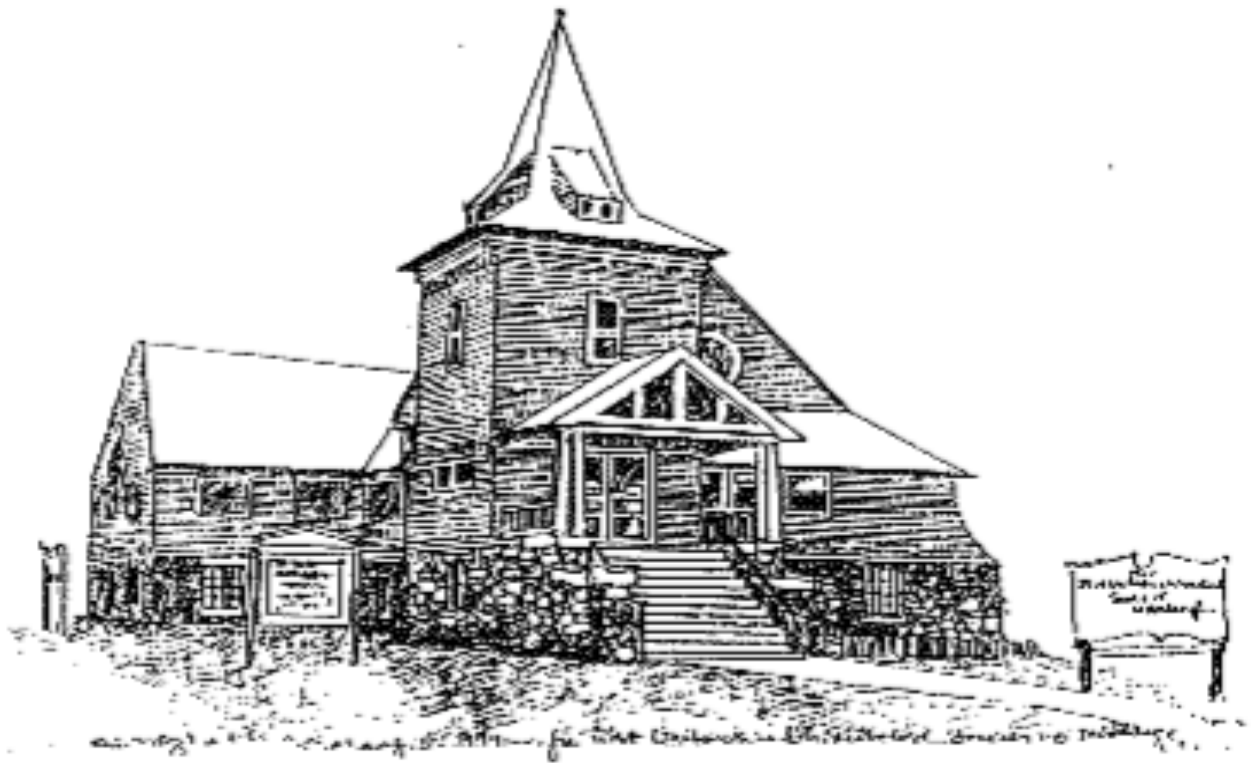


Annual Report

2017 - 2018



The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleborough
25 South Main Street
Middleborough, MA 02346

Annual Report

Table of Contents	Page
Ministry	1
Minister's role and responsibilities	
Minister's Overview	
Summary of Minister's Activity	
Worship	
Pastoral/Parish Care	
Committee on Ministry	
Religious Exploration	4
Program Notes	
RE Committee	
Music	7
Program Notes	
Music Committee	
Church Life	9
Small groups	
Programming (FUNdraisers)	
Membership Development	
Hospitality	
Public Relations	
Social Action	12
Initiative/projects	
Cash in the Plate donations	
Religious Exploration Fundraisers	
MAAC	
Governance/Administration	16
Parish Committee	
Governance/Policy	
Leadership Development	
Staff Support	
Physical Plant/Infrastructure	18
Building & Grounds	
Expansion	
Green Sanctuary	
Memorial Garden	
Technology	
Finances	20
Current Fiscal Year	
Investments	
"I Love My Church" Initiative	
Budget for Fiscal 2017-2018	

Appendix – Financial Report for 2016-2017

Ministry

Report contributors: Rev. Sarah Person; Sue Curtiss, *Pastoral Care Team Lead*; Bob Waterman, *Committee on Ministry Lead*

Minister's Role and Responsibilities

"The Minister and the Congregation shall share responsibility for the leadership and ministry of the Congregation. Achievement and maintenance of this collaborative relationship likewise shall be shared. The Congregation shall look to the Minister for spiritual leadership and initiative, for assistance in setting and articulating its vision, and for professional and inspired performance and oversight of the Congregation's programs, in collaboration with the Parish Committee and the Congregation's committees."

Minister's Overview

We continue to develop a social action presence in our community, and to work to create better systems around membership develop, hospitality, and pastoral care.

The biggest news was our wildly successful pledge drive. Earlier in the year, our leaders developed a short-term vision for the Society. They invited members and friends to respond to this vision with a series of Listening Circles where they could share what they were excited about and what could be improved (and how). People came away knowing their voices were heard, and having a better understanding of "how we make church happen." This translated to a tremendous amount of excitement about and support for our future.

On a sadder note, in the midst of all this growth and activity, we have lost members of our Church family, Eva McGuinness, wife of Wally, and Pete Schroeder, husband of Mike (Martha).

I continue to be grateful for your energy, willingness to engage, and generosity. I look forward to a great year ahead expanding our membership, pastoral care, hospitality, adult education, and social action initiatives. *Thank you.*

Summary of Minister's Activity

It's best to arrange meetings by calling or emailing ahead rather than dropping in. I have standing meetings and appointments during the week or may be away from the office and I would hate to miss you. Please call the office during hours of operation below (508-947-1935) or my home study (508-967-2763), or email me at minister@uumiddleboro.org if you would like to get together during the week.

