



D. Life Span Faith Formation ~ Children & Youth

Life Span Faith Formation for children has been under construction and redevelopment at UUCC. UUCC briefly had a 5 hour a week, paid Sunday morning nursery coordinator, who resigned from this position. The position is not currently being re-filled while we continue to develop the structure of the program.

There is currently a team of 7 volunteers who have participated in an orientation, not all have completed background checks which is a requirement to volunteer with children and youth at UUCC.

We are excited to welcome Martha Naber as life span faith formation lead and coordinator. Martha is just beginning her own orientation to the multi-age classroom approach UUCC is currently utilizing. We look forward to all Martha brings to her role! Thank you Martha!

With the level of our current volunteer capacity, we are starting with a once a month, elementary, multi-classroom approach utilizing the Soul Matters monthly theme resources purchased to support curriculum development. For the past 3 months, I have been coordinating volunteers and have developed lesson plans and prepared the necessary items for the lesson plans.

Thank you to UUCC's classroom volunteers, without you we would not be able to offer the programming we currently have. UUC has two children who participate in our multi-age classroom and as we continue to expand, more families will join. Currently, I field inquiries regarding children's programming from parents and guardians who are looking for existing programs for their children to participate in. When we can provide consistent weekly programming, we will have more families with children engage with UUCC. This is an important ministry to develop.

There are areas where programming is offered, the sewing ministry has offered programming for children centered on crafting. Cassie Sano, a local artist, children's author and teacher has voiced an interest in helping to create a trial children's program. While still under development Cassie's ideas

include a story time with follow up related activities over a 90 minute period for a few week trial. This is a unique idea allowing parents and guardians to drop off their child for programming while they have a few minutes to do errands for instance.

If you would like to help or would like to apply to be volunteer, please fill out our [volunteer application](#).. submitted by Rev. Donna Dolham, she, her

E. Peaceful Heart Sangha

Our weekly Monday & Thursday mindfulness gatherings can help us to calm, rest, and heal so that we can have more energy and insight into what can be our most helpful actions in these challenging times. Our gatherings are at UUCC every 1st & 3rd Monday and online every Monday 6:30-8pm. We gather a little early at UUCC since we lock the church doors at 6:30. We have yellow or white brochures in the entry way to UUCC about our practice. Thursdays are at Loudon Hill Center in Hallowell 8-9:30am. To answer your questions and share our zoom link, contact martysoule@gmail.com or peacefulheartsangha@gmail.com .



F. Read Learn Share Book Group

I love the power group of decision making and the effort that Read Learn Share participants put into using it as we choose books every year.

After the last meeting of the year in June, anyone who has suggestions for next year's list sends them in to be included on a ballot. The ballot is available to everyone who wants to vote. We are each responsible to do our own research on the books and authors. We ask that each person suggest no more than 2 titles, one fiction and one non-fiction. With as many as 15 participants, the work piles up. We use a ranked choice voting method to arrive at the most popular titles.

The effort that goes into the research and voting is a testament to the commitment of the group's readers! Often some of that research shows up during a discussion when someone shares what they learned working on the ballot.

In the 10+ years we have been meeting, I have yet to be disappointed in our choices or the discussions. I have read books that I had never heard of and been glad I did. I have read books I thought I would find lacking in some way, and books that I thought would make for a poor discussion. I have been mistaken every time I had one of those thoughts.

All of this before noting that the books themselves can be inspirational. Or educational. Or thought provoking. Or entertaining.

Our monthly discussions are textbook examples of civil, thoughtful exchanges as we enjoy hearing different responses we have to each book. Given that our reactions are grounded in our personal histories and experiences, we have learned quite a bit about each other. The deepening of friendships is a side effect of reading, learning and sharing.

A new addition to our process has been to spend time each month to connect our reading to the church's covenant. We single out the covenant either for the month we are meeting or the previous month's promise and find ways that our book reflects some facet of that promise. We have become more aware of the depth and usefulness of our community's promises to one another. A practice of community that is somewhat tangential to the book discussion.

This past year has been another banner year for books and people, for community in our group!

G. Safety Committee

The Safety Committee was formed by the UUCC Board in January 2024. The impetus at that time was a grant awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency which led to facility improvements including the installation of a monitored security alarm system in the church building with closed-circuit television (CCTV) and sensors at the three entrances as well as impact resistant film on all church windows.

In coordination with the Buildings and Grounds Committee, additional facility upgrades have been made. Recent improvements include the replacement of the exterior door in Fellowship Hall and increasing building accessibility through the installation of automatic doors on Summer Street. In the spring new digital key code locks will replace existing locks on the church building entrances. Also this year we updated the fire safety plan. Stay tuned for upgrades to outdoor lighting and a practice fire drill coming soon!