Monday	Day off & office closed
Tuesday	9:30 to 2:30
Wednesday	9:30 to 3:00
Thursday	9:30 to 2:30
Friday	9:30 to noon

Church-related Activity: Since my last report to you, I have conducted 31 worship services, and many family services with DRE Juliet Donaldson. I officiated at three child dedications, participated in or led

four memorial services, and assisted with one Bar Mitzvah. I meet monthly or semi-monthly with ten committees of the Church. I meet weekly with staff members. I have offered pastoral counseling to 11 individuals.

Collaborative Activity: Common Ground: Center for Spiritual Practice in Southeastern Massachusetts is winding down. I will continue to offer On the Table sessions on current events involving faith in society, but we are planning a different format, and seeking to be involved with other churches, temples, and nonprofits.

Denominational Activity: I ended my third term as Vice-President of the Ballou Channing District and will continue as an At-Large member. BCD has begun the process of district dissolution, beginning with a decision by the Board and opening the issue for comment and discussion among the district congregations. This will probably take a few years. I am one of two Good Officers for the BCD Minister's Association, offering advice and counsel to my colleagues. I am a peer Facilitator for the New England Region. At least twice a year, I meet with UU congregational boards to facilitate visioning and planning.

Community Outreach: I am serving my fourth term as President of the Middleborough Area Assistance Coalition (MAAC). I was appointed by the Middleborough Affordable Housing Committee by the Middleborough Board of Selectman. I am serving my second year as a Board member of the Old Colony YMCA.

Discretionary Fund Activity: I spend UUSM's discretionary fund to help friends and members as well as individuals in our surrounding communities. I work with the Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, Middleborough Gas and Electric, and our Veterans Agent in town to offer emergency assistance to individuals and families experiencing financial crises.

Veterans Ceremonies: I have offered invocations and benedictions at our annual town-wide Memorial Day and Veterans Day services. This year we hosted the Veterans at a Sunday worship service on Memorial Day weekend.

Worship

Our worship theme for the year was "Power, Privilege, and Possibility." It was influenced this year by political events affecting our entire nation, as well as upheavals within our denomination that have continued to reverberate. The issues have been reflected in sermons, deep discussions, and activism. It will continue next year with an Adult Education series led by Deanne Bonnar, "Our Path to Racial Justice."

The Worship Team, consisting of Laura Stevens, Jim Norris, Frank Girard, Tanya Trzeciak and Rev. Sarah Person, helped plan and coordinate the Sunday worship services. Team members served as worship associates opening services with announcements and contributing other elements of the services.

Pastoral/Parish Care

Our Care Teams are an extension of the Minister's pastoral care presence. The goal is to maintain a sustained connection between the congregants and the Church, especially when Church attendance becomes difficult or impossible and to provide a structure for responding to the emergencies that affect

the Congregation. This connection is maintained through phone calls, visits, and supportive activities offered by team members.

Our teams have been busy offering counseling and practical support to many of us over the course of the year. Lay ministers include: Sue Curtiss (Lead), Gene and Gilda Phillips, Deanne Bonnar, and Chris Korben. Advisors and friendly visitors include: Bill Howe, Kim Correia, and Sue St. Germain. Coordinators include: Dody Adkins Perry for meals, Tricia Tummino for transportation, Chris Korben for cards and notes, Valerie Fontaine for Caring Choir visits, and Juli Gould for prayer shawls and other knitted items.

Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry consists of Bob Waterman (Lead), Christine Hoyle, and Rev. Sarah. The Committee's purpose is to help strengthen ministry in our Church. The Committee operates on the principle that while it is the job of the professional minister to provide leadership and perform in a specialized role, overall ministry belongs to the membership of the Church as a whole. Ministry, therefore, refers to all activities that carry out the Church's mission. Accordingly, the Committee serves two main purposes: (1) To serve as a conduit for information and feedback concerning the effectiveness of ministry in our Church; the Committee seeks out and is open to input from the Congregation. (2) To serve as a sounding board and support resource for the minister. The Committee met over the course of the Church year, discussing and processing feedback from the Congregation and providing support and feedback to the Minister.

Religious Exploration

Report contributors: Juliet Donaldson, *Director of Religious Exploration*; JR Pucillo-Dunphy, *Religious Exploration Committee Chair*

Events

- We began the year with a cookout at the Myles Standish forest with swimming and kayaking.
- Juli Gould very kindly hosted our Halloween bonfire party.
- We also held our traditional holiday party where we decorated gingerbread houses, sang carols and dressed the tree.

Theme

Our theme this year was Star Wars. We had 7 Pillars of the Jedi representing our 7 Principles and we ran with this theme throughout the year as we explored the following topics:

- The Force Awakens – Exploring the Jedi Pillars and the Hero’s Journey (Sept / Oct)
- Force for Change – Creating a just and fair world (Oct / Nov)
- The Story of Star Wars / Winter Pageant – Showing how even the smallest person can make a difference (Dec)
- The Return of the Jedi – An introduction to Buddhism (Jan / Feb)
- Revenge of the Sith – Exploring the dark side of the force (Feb / Mar)
- A New Hope – Peace & Reconciliation (Apr / May)
- The Rebel Alliance – exploring democracy (May / Jun)

The Jedi Trials – The children were challenged to complete 4 Jedi Trials in order to be knighted as Jedi at the end of the year. The four trials were:

- The Trial of Service (helping in church)
- The Trial of Justice (helping to make the world a better place)
- The Trial of Democracy (learning how to take an active part in our democracy)
- The Trial of Compassion (random acts of kindness, to spread a little love to others)

Classes and Attendance

We ran three classes:

- Younglings K-Gr3
- Initiates Gr 4- Gr 6
- Padawans Gr 7 and up

	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>2016/17</u>	<u>2015/16</u>	<u>2014/15</u>
<u>Average Attendance</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Highest Attendance</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>Lowest Attendance</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Number of Teachers</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>

Of the 27 adults who taught in RE, 16 did not have children in the program and we are immensely grateful to these dedicated volunteers for stepping up and helping out, the RE program could not run without you.

Worship

Religious Exploration led 5 services this year:

- “Luke Skywalker and the Hero’s Journey”
- “Equal Exchange: Building a Better World”
- “The Story of Star Wars”
- “The Redemption of Anakin Skywalker”
- Flower Communion

Social Action/Fundraising

The children and youth participated in several initiatives. See details in the Church Life and Social Action sections.

UU Spaces

Towards the end of the year we experimented with a Spirit Play style of programming that we called UU Spaces. We met together at the beginning to hear and discuss a story before allowing each child or youth to choose from a range of activities. We had the following spaces: Spirit Space (for contemplative activities), Research Space (for grades 7 and up), Justice Space (making the world a better place), and Creator Space (creating artwork around the week’s topic).

Playgroup

During October we hosted a Wednesday morning playgroup for preschool children and their caregivers. We provided time for free play, snack, a craft, and finished with a whole group singing and story time. This was a success but required approximately 4 hours of DRE time per week to allow for set-up and clean up and time for leading the group. One volunteer is also required to help the DRE and be on-site for safety purposes.

OWL Program

We ran a three church 7th - 9th grade OWL program for youth from UU Middleboro, UU Bridgewater, and the UU Murray church in Attleboro. In total, we had 23 youth taking part, which meant using two different teaching teams running concurrently.

Childcarers

We had an excellent team of child-carers: Ashley Andrade and Alex Pucillo-Dunphy.

RE Committee

JR Pucillo-Dunphy continued as Chair and Liaison to the PC, Maria Pucillo-Dunphy acted as Treasurer and our CORI representative. Thank you to everyone on the committee for their support and commitment to the program.

Next year

Our preliminary theme is: *The Fellowship of the Rings: The Quest for the Six Sources*

We'll leave the Middle Boro and go on an adventure - crossing continents and learning about the universe so that we can more deeply connect with our UU faith.

In our search for the Six Sources we will:

- Discover the mystery and wonder in the universe.
- Explore other world religions, as we learn about the life of the prophet Muhammad as he founds the religion of Islam.
- Learn what wisdom modern day Jewish and Christian traditions have to give our UU faith.
- Search for prophetic people from across the globe who inspire us to live better lives.
- Follow science and reason to understand their importance of creating a better, more just world.
- Explore our earth-centered traditions with a Yule-themed holiday pageant

We also hope to run a Youth Group every other week on a Sunday evening for grades 7 and up.

Adult RE

A session of the Stewards of Children training program was held at the Church, facilitated by local Y staff. The program focuses on child safety and abuse prevention. Several members of the Congregation attended.

An informal survey was conducted this spring and the results are in! The survey revealed we are most interested in the following classes and workshops in the next year or two:

- Building Your Own Theology
- Ethics
- Spirituality in Everyday Life
- World Religions
- Small Group Ministries to continue – Insight Meditation, Ritual and Reflection, Spirituality Group, and Book Groups
- New Small Group Ministry – Soul to Soul

These programs will join Deanne Bonnar's "Our Path to Racial Justice." Many thanks to Deanne, Dan Hotchkiss, and others who have volunteered to lend their talents.

Music

Report contributors: Susan Hotchkiss, *Director of Music*; Valerie Fontaine, *Music Committee Chair*

The “Music Department” at First UU is alive and well! This is Susan’s tenth year as music director at FUUSM, and her vision of building a musical community has expanded slightly to be a supporting arm to the well-being and strength of our church. We continue to attract musicians looking for a strong music community who become church members and foundational participants in the life-spirit of this Congregation.

The bulk of our music making happens on Sunday mornings. The Chalice Choir sings every other Sunday, and “off Choir” Sundays have special music offerings from soloists, vocal ensembles, and instrumentalists. Most of the Sunday morning musicians come from the Chalice Choir. Our Christmas Eve service featured Shelley Otis on harp, Owen Kidd on trumpet, and Kate Melchior (soprano) in addition to a flute choir, Chalice Choir and Chalice Ensemble. This year we had two worship services led by visiting professionals: Matt Meyer in December and Jeannie Gagne (with Stan Strickland) in January. We also had special music offerings from “16 Shillings” (Rob Dragunas and Mark Belanger) and “Triple Time” (Patty Simon’s recorder group) in April.

It was a busy concert year that started with “Raising the Rafters” in October, featuring Natsumi Malloy on our historic Woodberry & Harris tracker organ. This was the fourth of five annual open concerts featuring the organ, which was renovated during the summer of 2014, with support from church members and town Community Preservation Act funding. The following month, our choir sang in the Middleborough Music Guild Thanksgiving Concert which raised substantial funds for music scholarships. We enjoyed “Saints and Singers” (led by Joshua McKiernan and Jon Keene) in December, and a 50/50 split fundraiser concert with Solstice Singers in January. March was an adventure sponsoring “We Did It for You: Women’s Journey Through History.” This production was made possible partly through a grant from the Middleboro Cultural Council. In May, Andrea Priest directed a most successful “Men Who Cook, Women Who Sing.” We enjoyed Riley Coyote as a season finale in June.

Somewhere between a Sunday service and a concert was Music Sunday. The choir worked hard to pull together Paul Basler’s “Songs of Faith,” a five-movement work for choir, piano, French horn, and percussion. We were pleased to have Susan Hadfield with us on piano, Eddie Kidd on percussion, and Matt Schofield on French horn. This experience was a high point in performance for our Chalice Choir.

We had special workshops for singers this year, including Vocal Training with Leilani Dalpe and a Caring Choir Workshop with Andrea Priest. In June we will have a two-part workshop featuring “Art of the Fugue” for classical singers and “Circle of Song” for the wider church community. Workshops are followed by a potluck luncheon and a chance to socialize. We will also have an annual summer potluck to kick off the new church-year in August, hosted by Valerie Fontaine.

Caring Choirs assembled and went out into the wider community four times this past year, including 2 nursing homes, 1 rest home, 2 private homes, and once for a large “Memory Café” at the Middleborough Council on Aging. A total of 16 different choir members participated, plus Rev. Sarah and one person from the congregation. Our Christmas Caroling group enjoyed a pot-luck feast at Hotchkiss House after singing at Oak Hill Rehabilitation and Serenity Home.

Kudos to our choir members and *music committee members as follows: *Dody Adkins-Perry, Katie Allen, *Nancy Backus, Marese Barry-Belanger, Holly Begley, Cindy Benard, Rick Benard, Jim Bonnar, Helen Casoli, Susan Curtiss, Rob Dragunas, *Valerie Fontaine, Kimberly French, Susan Hadfield, Dan Hotchkiss, Jon Keene, Heidi-Lawton-McCarthy, Dorine Levasseur, Marc MacQueen, Joshua McKiernan, Karena Paleologo, Andrea Priest, Ed Priest, Patty Simon, Tony Soares, Brynn Stevens, Jeff Stevens, *Laura Stevens, *Linda Thompson, Nicola Wilbar, and Heidi Woofenden.

It's a pleasure being a part of this vibrantly musical community – the beat goes on!

Church Life

Report contributors: Bob Waterman, *President*, Andrea Priest, *Fundraising Program Coordinator*;
Dorine Levasseur, *Membership Development Team Lead*

Ours is vibrant community always busy with many activities and events. The hard work and dedication of many committed and talented individuals help makes these a success.

Small Groups

We have several small groups that met regularly over the year:

- The Spirituality Group, led by Bob Waterman, provides a safe, quiet space to explore personal spirituality, learn more about teachings and practices from a variety of traditions, and share life's journey with fellow travelers.
- Satsang, led by Valerie Fontaine, is centered on passage meditation.
- Sangha Meditation, led by Tom Tanguay, provides an opportunity to develop a deeper meditation practice.
- Ritual & Reflection, led by Barbara Bancroft and Sarah Person, offers sessions providing ways to inspire and feed the soul with a blend of gentle yoga, thought-provoking videos, creative practices, conversation, and prayer.
- A Healing Circle, offered by a few of our members and friends who are Reiki practitioners, began in the spring and offers a way to take a step back from the chaos of modern life and to retreat, relax, and allow yourself to just "be."
- A new book discussion group, led by Carleen Loper, formed in the spring.

Programming (FUNdraisers)

Our fundraising programs continued to be not only a source of funds, but also a wonderful addition to our Church life. Andrea Priest continued to help coordinate the overall schedule of offerings. She notes that we do have to balance the events with all the other offerings, meetings and needs of the Church, and suggests we continue our efforts to have better planning of the calendar and communication around the scheduling of events.

Andrea also notes that it is good for us to create fundraisers to support the work of the Church. We have fun and create good memories. In particular, there are many service auction events planned throughout the year to help keep us connected.

In August, we held our annual Yard Sale, in conjunction with the Street Festival, Krazy Days. The sale was very successful thanks to the leadership of Sue Sherman and the hard work of many others. It is a huge effort to get everything sorted and ready. It was a great opportunity to recycle, reuse, and raise some money. Items are not all priced; buyers make an offer, which reduces the amount of time pricing all the items. The festival brings many people to the downtown area so it is a great time to have a fundraiser that takes advantage of such a large audience.

In October, we participated again in the Lakeville Arts Festival by providing a food stand where we sell vats of soup, bread, chicken salad, meatball subs, homemade goodies, and cranberries donated by

Helen Casoli. We had new tents which worked well. It is quite a task to organize and it takes many hands to implement, but is always a good fundraiser and a great way to be present in the community. We sold leftover goods at church on Sunday and had good results.

In February, the RE program hosted a Valentine's Fundraising dinner. The children and youth served the food and drinks and provided the entertainment. Rick Benard, JR Pucillo-Dunphy, Pam Rasa, and some of the youth built a stage for the entertainment. This stage has since been used by the Council on Aging with great success. It is stored in the garage and is available for use in the parish hall and the sanctuary.

In March, Norm Grenier continued the tradition as auctioneer for the annual "Service Auction". The goal was to raise half of the budgeted fundraiser line and we exceeded that goal! The best parts, of course, are all the opportunities to get together for all kinds of activities all throughout the year.

In May, Men Who Cook, Women Who Sing was a terrific success celebrating its 13th year! There were over 25 performers in addition to the full choir. Over 13 "Men Who Cook" participated and did a great job. In addition, there were more than 30 people involved in preparing other appetizers, setting up, working the kitchen, and cleaning up. It was a great night.

In June, the annual Plant Sale, once again coordinated by Mike Schroeder and Maria Pucillo-Dunphy, was held. The event was moved to June 2 due to a schedule conflict.

Also in June, we hosted a Riley Coyote CD launch concert. The group donated all ticket proceeds to the Church as a thank you for providing space in our sanctuary to record their CD. There were also raffles and refreshments for sale, with proceeds going to the Church.

See the Finance Report for details on the financial results of our fundraising efforts.

Membership Development

The Membership Development Team, consisting of members Dorine Levasseur (Lead), Chris Korben, Sandy Smiley, Sue Sherman, and Rev. Sarah, continued its work this Church year to enhance the welcoming nature of our community by elevating the profile of its outreach to visitors and new members, both by consistent and continuous follow-up and connection. We connected with four different congregations to learn about their "best practices" in welcoming newcomers and building membership. We are inviting all FUUSM members to join us in these efforts by all continuing to take individual responsibility in welcoming newcomers, especially as they find their way into the sanctuary and look for a place to sit.

Newcomer "munches" (light lunch following a Sunday service) were formally expanded to occur once in the spring and once in the fall. This is a great opportunity to share what brought us to FUUSM, what keeps us here, and to connect newcomers to their interests. The RE program continues to be a great draw for families. The Team moved the Welcome table to two locations: the narthex and to the side of the sanctuary with the Welcome forms, Welcome packets, and name tags available at each location. Thanks to Chris Korben as she continues to make name tags for people who regularly attend church as part of the Membership/Welcome efforts.

As we look ahead to a new Church year, our goal will be to develop a team of greeters who are willing to take on simple but very focused responsibilities for welcoming newcomers. Linda Thompson has

graciously agreed to make simple stoles that will identify greeters. We also hope to expand FUUSM's profile in the community through planned participation in town events. In doing so, we will be mindful of current capacity and the need to build further capacity for this effort.

Hospitality

The Hospitality Team continues to organize coverage for Sunday Coffee Hour and members contributed to other events at the Church. Contributors included Andrea Priest, Dody Adkins Perry, Eileen Smith, Sue Sherman, Sandy Smiley, Bill Howe, Rev. Sarah Person, and many others who provided treats, helped with set up, washed dishes. etc.

The Team made some changes this year to encourage new volunteers. Coffee Hour was drastically simplified, providing simple snacks and preparing the coffee and hot water urns ahead of time. Recruitment is still slow but picking up. The Team is working hard to train more volunteers on proper kitchen procedure to keep things clean and safe.

Public Relations

The Public Relations Team continues to spread the good word about all of the wonderful things our Church has to offer. Contributors include Mark Belanger, Pam Davis, Maria Pucillo-Dunphy, JR Pucillo-Dunphy, Holly Begley, Valarie Ortelt, and Rev. Sarah.

The team seeks to get information in a timely fashion to as many people as possible in as many ways as possible, and works with the various committees and teams to facilitate and coordinate information flow. Avenues include our website, social media sites, email updates/alerts (UU Updates, E-tree), features in local newspapers, and specialized brochures.

Everyone has a part in helping spread good PR about our Church. The easiest way is to interact through the Church's social media sites. You can comment on posts, and share them with family, friends, or to a broader audience.

Like us on Facebook:	www.facebook.com/uumiddleboro
Follow us on Twitter:	@UUMiddleboro www.twitter.com/UUMiddleboro
Find us on Google+:	First UU Middleboro MA www.google.com/+UUMiddleboroOrg
Subscribe to us on YouTube:	www.youtube.com/user/UUMiddleboro

Social Action/Social Justice

Report contributors: Deanne Bonnar, *Social Justice Council Lead*, Kimberly French, *Climate Justice Initiative Team Lead*, Cheryl MacQueen, *MAAC Representative*, Juliet Donaldson, *Director of Religious Exploration*, Rev. Sarah

Social Action/Social Justice is widely viewed by this Congregation as an opportunity to deepen our commitment to our faith by acting on the principles we profess. In so doing, we strengthen our connections to one another, and engage our children and newcomers in the meaning of being a UU in the world.

Projects/Initiatives

The year started with Rev. Sarah hosting a dinner with 10 people in the Congregation who had expressed interest in social justice work. It was proposed and accepted that we form a social justice council whose work it would be to promote and help sustain social justice projects within the Congregation. Eight people signed on to work on the Social Justice Council. It was clear that our central project would be built on the momentum of the climate justice group that had started last year from the Web of Life Class. If other issues rose to the level of significant concern during the year they too could be considered for support. It was decided that one method of support would be to have a monthly Social Justice table at coffee hour that featured what people were working on and encouraged others to get involved. In all, seven tables were presented and staffed which featured two critical issues: climate justice and reducing gun violence. Details about the climate justice initiative are below.

A second social justice initiative arose this spring to address the issue of gun violence. There were two social justice tables highlighting the issue. Five people signed up as interested in working on the topic. A number of people signed the UUA petition to bring suit against the federal government for failing to keep young people safe in their schools. Several people from the Congregation marched in the Boston protest march to reduce gun violence as part of nationwide marches to force more active gun control legislation. As of this writing, there is no one who feels they can commit to leading a group to continue this effort, but we will continue to work on it over the summer.

This spring a number of the social justice council members attended a workshop on holding difficult conversations. It was hosted by the UUA Ballou Channing District, run by Essential Partners and deigned to build skills in talking about deeply felt positions where there are polarized viewpoints.

A one-day social justice retreat is planned for the summer. During this retreat we will review the successes and challenges of the past year and consider what future direction elicits the most interest and energy in the Congregation. All interested parties are invited to attend.

Rev. Sarah is involved in various community organizations and activities, and serves on a number of local boards. She helps individuals in our surrounding communities with funds from the Minister's Discretionary Fund, and she works with local agencies to offer emergency assistance to individuals and families experiencing financial crises.

The Church supports the Food Pantry of St. Vincent de Paul. The Buczek family volunteers to bring our donations to the Food Pantry. *Please donate as generously and as often as you can.*

Climate Justice

In early 2017, 27 adults in our church demonstrated their commitment to taking action for a livable climate by signing up for an intensive 5-session Exploring the Web of Life course. The class involved educating ourselves, reflecting on our religious values, and compiling a database about our own resource use by talking widely to people in our towns.

Following up on that work, last summer we reached out to other faith-based and environmental groups to learn about the broader climate-justice movement and what role we could play. It turned out they were very excited to hear from us, an organized group in a conservative part of the state where they didn't have contacts. What we heard was that state climate policy was one of the most effective places to put our energy right now - in the final year of our state's two-year legislative cycle, with numerous big climate bills on the table. That continues to be our focus through the end of that cycle on July 31.

Meanwhile, we continue to search for the best, most effective role for a faith-based, local group like ours in the movement, following two principles we adopted early on: Act first, then reflect. Listen with humility.

Here is what we worked on this past year:

- Carbon Pricing Education: In September we partnered with Soule Homestead and ClimateXChange to bring economist Marc Breslow to teach us about carbon pricing policy, one of the most promising ways to reduce carbon emissions.
- Climate Justice Google Group. We created an electronic group to keep the 87 people who have attended our events up to date on what we're doing, with notices of opportunities for action.
- Stand-In at the State House: Thirteen of us - our Baker's dozen - demonstrated for one (or more) days with other activists in the 8-week Stand Up Charlie campaign in fall 2017, demanding that Governor Baker ban new fossil-fuel infrastructure in the state. UU Mass Action organizers Matt Meyer and Evan Seitz led us in a workshop on congregational movement building.
- State Legislator Meetings: Constituent groups repeatedly met with our state legislators (Pacheco, Orrall, Gifford, and Calter) and their aides, initially after our demonstration at the State House in November. We also showed up at their district office hours throughout the year. In February, we hosted a meeting at the church with Senator Marc Pacheco just before he unveiled his clean energy omnibus bill, to tell him our priorities and learn more about the bill. In March, we met with our legislators again at UU Mass Action Lobby Day, and got a shout-out as a first-time participant and the church registering the most people. Even if we don't get our reps' votes, these meetings have been valuable work. At this point we have a real rapport with all of them, though it wasn't always smooth. They know who we are and what we want; they'll talk to us about where we can find common ground; and they respect that we keep reaching out.
- Letter Writing Table and Flood the Phones: At the Social Justice Council table at coffee hour and in response to our Google Group action alerts, we have written scores of letters to our legislators and governor. One rep told us how impressed she was to get several handwritten letters. We have also joined statewide calling campaigns to urge legislative action on climate bills.
- Fossil Free Fast Watch Party: We hosted one of 200 watch parties nationwide to live-stream a rally led by Bill McKibben and Bernie Sanders, bringing together groups like ours from all over the world. It was empowering to see that people of all ages, classes, ethnicities, and religions are doing just what we're doing in towns everywhere.

- Environmental Justice Sign-On Letter: We invited and got signatures of two Middleborough Selectmen to join municipal officials across the state supporting an environmental justice bill.
- Green Energy Public Forum: We participated in a panel hosted by the Democratic Town Committee at the Middleborough Public Library for green energy leaders in town for Earth Day. We also hosted a conversation at church as part of the Sunday service that weekend.
- Mass Power Forward “Bird-Dogging”: We answered our coalition’s strategy to ask our governor about climate at every public appearance, and in May asked him a question about fossil-fuel infrastructure at his monthly appearance on WGBH’s Boston Public Radio.
- Mass Climate Action Network’s Green Muni Campaign: A few of us have been working with MCAN and attended a workshop with activists from the 51 towns served by municipal electric plants in the state. We then met with Middleborough Gas and Electric heads to talk about how we can move our town away from its heavy reliance on fossil fuels and nuclear, and set a target date and plan to move toward 100% renewables. We promoted MG&E’s launch of its first small community-supported solar project this winter, and our members were among the first to sign up, encouraging the utility to develop more.

Several of our core group have continued reaching out to environmental, conservation, and political allies in our community to search for our best role, and this summer we plan to transition our team from a church-based group to a wider community organization. UU Mass Action organizers have offered to continue advising and supporting our organizers, as we form a local MCAN chapter called Sustainable Middleborough and work with MCAN staff as well.

Some of this new group’s potential projects could include an electric-vehicle campaign (our town has only a couple dozen private EVs); support for the town’s plastic bag ban effort; collaborating with MG&E on its energy fair, conservation, and solar projects; running a candidate for MG&E board; and organizing citizens to attend board meetings to advocate for our clean-energy priorities.

We hope church members will continue to live our religious principles supporting our precious, fragile web of life and democratic process and will stay involved with this work our church has launched, as it keeps evolving.

Cash in the Plate Donations

Each month, we donate our “cash in the plate”, i.e., any cash not designated toward pledges, to local worthy causes. Thanks to everyone for your incredible generosity.

Recipients	Amount
Minister’s Discretionary Fund	\$2936
Brain Tumor Research	\$334
Hurricane Relief	\$2223
Food Pantry	\$825
Fuel Assistance	\$894
Matthew Mission	\$696
School Lunch Program	\$668
Scholarships for Church youth	\$953
Scholarships for Church musicians and volunteers	\$722
Middleboro Veterans program	TBD
Total (so far!)	\$10,251

Religious Exploration Fundraisers

The children and youth engaged in fundraising activities as part of their RE curriculum.

- Raised money for UNICEF in October and sold Equal Exchange items during Coffee Hour throughout the year.
- Held a Rainbow Ice-cream Fundraiser in June to help raise money for the Global Art Peace Project, which helps children, youth and families in an impoverished village suffering from the effects of climate change. Earlier in the year, took part in this project and shared art with partners in Morocco.

MAAC

The Middleboro Area Assistance Coalition’s (MAAC) mission is to develop an area wide coalition that will represent agencies dealing directly or indirectly with conditions that are detrimental to the health, safety or social well-being of individuals and/or families in the service area. Cheryl MacQueen served as the Church’s representative to the group this year. Cheryl attended regular meetings and reported back to the Church on the group’s initiatives and projects.

Governance/Administration

Report contributors: Bob Waterman, *President, Governance & Policy Team Lead, Leadership Development Team Lead, Staff Support Team Lead*

Parish Committee

The Parish Committee worked continuously this year to address many issues from mundane to more significant to the life and future of our Church. The Church year started with a process to develop a vision for the Church for the next couple of years. The vision addressed three components: (1) Engaging with the community beyond our walls; (2) Building spiritual community in our Congregation; (3) Paying our way responsibly. Listening circles were then held in the winter, organized Cheryl MacQueen, Eileen Smith, and Rev. Sarah. These were well-attended, well-received, and provided valuable feedback and engagement. Next was the design and planning for our Annual Pledge Drive. Marc and Cheryl MacQueen led a task group and the results were magnificent, thanks to the hard work, commitment, and generosity of so many.

FUUSM became a MA state corporation June 23, 2017, thanks primarily to Bill Howe's efforts. This created a great deal of work, particularly for our Treasurer, Investments Team, and Staff Support Team. Incorporation meant that the Society became a new entity and needed to change its status with the state and federal governments, unemployment, financial institutions, etc.

The 501(c)3 application process (for non-profit status) is pending. The process has been daunting, but Bill Howe, Dan Hotchkiss, Rev. Sarah, and others have worked to get the application ready for submission.

Over the year, the PC also addressed the development and revision of several policies and procedural guidelines.

Governance/Policy

The Governance/Policy Task Group, comprised of Bob Waterman (Lead) and Rev. Sarah, serves to: (1) Examine current governance and management structures and methods, and make recommendations on revised or new approaches; (2) Draft and facilitate implementation of changes to Church by-laws; (3) Create, review, and revise policies as needed; (4) Design mechanisms for effective communication of policies (e.g., Policy Handbook, postings on website).

This year's projects included: (1) Continuing to examine policy governance models and alternate organizational structures; (2) Facilitating the adoption of policies concerning Conflict of Interest and Indemnification of Officers of the Corporation, with Bill Howe as a key contributor; (3) Beginning to develop a comprehensive Finance Policy.

Thanks go to the committees, teams, and individuals who assisted with review and revision of the above.

Leadership Development

The Leadership Development Team consists of members Bob Waterman (Lead), Barbara Bancroft, Chris Korben, and Rev. Sarah. The team's purpose is to assist with the cultivation of leadership in the Congregation. Specific objectives include: (1) Helping define and establish the mission and vision of leadership in the Church; (2) Assessing needs for leadership development opportunities; (3) Developing and delivering leadership development activities, such as training, retreats, and meetings for Church leaders; this may include identifying outside activities at the regional level, UUA, or other sources, and identifying resources to provide activities in-house; (4) Assisting with seeking out and identifying individuals in the Congregation who have the skills, abilities, experience, and willingness to serve in leadership positions on committees, teams, and task groups.

This year, the team: (1) Continued to examine the Church's leadership mission and vision, and identified specific developmental needs for the enhancement of leadership skills; (2) Coordinated the Nominating process and sought out candidates for Parish Committee positions for the upcoming year.; (3) Assisted in identifying potential leaders for other key roles.

Staff Support

The Staff Support Team, consisting of Bob Waterman (Lead) and Marc MacQueen, provides support to the Church's professional staff and to the Minister, as staff supervisor. This year, the team: (1) Examined staff compensation and benefits issues, and made recommendations for staff salary increases for next year's budget; (2) Supported the transition of employees with the new incorporated status; (3) Assisted with the proposal to increase the hours for the RE Director's position.

Physical Plant/Infrastructure

Report contributors: Sue Sherman, *Building & Grounds Team Lead*; Rev. Sarah.

It takes many hands to keep our Church in good working order. Our glorious old building and surrounding grounds continue to delight, but also present many challenges to keep things presentable and functioning properly. Profuse thanks go to the many who work tirelessly to see after this very important work.

Building & Grounds

Sue Sherman continued to lead the efforts to oversee the work of maintaining the building and grounds. She notes that there are a number of individuals who contribute to this work, and the regular contributors are Alan Melchior, Marc Mac Queen, JR Pucillo-Dunphy, and Bill Sherman. Sue does a good bit of hands-on work, as well. She notes that the summary below captures only some of the major work that was done during the year.

Upkeep and maintenance:

- Steve (our Sexton) continues to put out traps and remove mice regularly.
- Susie, Bill, and Steve replaced the Parish Hall filters three times.
- Roberts Roofing replaced a few shingles and also cleaned the gutter over the Nickerson Ave. door.
- Paul Macuch of Macuch Restoration and Painting trimmed the bottom of the large sliding door leading into Rev. Sarah's Office.
- Marc repaired the kitchen pass-through windows.
- The batteries in the lights on the back stairs were replaced three times.
- Specialized Heating installed a Comfortmaker Kit to our heating system.
- The filters in the Sanctuary (there are four) are still not dirty and will be checked this spring.
- JR and Alan replaced the Sanctuary lights with dimmable LEDs.
- Alan is negotiating with Macuch Restoration for paint work on the exterior.
- Veterans Lawn Service has been engaged to do lawn mowing.
- Alan is negotiating with Well Done Landscaping regarding lawn and garden costs.
- Volunteers removed the leaves from the gardens in the fall and spring. Mike Schroeder, Natalie Johnson, Patty Simon, and others did the work.

Elevator Inspection - The state inspection of our church elevator was done on January 10, 2017. According to current regulations, inspections must be done every two years, meaning our next inspection needs to be done on or before January 10, 2019. Above and Beyond Elevator technicians must do the pre-inspection maintenance one month before the inspection.

Expansion

The Expansion Task Group, consisting of Pam Davis, JR Pucillo-Dunphy, Alan Melchior, Sue Sherman, Jim Bonnar, and Rev. Sarah, continued to meet and gather information on reorganizing and re-purposing space options. In addition, the group is exploring possibilities for renovations and additions.

Green Sanctuary

Though relatively inactive this year, the Green Sanctuary Team still serves to advocate for engaging in environmentally responsible and sustainable practices in all that we do, including purchase and use of goods and materials, energy conservation, and recycling.

Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden Team, led by Mike Schroeder, oversees maintenance and care of the Memorial Garden, which is the repository for ashes of former members of our Church. The Garden is a place of contemplation and remembrance, and many hands have contributed to its upkeep and beautiful presentation.

Technology

The Technology Team keeps our technical systems and equipment in working order, maintains our Church website, social media accounts, and email addresses, and records and distributes for broadcast our Church services. Contributors include JR Pucillo-Dunphy, Maria Pucillo-Dunphy, Rob Dragunas, Mark Belanger, Valarie Ortelt, and Rev. Sarah.

Finances

Report contributors: Pam Davis, *Treasurer*; Andrea Priest, *Programming Coordinator*; Bob Waterman, *President*

Current Fiscal Year

Pledge units have been very committed to paying their pledges this year. Because life occasionally throws a curve ball, some pledges have needed to be adjusted, but it is anticipated that about 97% of budgeted revenue will be collected. A significant portion of our income comes from the fundraising programs that so many of our members work tirelessly to help make succeed. Overall, this year's fundraising goal was exceeded by \$3000. Thank you to all the volunteers who made the fundraising so successful! Rentals and unpledged special gifts are more than budgeted. Overall, this year's revenue is expected to be \$2000 more than budgeted.

Almost all expenses are under budget. The law now requires our elevator to be inspected every two years instead of every year saving an additional \$1600.

Thus, the anticipated budget deficit for the current fiscal year will be approximately \$20,000 instead of the budgeted \$26,000 (see particulars in pages following this report).

Funds in Checking Accounts

Account	Fund	Balance as of 5/30/18
Church Debit card	Operations-Unrestricted	\$1,891
RE account	Religious Exploration	\$500
Music account	Music	\$500
Church Operations	CUUPS	\$627
Church Operations	Cash in Plate^	\$3,538
Church Operations	I Love My Church*	\$12,825
Church Operations	Piano*	\$650
Church Operations	PrePaid Rental	\$120
Church Operations	PrePaid Pledge	\$6,665
Church Operations	Operations-Unrestricted	\$22,259
Total		\$49,575

^ Pending check disbursement to recipients.

* Funds to be moved to Investment accounts as soon as our Fidelity Account is changed to a Corporation account.

Investments

The Church has several investment funds, some that are restricted, and one general fund that is unrestricted. The Investments Team, consisting of Bill Howe, Marc MacQueen, Gene Phillips, and Alan Melchior, oversees the investment strategy for the managed funds. The funds have done quite well this year, with an overall rate of return of over 8%.

The transition for our investment accounts due to our new incorporation status should finally be complete when Fidelity gets the account changed over to a corporate account.

Fund	Balance on 7/1/17	Plus	Minus	Market Change	Balance on 4/30/18
Unrestricted	\$105,639.15	\$ -	\$ -	\$8,477.72	\$114,116.87
Scott Trust	\$18,629.08	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,494.32	\$20,123.40
Mary Fuller	\$23,714.64	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,902.26	\$25,616.90
Organ	\$953.65	\$ -	\$ -	\$76.50	\$1,030.15
Piano	\$301.23	\$ -	\$ -	\$24.16	\$325.39
Memorial Garden	\$1,086.16	\$ -	\$ -	\$87.13	\$1,173.29
Total Funds	\$150,323.91	\$ -	\$ -	\$12,062.09	\$162,386.00

“I Love My Church” Initiative

The “I Love My Church” Initiative, organized and led by Rick Benard and Amanda Huggon-Mauretti, was immensely successful in raising funds for renovations and long-term maintenance projects. The last of the multi-year pledges are still coming in. As noted earlier, there is already \$12,825 of I Love My Church donations in the checking account ready for transfer to the new Fidelity account. The Congregation’s commitment and generosity in contributing to this initiative allowed the Society to accomplish some much-needed repairs and improvements to the Society’s property and still have funds available for future repairs. Thank you all for your contributions

	2015	2016	2017	Totals
Renovations	-\$35964	-\$40007		-\$75971
Roof & Ceiling		-\$13945		-\$13945
Mary Fuller Fund			-\$4284	\$4284
I Love My Church	+20250	+\$62950	+\$3000	\$86200
Difference				+\$586

Budget for Fiscal 2018-2019

The Annual Pledge Drive was a great success this year thanks to the commitment and generosity of many. Anticipated income from pledges next year is 17% higher than the current year’s. Both long-time members and friends and new pledgers have made pledges that show how much we love and how committed we are to The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleborough. Based on past successes with fundraising, the goal has been raised for next year to match these results.

The Parish Committee’s plan was to reduce deficit spending by half in Fiscal 2018-2019, with the goal of eliminating deficit spending entirely in Fiscal 2019-2020. The Parish Committee’s proposed budget provides staff with modest increases, expands the Director of Religious Education position from a 1/2 position (20 hrs) to a 5/8 position (25 hrs), and reduces budgeted deficit spending by half.

Any level of deficit spending is not sustainable. So, the Parish Committee will continue engaging with the Congregation in discussions in Fiscal 2018-2019. The Congregation will need to decide how to achieve a sustainable non-deficit spending budget in Fiscal 2019-2020.