Responsibility for the safety of our congregation is a team effort. We appreciate the UUCC culture of increased awareness and collective problem solving to keep people safe. If you have comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact Jim Caldwell, Harry Grimmnitz, Nancy Fritz or Bill Allen from the Safety Committee. Jim Caldwell, Safety Committee Chair

H. Seasoned Souls

This year we continued to meet in our new format: Unlimited check-in time, with general conversation afterwards. We're now a fairly small group – typical attendance 4 – 6 – so that format works well for us. Around the first of the year, we changed our meeting location from the Fellowship Hall to the Meeting Room. It's more suitable for our smaller size. – Hal Booth

I. Sewing and Crafting Group

Approximately 25 individuals have participated in this ministry during its first two years. The group meets twice a month, year round, in the Fellowship Hall. We have sponsored three two-day retreats and will hold another one in June. Here are some things that participants say about the group:

- "Opportunity for collaboration and sharing creativity"
- "A feeling of safety to try new things"
- "Welcoming atmosphere for all ages, all genders"
- "Laughter happens"

The Sewing and Crafting Group has made fleece hats for unhoused individuals and others, items for the Holiday Fair, cloth napkins to reduce paper product use, and net vegetable bags for grocery shopping to reduce the use of plastics

We also sponsored two sessions of Crafting for Young People (ages 8-12) last fall. Five girls participated with Martha Naber, Kathy Sparrow and Nancy Fritz providing leadership. Origami light decorations, catnip toys, handmade books and painting were some of the activities offered.

Report submitted by Martha Naber and Nancy Fritz, Coordinators

J. YAHUUS - Young-At-Heart Unitarian Universalists

Our first year of the YAHUUs (Young At Heart Unitarian Universalists) has been a learning and growing experience. What started as an idea to bring together some of the younger people at the church and expand our friend group has evolved into its own ministry. The concept started as a group chat and expanded into several break out groups of people interested in different activities.

Our first formal gathering was a Friendsgiving in November that was well attended by about a dozen people. Our next formal gathering was a smashing success, a dumpling party for the Chinese New Year with three full tables of participants of all ages.

Informally we have had many crafting sessions and outdoor walks. Two Dungeon & Dragons groups have come out of the YAHUUs as well. We have also come together in various combinations to host coffee hour.

Most importantly though we are an emerging ministry and we have been there for each other with openness. In our group chat people have reached out for rides when they have had car troubles. Sometimes our work from home folks reach out for someone to come and body double for them. Sometimes people just reach out for someone to talk to.

We have a lot of opportunities for growth. We continue to reach out to new people in the UU community and strive to create a welcoming environment. While at the moment we don't have a clearly defined leadership team, there are definitely some individuals who do take the lead for activities.

This next year we plan to have more meals and activities. As we grow we will perhaps look to defining who our leaders are. Or we will keep our informal leadership concept. Either way as we expand we will focus on our spiritual growth and emotional support of one another as we head into still uncertain times in our country. – *Jamus Hanscom*

VII. Bylaws of the UCC

Approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting in June 2024

These bylaws are part of a three part structure that guides UCC as a community. The first is our Principles, the [seven](#) that we share with the entire UUA and [our 8th principle](#), which we adopted in 2023. The second is our [Covenant](#) which we created and endorsed in 2023. The third is these bylaws which are a legal document outlining the duties and responsibilities of church members and leaders. Together these three pillars guide us as we create our community and live out our values.

I. Name

The name of this religious society is the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Augusta (UCC).

II. Purpose

The purpose of the UCC is to worship, learn, and minister together consistent with our mission and vision.

III. Non-Discrimination Policy

The UCC declares and affirms its responsibility to promote the full participation of persons in all activities and in the full range of human endeavor, without regard to race, color, gender expression, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, age, or national origin.

IV. Denominational Affiliation

The UCC is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) and therefore is part of the UUA's New England Region. Member congregations are committed to https://www.uua.org/files/2023-05/uua_bylaws_05222023.pdf.

V. Membership

- A. As a community, UCC members are joined by a [shared covenant](#) which calls us to share our spiritual gifts with others, encourage and support others in developing and sharing their spiritual gifts, and to show care for our kin outside of the church, including in the natural world.
- B. Any person who desires to be a member and is at least 13 years of age must have a conversation with the Minister or a member of the Board of Trustees (the Board). This conversation may include, but not be limited to, UCC's covenant and purpose, participation in congregational life, and financial support. Subsequent to this discussion, this person may become a member by signing the membership book.
- C. The Board may remove members from the rolls if:
 - 1. the member has not attended worship or participated in other church ministries or activities or financially supported the church for over a year's time; and
 - 2. no response is received within 30 days to a written notice asking if the person wishes to remain a member.
- D. Members may withdraw their membership at any time by notifying the Clerk of the church.

VI. Membership Meetings

- A. All authority rests with the membership and is exercised through the meetings of the membership except as herein designated.
- B. Business meetings of the congregation are referred to in these bylaws as membership meetings, and are open to all with voting restricted to church members.

- C. Members may participate in membership meetings either in person or remotely over video-conference.

VII. Annual Meeting

- A. An annual meeting of the membership (Annual Meeting) must be held on the first Sunday in June of each year. The Annual Report must be made available to the membership at least ten days before the meeting and must include, but not be limited to, information about any matters to be voted on at the meeting, the proposed budget for the next fiscal year, reports from the Minister, other staff, the Clerk, the Board, the Treasurer, and committees as well as a copy of the current bylaws.
- B. In addition to the slate proposed by the Leadership Development Committee, nominations for Board positions may be made by petition of ten active members to the church administrator for publication ten days prior to the Annual Meeting. Such nominations must be published to the membership, available at the church, and included in the slate presented at the Annual Meeting itself.
- C. Nominations for any position may be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting.
- D. The Board may fill vacancies for which no nominations were made at the annual meeting for a term ending on the date of the next annual meeting.
- E. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to:
 - 1. elect officers of the church, Members-at-Large of the Board, Chairs of all Standing Committees and all other elected positions;
 - 2. receive the Annual Report;
 - 3. vote on the proposed annual budget of the church; and
 - 4. transact any other business for which proper notice has been given.
- F. Special membership meetings may be called by the Board for any purpose.
- G. The Board must call a membership meeting if petitioned in writing by twenty percent of members. The request must state the business to be considered. Actions at the meeting must be limited to the stated purpose. The meeting must be held within thirty days of the request.
- H. Notices for all membership meetings must be transmitted to all members at least ten days prior to the date of such meetings, and must include a description of the subjects to be considered, matters to be voted on, date, time, and location including any links necessary for video access.
- I. Thirty percent of the membership constitutes a quorum.
- J. Those who have been members of the church for at least ten days prior to the date of the meeting are eligible to vote. Any member may request that voting take place by written ballot. Except where otherwise specified here, the outcome of votes are determined by a simple majority of those present and voting.
- K. The Board must nominate a moderator for confirmation by the membership at the meeting.

VIII. Board of Trustees (the Board)

- A. The Board is authorized by the congregation to conduct all church business. Serving on the Board is significant and membership is to be held with honor and dignity. The Board leads the congregation in accordance with UUCC's covenant and principles with the aim of building beloved community.
- B. The elected officers are the President, Vice President, Clerk, and Treasurer.
- C. All nominees for officers must have been members of the congregation for a minimum of one year.
- D. The President must:

1. preside at meetings of the Board;
 2. convene the first meeting of the Leadership Development Committee in September of each year to discuss the charge to the committee; and
 3. delegate responsibilities as appropriate.
- E. The Vice President must:
1. discharge the duties of the President when the President is absent;
 2. aid and assist the President with administrative duties; and
 3. succeed to the Presidency for the unexpired portion of a term upon the death, resignation, or removal of the President.
- F. The Clerk must:
1. maintain the official record of Board proceedings as well as church meetings and correspondence;
 2. issue notices of meetings;
 3. accept legal service on behalf of the UUCC;
 4. verify the membership list prior to all membership meetings, determine the quorum requirement, and determine the proportional vote required; and
 5. serve as the final authority in determining vote outcome.
- G. The Treasurer must:
1. be custodian of all monies and securities, as overseen by the Board;
 2. present the current financial statement at each meeting of the Board and the Annual Meeting;
 3. account for all receipts and disbursements and present these records upon reasonable notice, except for identification of individual pledges;
 4. oversee contracted financial services; and
 5. serve as a voting member of the Finance Committee.
- H. In addition to the officers, the Board includes two members-at-large and the Chair of the Finance Committee. The immediate past president may serve on the Board at the request of the President. Board members may serve on other church committees. The Minister serves as a non-voting member.
- I. Vacancies on the Board may be filled by appointment of the President, subject to approval of the Board. The people appointed to fill vacancies must serve until the next Annual Meeting.
- J. The Officers of the Board serve a one-year term. At-large members of the Board are elected for staggered two-year terms.
- K. The members of the Board assume office immediately following the Annual Meeting.
- L. A quorum of the Board is two-thirds of the positions filled at the time of the vote, provided that at least one-half of the Board's positions are filled.
- M. The outcome of votes of the Board are determined by a simple majority of those present and voting.
- N. When a decision is required between regular meetings, the Board may hold a meeting by electronic means and any vote taken at said meeting must be affirmed at the next regular meeting to assure its inclusion in official minutes.
- O. Attendance at Board meetings is a necessary function of all members of the Board. Resignation

from the Board may be requested by the President with Board approval if an individual's absence interferes with the workings of the Board.

P. The Board must:

1. implement the decisions and policies of the membership,
2. conduct and approve all business transactions of the church, consistent with these bylaws;
3. establish policies and appoint persons and committees as necessary to achieve these functions and fill vacancies among committee chairs until the next annual meeting;
4. implement the budget approved at the annual meeting with the provision that the Board may adjust that budget not to exceed ten percent of the total; and
5. publish a written Annual Report.

IX. Standing Committees

A. Committee work is the lifeblood of the UUCC. Committee members demonstrate commitment to the principles of the church and compassion for our community. Service on a committee is a ministry to the church and is received by the congregation with gratitude.

B. The Finance Committee

1. assists the Board in overseeing the financial affairs of the church, including the annual budget leadership and periodic internal audits;
2. is responsible for stewardship, fundraising, endowment, gifts and bequests;
3. submits recommendations for the annual budget;
4. conducts special financial reviews at the request of the Board; and
5. is composed of the committee chair, member-at-large, the Treasurer, and the Chairs of Fundraising, Invested Funds, Planned Giving, and Stewardship subcommittees. Vacancies must be filled by the Board.

C. The Leadership Development Committee

1. develops and submits nominations for Board officers, the members-at-large of the Board, the chairs of standing committees, and the member-at-large of the Finance Committee for election by the membership at the Annual Meeting;
2. consists of, at least, two members of the congregation who have broad familiarity with the congregation;
3. submits the slate of qualified candidates to the church administrator for publication one month prior to the Annual Meeting.

D. Committee on Compensation: the President and Minister shall appoint two members annually to recommend to the Finance Committee compensation packages for the minister and staff and to advocate for the package.

X. Other Committees

A. The Committee on Shared Ministry must be:

1. created upon the request of either the Board or the Minister;
2. comprised of up to three members chosen by the Board from a list of active church members submitted by the Minister. Members serve for no more than three years.

B. The Board may authorize other committees necessary to carry out the business of the church. All authorized committees must submit a report for the church's annual meeting.

XI. Ministerial Search

- A. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Minister, the Board must nominate up to seven members of the congregation to serve as a Ministerial Search Committee, with the slate of nominees subsequently confirmed by the congregation at a duly called meeting of the congregation
- B. The purpose of the Ministerial Search Committee is to nominate a candidate to serve as Minister in accordance with the UUA transitional procedural guidelines.
- C. The Minister must be called by at least eighty percent of the voting membership present at a membership meeting. The vote to call a Minister must be by written ballot. One-half of the members eligible to vote constitute a quorum at such special congregational meeting.

XII. The Minister:

- A. serves as the spiritual and administrative leader of the congregation;
- B. must be in fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations;
- C. has primary responsibility for worship and other religious ceremonies;
- D. is a non-voting member of the Board;
- E. serves as the spokesperson for the church with the endorsement of the Board;
- F. supervises and evaluates all employees, maintains written job descriptions for each position, is responsible for the administration of the church, and keeps complete and accurate records concerning the membership;
- G. has indefinite tenure upon election by the membership;
- H. is bound by a contract detailing the terms of agreement between the Minister and the congregation which is proposed by the Ministerial Search Committee, agreed to by the Board, signed by the officers of the church, and reviewed annually by the Board;
- I. may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any meeting convened for that purpose. In the event of a potential dismissal, the advice of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations and the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association must be sought; and
- J. may continue working for 90 days after a written notice of resignation is received by the President, or after a membership decision for dismissal.

XIII. Fiscal Year

UUCC's fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30 of the subsequent calendar year.

XIV. Bylaws and Amendments

- A. Proposed changes to these bylaws must be submitted to the Clerk, and if approved by the Board, must be presented to the membership.
- B. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any membership meeting, provided that written notice of any proposed change is included in the notice for that meeting, at least ten days prior to the meeting.
- C. The bylaws must be reviewed at least every five years.

XV. Dissolution

In the event of dissolution and liquidation of this corporation, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the Board (in the event of voluntary dissolution) or the appropriate public official (in the event of involuntary dissolution) must transfer any surplus in excess of the corporation's outstanding liabilities to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregation

