

## Annual Report 2014-2015

### Unity Church-Unitarian

Sanctuary Address: 733 Portland Avenue

Business Address: 732 Holly Avenue

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104

651-228-1456 • 651-228-0927 (fax)

unity@unityunitarian.org • www.unityunitarian.org

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## **In Memoriam**

### **Hamilton Stickney Ross**

March 3, 1920 – November 21, 2014

### **Mary Sharon Runnels Krubsack**

March 13, 1941 – November 28, 2014

### **Emily West Day**

October 20, 1913 – January 13, 2015

### **William “Bill” Wolston**

September 1, 1926 – January 25, 2015

### **Howard Finnell Huelster**

July 31, 1924 – April 1, 2015

### **M. Linda Eller**

April 3, 1923 – July 11, 2015

### **William Lawrence Downing**

October 2, 1921 – July 21, 2015

### **Sarah “Sally” Lovegrove Baker Ross**

April 16, 1923 – August 5, 2015

### **John B. Emkovik**

June 6, 1927 – September 4, 2015

### **Mary Katherine (Heaton) Kaul**

March 13, 1940 – November 6, 2015

### **Nancy Solo-Taylor**

January 23, 1958 – November 10, 2015

## **2014-2015 Annual Report**

### **Prepared by the Executive Team**

November 21, 2015

Dear Members and Friends of Unity Church-Unitarian,

We are pleased to present this Annual Report to the Unity Church-Unitarian congregation at the 2015 Annual Meeting. This report seeks to capture many highlights of the exciting and nourishing 2014-2015 church year. This report only begins to tell the story of a rich and fruitful year.

We have begun to live into our new ends statements which reflect deep conversations among congregants and with “moral owners” beyond the congregation in response to the Board’s powerful question: How can we become more vulnerable and more courageous people? On page 5 you will find the Executive Team’s interpretation of the Ends, and the measures we intend to use in tracking the impact of our ministries in your lives and the life of the larger community. This annual report is intended to provide some of the details of how the church has translated the new ends into invitations for involvement. It is largely a list of programs and activities. But that list implies a wide array of ways our lives have deepened as we become more effective and more loving people.

Our newly refurbished building continues to serve us well. Building use is up markedly since the completion of the *Unity Tomorrow* project in 2012. The building is used by an ever-growing number of partners including Above Every Name Ministries, One Voice Mixed Chorus and the Circle of Peace Movement. There is a remaining debt related to the *Unity Tomorrow* project. We are still working to reduce the principle before we roll it over into a long-term note. For the second year the annual canvass has included a request for capital pledges. \$646,000 has been raised both to service the debt and provide funds for ongoing capital needs.

In the summer of 2014 we brought Madeline Summers on board to serve both as volunteer coordinator and Lisa Friedman’s assistant in her work as Minister for Congregational and Community Engagement. She has been a welcome and effective presence in strengthening our volunteer base both on the welcome teams and our food ministries. In late summer of 2014 we bade farewell to Christy Randall, Coordinator of Children’s Ministries and welcomed her successor, Michelle Hill. Christy remains an active member of the congregation and Michelle has become an indispensable member of the religious education staff.

Our work in helping to end racism and be an instrument of justice and healing is growing deeper and more central to our ministry. Above Every Name, an Afrocentric Universalist Christian Congregation is becoming an integral expression of our larger ministry. Pastor Danny Givens, Jr. completed his first full year as Unity’s first Ministerial Resident and has continued halftime on Unity’s ministerial staff as he pursues Fellowship as a Unitarian Universalist minister. His work has helped to encourage and guide our efforts. In March the church convened a diverse delegation of St. Paul pilgrims to join in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama. The Church also served as fiscal agent and consultants to the Circle of Peace Movement which was conceived at Unity Church and is taking root in service to the

community. Contributions and grants sought and received in support of our Racial Justice work amounted to over \$212,000 this past year.

The Co-Ministers wish to thank the congregation for granting them the second half of a sabbatical leave in February and March of 2015. Once again the Rev. Lisa Friedman capably addressed a major portion of their duties as Sabbatical Senior Minister during their absence.

This report is organized according to program area, with the Ends Statements and Interpretations of Unity Church's Governing Policies as a preface. The Ends Statements guide the Unity Church Board of Trustees and the Executive Team in the day-to-day and long-term decision-making processes in the church's life.

We hope you find this information helpful and that you won't hesitate to contact us with ideas, questions, and comments.

In faith and gratitude,

Janne Eller-Isaacs

Rob Eller-Isaacs

Barbara Hubbard

Lisa Friedman

The Executive Team of Unity Church-Unitarian

## **UNITY CHURCH-UNITARIAN ENDS STATEMENTS 2014-2018**

with Executive Team Interpretations and Measures

*If these things happen, how will people's lives be changed, and how do we measure the impact?*

### **Within**

- 1. The people of Unity Church-Unitarian value a deeply meaningful, transforming liberal religious experience.**

*That which we value, we are willing to work on. This implies that our people will take a spiritual inventory, set personal goals, and engage in regular self-reflection. We understand the role of a supportive religious community in helping people to become more vulnerable and more courageous. We affirm that transformation comes from being fully present to the beauty and brokenness of the human condition.*

#### **Measures:**

- *Spiritual Maturity / Transformation Index*
- *Annual Congregational survey*

### **As individuals, we**

- a. Open ourselves to compassionate pastoral care in times of joy, sorrow, and transition.**

*We nurture an environment where people are able to be vulnerable and to enlist the support of the church. We foster a climate of acceptance and encouragement for vulnerability and courage in all of the communities within the church. As a result, people feel empowered to risk new ways of being in the world.*

#### **Measures:**

- *Analyze participation in formal support groups.*
- *Number of Pastoral Care requests.*
- *Participation in Embracing Meditations*

- b. Develop spiritual practices that nurture reverence and encourage diverse worship services rich in beauty, serenity, community and joy**

*We understand the development of individual spiritual practice to be an essential expectation of church involvement. Such practice builds our capacity for reverence and helps prepare us for a richer, more diverse worship experience. Both personal practice and congregational worship are fundamental to spiritual development.*

#### **Measures:**

- *Analyze participation in church-sponsored classes and workshops*
- *Congregational surveys*

**c. Embrace our identity as Unitarian-Universalists and live out the principles of our shared faith in our daily lives.**

*Congregants know and feel a part of the unfolding story of liberal religion and make use of our stated principles as a tool for self-reflection and action in the world.*

**Measures:**

- Participation in Heritage Week, history classes, etc.
- Participation in pilgrimage opportunities
- Congregational surveys

**d. Cultivate a spirit of curiosity and welcome, growing from a desire for authentic relationship.**

*By embodying a spirit of curiosity and respect as individuals, we create a radically hospitable church. Visitors and newcomers more easily find their place within the larger congregation and the church as a whole becomes a more spirited and welcoming community.*

**Measures:**

- Collect visitor feedback on their experiences.
- Participation in Pathway to Membership classes
- New member retention
- Congregational surveys – “Have you felt empowered to be a part of welcoming visitors and new members?”

**Among**

**2. Unity Church-Unitarian is a community of welcome, reverence, and deep connection.**

*The Holy exists in relationships among people. Congregational participation is essential to the religious life because it opens us up to that experience of the Holy while holding us accountable to one another and our best intentions. When we are a welcoming, reverent, deeply-connected community, the Holy grows in our lives and in the world.*

**Measures:**

- Dashboard report
- Congregational surveys
- Focused interviews (Implement a system in which ET members ask “In what way does your participation inform your experience of the Holy?” In one month each year, we ask teams in all programs to respond to a particular set of questions that will help us )

**As a community, we**

**a. Sustain and encourage one another in love**

*An ever-expanding portion of the congregation embodies and takes up the pastoral ministry of the church, holding each other in vulnerable times, asking for help when we are in need, and celebrating one another’s joys and accomplishments.*

**Measures:**

- *Participation in the pastoral ministries of the church (What really counts?)*
- *Congregational survey*
- *Focus groups (In times of need, do you turn to the church for help? Is it hard for you to ask for help, and why?)*

**b. Value our shared ministry and practice it with integrity**

*An ever-expanding circle of congregants invite and feel invited into shared ministry and understand that they are living it out in their daily lives and in the life of the congregation. Shared ministry is integral to their reflections on their own spiritual well-being and growth and is an openly acknowledged aspect of their religious identity.*

**Measures:**

- *Spirit Map*
- *Congregational survey*
- *Number of leaders able to share the core teachings of the church with others. Shared ministry has come to mean two things: 1) living out our values and 2) sharing our gifts and talents with the church.*

**c. Reach out to one another across differences and stand together in the face of injustice**

*We meet faith-to-faith, engaging our shared humanity in a way that honors the particularities of our differences and allows us to work in authentic partnership while facing the uneven effects of injustice.*

**Measures:**

- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Participation in Community Outreach teams.*
- *Participation in Anti-Racism / Anti-Oppression trainings and workshops*
- *Eagerness of outside organizations to partner with Unity Church.*

**d. Foster a culture of open, inclusive leadership and meaningful engagement**

*The church is a learning community that empowers people to identify and live into their gifts. It's a place that encourages risk-taking, in which it is okay to try and fail, be forgiven, and try again. Present church leaders actively reach out and recruit people they don't know into leadership, recognizing that the best interest of the church is served by a diverse and creative leadership core.*

**Measures:**

- *Information about opportunities for leadership is readily available.*
- *Robust candidate list for open positions.*
- *Established teams include new leaders and broadly reflect the make-up of the congregation.*
- *Congregational survey*

**e. Are generous with our time, talents, resources and creativity**

*There is a widely-shared sense of responsibility for the health and well-being of the church. People are fully engaged in the church and are optimistic about its efficacy in their lives and in the world. People bring their best selves to their work as volunteers. The generosity of the people of Unity Church is an expression of their gratitude for the ways in which the church informs and nourishes their lives. They are open to creative exploration, even and especially when they are in uncertain territory.*

**Measures:**

- *The Operating budget is adequately funded by a broad base of congregants.*
- *Recruitment is easy because people wish to serve.*
- *Volunteers report having a meaningful experience.*
- *Congregational survey*
- *Newly imagined Gifts and Talents survey (moved from II.b.)*

**f. Are careful stewards of our resources and facilities.**

*Practices and decisions ensure the long-term strength and viability of Unity Church. Church facilities are well-maintained and green. We have a well-developed life-cycling program that helps us maintain and protect our facilities. Financial resources are well-managed. Opportunities for thoughtful reflection on generous participation are readily available.*

**Measures:**

- *Capital needs are addressed in a timely and thorough manner.*
- *The budget balances at the end of the year.*
- *Audits and financial reviews*
- *Participation in reflection on generosity*

**Beyond**

**3. Unity Church-Unitarian carries out the work of love in community, making a positive impact in our neighborhood and in our world. Grounded in the transforming power of our faith, we**

*Our congregation's work for justice is a natural expression of our inward work and our experience of religious community. Our faith affirms that God's love is for everyone and that the choices we make shape both our lives and the world. The experience of the Holy inspires and sustains a sacred obligation to work for justice. In the work we do, we are seeking to live out God's love in the world. We seek to strengthen and expand our practice of partnership for positive change.*

**Measures:**

- *Organizational partnerships*
- *Grants-making*
- *Congregational survey*
- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Depth and breadth of participation in community outreach teams*

**a. Open our doors and our hearts to those who seek comfort, courage, and meaning**

*Unity Church is a place where the larger community knows it is welcome in times of public grief, sorrow and celebration. We provide space and volunteer support for innovative responses to community needs with an emphasis on marginalized communities, including communities of color.*

**Measures:**

- *Building use report*
- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Participation in special services and rites of passage*

**b. Build authentic relationships with people across differences, in the spirit of humility and reverence**

*We meet faith-to-faith, engaging our shared humanity in a way that honors the particularities of our differences and allows us to work in authentic partnership while facing the uneven effects of injustice.*

**Measures:**

- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Participation in Community Outreach teams.*
- *Participation in Anti-Racism / Anti-Oppression trainings and workshops*
- *Eagerness of outside organizations to partner with Unity Church.*

**c. Live out our commitment to racial reconciliation and to dismantling racism**

*We recognize the “tragic gap” of racial disparity in our community and in our nation. We know the disparity is systemic and that any progress in dismantling it requires both institutional and personal action. Inspired by the theological mandate that we work toward the realization of the Beloved Community, we pursue the mission of the church, keeping the work to dismantle racism and oppression at the heart of our agenda. This is difficult work and we cannot do it alone. Our commitment to partner with people and communities of color outside the church does not deny the diversity already among us.*

**Measures:**

- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Participation in Community Outreach teams.*
- *Annual Congregational Survey*
- *ARLT Annual Report*

**d. Serve as a trusted and visible leader, partner, and advocate for the creation of a just society and a sustainable environment**

*The “prophetic imperative” calls us to be partners in seeking to make the Beloved Community real. Oppressions, including the destruction of our environment are linked and affect us all. We recognize that the crisis of climate change calls us to act immediately to protect affected communities, the earth and future generations. We understand that “the arc of the moral universe is long.” Trust grows out of long term partnership. We commit to keep showing up, to serve, to learn and to be advocates for positive change.*

**Measures:**

- *Moral Owner interviews*
- *Monitor Policy J. Insert into the Board’s monitoring calendar a schedule for reporting on ET Limitation # II.J.*
- *Participation in Community Outreach teams*
- *Annual Congregational Survey*

**e. Participate actively in the larger Unitarian-Universalist community.**

*We support those who seek a larger context in which to claim their UU identity. Unity will continue to be an influential congregation that leads, inspires, connects with and learns from other UU communities. We will continue to be a teaching congregation and a working partner with other congregations in our area and across the Association.*

**Measures:**

- *maintain and expand Unity Consulting*
- *volunteer involvement in larger UU activities*
- *financial contributions*
- *Congregational Survey – increase the congregation’s awareness of our current involvement in / contributions to the larger movement.*

## 2015 Congregational Survey Results

In May 2015, 263 people completed the congregational survey. Respondents answered questions about the extent to which they saw the Ends being true for our church and about their own sense of spiritual growth and maturity. The survey results were aggregated and evaluated by Laura Park and Bill Etter. The survey results and other summary documents can be found online at <http://bit.ly/ucusurveyresults2015>. The congregational survey results were presented at a Wellspring Wednesday session on October 14 and Bill Etter presented the information.

Some of the more interesting findings are listed below:

Overall, respondents see us doing well on our Ends. Although, people who said that they or someone in their family identified as a person of color rated our Ends lower overall, and some of them substantially lower.

Overall, we saw significant progress on three “Beyond” Ends:

- Serve as a trusted and visible leader, partner, and advocate for the creation of a just society and a sustainable environment,
- Live out our commitment to racial reconciliation and to dismantling racism, and
- Build authentic relationships with people across differences, in the spirit of humility and reverence.

Comments on the survey encouraged us to find ways to welcome and include people from a wide range of diverse backgrounds.

Results from the spiritual maturity portion of the survey encourage us to develop our ability as a congregation to actively integrate spirituality into our lives.

The spiritual maturity portion of the survey showed that while “I believe my life has meaning and purpose” is a spiritual strength of our congregation, “I have a clear purpose to my life and am able to articulate that purpose to both myself and others” is a key opportunity. For this reason, our Executive Team is building opportunities to reflect on and clearly articulate meaning and purpose into much of this year’s programming and activities. This connection will explore deepening our congregation’s commitment to providing a stable financial base for the operation and maintenance of Unity Church through pledging.

We reviewed the impact of church programs and activities on spiritual growth a little differently this year. We grouped activities into categories instead of listing each one. People reported that music activities have the greatest impact.

These evaluative tools are not meant to be viewed as tests or judgments. Instead, they aim to provide congregants with an opportunity to annually reflect on the work of the church and their own faith journeys. These important self-reported insights allow the leadership of Unity Church to verify observations or anecdotal evidence with data, allowing for more informed decision-making regarding church programming, worship themes, budget priorities and policy changes.

## **Worship Life**

The worship life of Unity Church is rich, moving, and meaningful. The ministers receive consistently positive feedback. Services are well-attended with an extremely high ratio of attendance – over 60% of our membership attend on a regular basis. Service topics are reflected in extensive programming for adults and children. We continue to bind the services together thematically and are starting to explore how to bring the themes for adult worship into close alignment with the overarching themes of the religious education program for children and youth.

This past year we have been blessed by a wide variety of excellent preachers. In addition to regular services led by our Senior Co-Ministers, the Rev. Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement oversaw services during February and March while Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs were on sabbatical. Hallman Intern, Lindasusan Ulrich, was a strong presence in the pulpit as was Ministerial Resident, the Rev. Danny Givens, Jr. We also heard from Literary Minister, Karen Hering; Chaplain and Affiliate Minister, Karen Hutt; and special guests Vanessa Southern, Kate Tucker, Jim Eller, and Derek Mitchell.

This past year saw vigorous involvement by the worship associates who have often taken up the invitation to offer their own reflections as an integral part of the service. The associates continue to be a vital support team for the worship life of the church. Staff and ministers are deeply grateful for their commitment. They are our “living lectionary,” helping to keep our worship services fresh and relevant.

Wellspring Wednesday worship continues to thrive. This year most services were led by either Lindasusan Ulrich or the Rev. Danny Givens with musical support from members of Wayward Creek, the folk band that includes Debbie Cushman, Elizabeth Giffin, and Mary Nienaber. The service is framed using the Children’s Chapel Sunday liturgy. Children in attendance take considerable pride in sharing their way of worshipping with the adults. Attendance at Wellspring Wednesday worship averaged approximately 60 children and adults over the course of the church year and held up well through the spring.

We continue to work to find the right balance between the comfort of consistent liturgy and established worship culture and the experimentation and cultural exploration which are required of us if we are to become a more inclusive multi-racial, multi-generational and multi-cultural congregation.

## Pastoral Care

The pastoral care program seeks to serve people in times of need, crisis, transition, grief, and loss. Overseen by Janne Eller-Isaacs, the interns and a team of remarkable pastoral care associates provide a caring ministry of presence for our members and friends.

The heart of the program is best expressed in the Embracing Meditation each Sunday. This essential part of our worship always contains the joys and sorrows of people who are willing to share their tender news with the larger congregation. The Embracing Meditation is read at the weekly staff meeting, the adult service, Children's Chapel and with the preschoolers in Spirit Play. It is also placed on the pastoral care table in the Parish Hall during coffee hour. There, the entire congregation is invited to send cards of care, concern, and congratulations to those listed each week.

The pastoral care team meets monthly throughout the year to receive training, support one another, share ideas, and to ensure that everyone in need is served adequately. The program continues to grow in scope and depth. The gender balance of the care givers has been achieved with men playing a vital role in the program. We always work to hone our listening skills because they are at the heart of the ministry of presence we seek to provide everyone with whom we come in contact. In addition, the monthly meetings often focus on a particular theme or pastoral issue. This past year the pastoral care team participated in informational meetings or trainings on these issues:

- Offering care and support to those dealing with addiction issues and recovery
- Traveling through grief and loss: nourishing a grieving heart
- Dynamics of Pastoral Care
- Self-Care for Caregivers
- Effective condolences

Janne Eller-Isaacs and Cynthia Orange continue to co-facilitate a monthly support group for caregivers that has provided a place of mutual support and encouragement for the caretakers who attend. This group continues to grow in numbers and commitment.

Unity's grief group continues as a monthly drop in resource. There is a core of regular attendees who seek to welcome all newcomers so that they feel welcomed and included. In addition, we hosted the Interfaith Grief Coalition in March, April and May, providing space, hospitality, and speakers for this weekly group.

It is clear that depression in the lives of our teens and young adults is a real issue at Unity Church. In an effort to support the parents of depressed youth and young adults, we held gatherings to offer support and resources. Those who participated found it powerful.

Each year we expand the care provided by those who join our caring circle. The caring circle seeks to provide one time services which include things like rides, meal preparation and delivery, child care, respite care, shopping and errand running, and house projects.

The UU-knitarians continue to provide us with comfort shawls which are delivered to folks in the midst of transition, loss, and injury. They are much appreciated.

Given the cross pollination continuing this year between Above Every Name and Unity Church through Beloved Conversations, shared worship, and the Selma trip, some pastoral care was offered to members of these congregations through the ministers and participants. Hospital visits, sharing comfort shawls and caring relationships crossed generations and congregations. We hope this will continue into the future.

Future projects: restarting the divorce support group and creating an evening caregivers support group since many of our caregivers are busy working or caregiving during the day and can't make our meetings.

## **Congregational Life**

### ***Membership***

In February, Unity Church certified 826 voting members with the Unitarian Universalist Association. Since the summer of 2014, Unity has welcomed 33 new members and their families. The visitor cards and online visitor form continue to be widely used as a first point of contact for visitors and visiting families. Pathway to Membership classes were well attended and will be offered in the summer months for the second time. The ongoing presence of lead staff members and lay leaders from the Executive Team, Religious Education, and Music Ministries has facilitated a warm welcome and early active involvement in the life of the church.

Unity was honored to welcome the following new members and their families this past year:

### **New Members July 2014 – June 2015**

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Erin L. Adams      | 18. Stephanie Malon-Rufi   |
| 2. Denise Cardinal    | 19. Anna George Meek       |
| 3. Meaghan Carpenter  | 20. Nancy Paulson          |
| 4. Amalia Centurión   | 21. Andrew Pieper          |
| 5. Rick Condon        | 22. Eric Fulton Silvernale |
| 6. Kathleen Cooper    | 23. Nanette L. Stearns     |
| 7. Brian M. Davis     | 24. Jennifer Nelson Taylor |
| 8. Rory Burton Feeney | 25. Jonathan Taylor        |
| 9. Sherril Garahan    | 26. Laura Kindig Temali    |
| 10. Ben Grove         | 27. Cole Velders           |
| 11. Rico Durán        | 28. Mark Wallace           |
| 12. Michaela Kronlage | 29. Mary Josephine Wallace |
| 13. Kathryn A. Kysar  | 30. Marion Wittenbreer     |
| 14. Betsy Jensen      | 31. Bill Wittenbreer       |
| 15. Nicole Lynskey    | 32. Sarah M. Morreim Wood  |
| 16. Julia B. Lyon     | 33. Luke Zenker            |
| 17. Frank T. Mabley   |                            |

Over 87 people provided a ministry of hospitality through our 12 welcome teams and twelve new members were added to our teams. The Welcome Team manual was revised for the first time in several years, and Welcome Team training was offered in the fall, with follow up opportunities in the winter and spring. Ann and John Mulligan and Peggy and Dave Hintzman retired as Welcome Team leaders after over a decade of dedicated leadership. We offer our deep gratitude for their service and welcome Terri Burnor and Jane Lee who stepped up as new team leaders.

### ***Adult Religious Education and Programming***

Unity's adult programming and mid-week congregational life continued to thrive. Adult Religious Education opportunities increased by 25% and Wellspring Wednesday programs

represented 27% of overall offerings. Wellspring Wednesday offered more ongoing class series this year and expanded in programming for all ages, including the Tween Group's exploration of Fairy and Faith Tales, a Mother/Daughter Book Club, and the Saint Paul Performance Project for high school students. Programs were sponsored and led by Community Outreach teams, Parish Hall artists, as well as other Unity teams. The Embodied Spiritual Practice classes continued for their first full year and were well attended. Wellspring Wednesday also saw new partnerships, such as the Doctrine of Discovery series co-hosted with the St. Paul Interfaith Network and Margaret Regan's book presentation in collaboration with Good Books, Beacon Press, and Unity's Library Team.

A wide variety of adult classes and retreats met on such topics as Zen meditation, marriage, parenting, art and spirituality, Selma, and more. Over 100 women gathered for the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Women's Gathering, *Keep the Fire*, which focused on the role of creativity in our lives and featured Unity's own Women's Ensemble and Wayward Creek. Sarah Cledwyn continued her leadership in offering individual and group spiritual direction opportunities, silent retreats, and contemplative nature walks. Rev. Karen Hering continued to offer Open Page writing sessions, but also developed a new Thresholds series that was deeply meaningful to all participants. Many people participated in February UU Heritage Week by attending Sources Suppers at church and in people's homes and engaging presentations by Rev. Dr. Sandor Kovacs, Associate Professor of History at the Unitarian Seminary in Transylvania. The Samuel Morgan Forum welcomed two distinguished speakers this year: Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed on his book, *The Selma Awakening*, in November (which was also this year's Unity Book Read) and Ms. Emily Baxter on her interactive exhibit, *We are All Criminals*.

In a congregation of this size, it is important to offer opportunities for social connections outside of Sunday. Over 100 people gathered in monthly Dine with Nine dinner groups in each other's homes. The new young adult group continued to meet monthly throughout the year and was a point of entry for many visitors. More summer community-building opportunities were offered, including a Unity outing to the St. Paul Saints.

### ***Food Ministry***

Unity's food ministry thrived this year, under the skilled and enthusiastic leadership of Madeline Summers. Of the 133 people who helped prepare Soup Suppers and Wellspring Wednesday dinners, 80 were new, including seven children. We had three regular soup cooking teams and were well supported by our Coming of Age families, whose collective hospitality anchors our 4:30 p.m. congregation. We had four Wellspring Wednesday teams, whose delicious and creative meals nourish our mid-week congregation. Our Wellspring Wednesday team leaders play a particularly vital role, volunteering on average 15 hours/month to this ministry.

## **Library/Bookstall/*Cairns***

Our dedicated *Cairns* committee, led by Shelley Butler, Editor, and Rev. Karen Hering, Ministerial Consultant, created Volume 6 of “The Unity Church Journal of the Arts” in 2014. This amazing journal includes artwork and writings from the archives, the pulpit, ministers, staff members, and members of Unity Church. In addition to *Cairns*, our library and bookstall ministry teams led by Barb Foss, Janice Gestner, Louise Merriam, and Shelley Butler continued to enhance our collection and sponsored well received public readings, author events, and *Café Unity* during the year. Their commitment and creativity continue to enrich us all.

## Music Ministry

Unity Choir, Unity Singers, Women's Ensemble, Children's Choir, Percussion Ensemble, Unity music staff, and varied guests brought consistent musical offerings to all three of our services again this year. Choir rotation is fully established to include all three services, offering a choral presence in each service, on average, three Sundays a month.

Our choir programs continually involve from 160-170 people during the year. We "sing" a vibrant and rich community spanning all ages and life involvement, from children, young adult, middle-life, through retirement age experience.

Efforts to make connections through music with our local community and wider UUA community were realized through the following:

- a. Unity Singers Boston Pilgrimage tour, singing at the national UUA offices, First Parish in Concord and Arlington Street Church, along with moments on the shores of Walden Pond and parking lot concerts at Walker House!
- b. Unity Choir expanded their multi-cultural repertoire with works from traditional spirituals; Gospel; anthems of African origin, singing Swahili, Somali proverbs, and mixture of Zulu and Ndebele in a South African anthem; and an Indian raga.
- c. Women's Ensemble grew to 41 members by the end of the year. Membership included seven mother-daughter teams with one three generation team.
- d. The Children's Choir brought a special program of music to the Episcopal Homes

Our 10:00 P.M. Candlelight Choir continues to expand as a new tradition added to our Christmas Eve service offerings of two Christmas Pageants (which include choral support), along with music for all other services.

Our 2015 Arthur Foote Music Sunday again included all of our musical organizations: Children's Choir, Women's Ensemble, Unity Singers, Unity Choir, and Unity Percussion Ensemble.

Children's experiences in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades were augmented by participation in our highly successful Children's Musical directed by Sandy Waterman and Mary Blouin Auffert. This opportunity for three years of involvement seems firmly established and completes the arc of offerings for our children with Children's Choir (grades 1 through 5) and Children's Musical (grades 6 through 8).

Our Unity music program continues to be recognized as one of the most successful and vital programs in the UUA. This season, Ruth Palmer was invited to lead a choral reading session at the national UUMN convention.

Unity Church volunteer musicians continue to enrich our services throughout the year and, in particular, during our summer services under the direction of summer music coordinator, Kathleen Bartholomay. Their commitment and generosity is a huge gift to all.

Our choir program continues to be not just an opportunity for involvement but an entrance into this community. Many people establish their relationship with Unity Church through participation in one of our choirs before becoming members.

## Ministry with Children and Youth

Whether tightrope walking or the more dynamic stretch and bounce of slacklining, the line is held under precise tension, providing the means and very impulse to step forward. This is no less the case with “relational learning” at the core of our Religious Education, with lines stretching between teachers and children (*relational lines*) and strategically from program to program (*organizational and developmental lines*). The work of determining precise tensions necessary for learning and spiritual formation of children continued to guide as the focal point and intensified our diagnostic review across all programs. Such lines were kept taut not by sentiment or obligation, finally, but by the measured passion, generosity, and abiding devotion of many who are beginning to grasp *relational learning* and *teaching as spiritual practice*. Significantly, attending to such lines – their anchor points, precise tensions, where it slacks, and movement – enabled Religious Education (R.E.) staff and ministry teams to assess the weight and balance of our direction for the future.

Among those directions and possibilities that shifted weight and balance to R.E.’s work, the encompassing challenge of multiculturalism registered with the Religious Education Ministry Team (REMT) as one of its leading commitments for the future. Prompted by both Mark Morrison-Reed’s exchange with mixed-race families and the growing momentum for the pilgrimage to Selma, junior high class teachers overwhelmingly chose to hold class in the Sanctuary one Sunday in November, to hear Rev. Danny Givens share his spiritual biography that offered testimony and call to engage the world of pain and trouble. That the teachers themselves initiated and chose to do this speak of the aspirations around multiculturalism and educating children and youth for “resilience and resistance” as an index of our racial justice work. Consequently, a curriculum review task force brought together a team of parents, professional educators, and outside partners to integrate critical multicultural education into the R.E. curriculum, and to meet the needs of a culturally diverse population. The task force on R.E. Curriculum Review continues, with Jackie Smith and Mike Huber co-chairing this work for the coming year(s).

The weight of racial and social justice work, including training and direct action with *Black Lives Matter*, also significantly factored in setting precise tensions for the Coming of Age and Tower Club programs, keeping the line taut for a more seamless youth experience from COA to Tower Club to Boston Pilgrimage to senior youth leadership at the Twin Cities Youth Con. From questions about the meaning of “beloved community” in the COA curriculum, to sending three Tower Club pilgrims to Selma, to Youth Con’s focus on healthcare as a social justice and spiritual matter of concern, multiple connecting themes and programmatic intersections continued to restructure a more interwoven, layered, and engaged experience for older youth. No better example gives accent to the interrelated achievements of emerging public identities, leadership, and living out our faith in the world than in three senior youth accepted to Summer Seminary 2014, for Unitarian Universalist youth exploring the possibility of religious vocations. Much of their inspiration flows from Youth Con and the pilgrimage to Selma.

Such possibilities and the risk of stepping forth on that line of faith are only equal to the relational lines that support each child and youth. R.E. staff and members of REMT continued to center the work of clarifying, embodying, and advancing *teaching as spiritual practice*, the

classroom as a community of *relational learning*, and parents/teachers understanding themselves as *spiritual guides of children*. New initiatives are underway to strengthen these commitments and possibilities, including: asking a growing number of teachers to take on teaching for the *entire R.E. year* while normalizing the semester as the basic time commitment for most, expanding the number of junior high classes to maintain smaller class size, restructuring the Rotation program so each unit begins with community sharing, sending a team to the summer 2015 North American Conference on Godly Play (Spirit Play), and more boldly inviting adult volunteers from the larger church community into R.E. – especially those other than parents of children enrolled. Expanding the pool of teachers offers not only logistical support for teaching needs but honors our covenant with children and makes more credible an intergenerational ministry with children and youth.

The year's work of attending to these lines that stretch toward our possibilities remain anchored in the generosity and reverence for children that brim with joy among our teachers. I have only immense gratitude in knowing that the weight and balance of our work is held under precise tension by their covenant of love and care.

## **Community Outreach Ministries**

Unity honored Pat Haff's retirement last July and celebrated her founding leadership of the Community Outreach Ministry. The Justice Learning Scholarship Fund was created in her honor to support scholarships and participation in justice learning pilgrimages and outreach efforts. Her wisdom, dedication, and organizational support are a continued legacy to the team's partnerships and ministries.

Approximately 200 people actively participate in our Outreach Ministry and their monthly meetings, and they, in turn, lead the congregation in many avenues of activism, education, advocacy and service. The teams embody a shared leadership model, which also makes time for spiritual reflection on their work together. What follows is a brief summary of highlights from each team's year.

### ***Affordable Housing Ministry Team***

*Community Partners: Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, St. Paul Council of Churches Project Home, and Faith Builders Habitat for Humanity Collaboration.*

The team partnered with the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative in their legislative advocacy campaign: "What Does Home Mean to You?". They collected statements from the congregation, attended lobby days at the capitol, and worked to help secure funding for operations for the new housing projects currently under construction, especially Prior Crossing. In the summer of 2014, Unity volunteers joined efforts with the two-week Faith Builders Habitat for Humanity Build and raised money for the build selling parking spots at Grand Old Day. In May 2015, Unity once again hosted homeless families through Project Home, with the assistance of over 150 overnight and evening volunteers. This year an extra bedroom was added to make room for additional families, with the support of our facilities and RE staff.

### ***Center for Victims of Torture***

Although Unity Church no longer has a formal Outreach Team, this partnership continued with a successful summer/fall bike drive and a free performance collaboration with Ten Thousand Things Theater, *Forget Me Not When I Am Far Away*.

### ***Evergreen Projects Ministry***

*Community Partners: Family Place, Sharing Korner Foodshelf, St. Paul Jeremiah Program.*

The Evergreen Project continued to create art and beauty in the service of women, children, and families. Through their holiday and Mother's Day sales, significant funding was raised for their partners. Food collections continued throughout the year for the Sharing Korner Foodshelf at two locations in the church and monthly meals were cooked and served for the Jeremiah Program community.

### ***Generosity Ministry Team***

From September 2013-September 2014, \$80,145.40 was donated to worthy causes and organizations through our Generosity Ministry. Since this ministry began, over \$600,000 has been raised and given away. The Generosity Ministry Team receives and vets nominations for

the offering and then schedules the offering recipients for every service of the church year. This past year saw a record number of nominations, as well as nominations of new organizations.

### ***Holdeen India Program (Emerging Team)***

The Unitarian Universalist Holdeen India Program (UUHIP) works with organizations of India's most vulnerable groups as they seek to advance empowerment and promote equity. In January of this year, four people from Unity Church joined a UU pilgrimage to India. Holdeen Director Derek Mitchell preached and presented at Unity in May. Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs serves on the Holdeen Board of Directors.

### ***Mano a Mano Ministry Team ("Hand to Hand" in Spanish)***

*Community Partner: Mano a Mano International Partners*

Mano a Mano continues to grow and diversify the many ways that it serves the citizens of rural Bolivia. Unity members participated in two pilgrimages this year: one in March focused on agriculture and one in early summer, which continued a partnership in teacher training. More and more teachers are being trained as trainers so they can in turn train other teachers. The winter crafts fair and January regifting sale continue to be important fundraisers. The team sponsored a book talk with Bill Powers, in cooperation with the Sustainable Living Team. Joan and Segundo Velasquez were awarded for their leadership and vision this year, and Joan received an award for her new book: "Gaining Ground: A Blueprint for Community-Based International Development." Unity was proud to host a reading.

### ***New Orleans Pilgrimage***

The 9<sup>th</sup> annual pilgrimage to New Orleans took place in November 2014 with eleven Unity pilgrims, many of whom attended for the first time. The theme for this year was the elderly and poverty, especially in the aftermath of Katrina. In addition to the renovation project, many pilgrims volunteered at a remarkable day center (Pace Center) for the elderly in the Bywater area.

### ***Obama Elementary School Tutoring***

The number of Unity Church members who volunteered at Obama Elementary School this year increased 33% to 20 people, as this partnership continues to grow and deepen. Volunteers worked with students in grades 1-4 in reading, through a program coordinated by the Minnesota Reading Corps. Unity volunteers also gathered together to share stories, wisdom, and to offer feedback on their experiences. Unity once again hosted Obama staff and teachers for their August planning week and welcomed them with a pancake breakfast.

### ***Partner Church Ministry Team***

The Partnership Church Team hosted two visitors to Unity Church this past year. Csongor Benedek, a seminarian and previous translator for Unity pilgrims, came for the month of July to study American congregational life. This year, in February, Rev. Dr. Sandor Kovacs, Associate Professor of History from the Unitarian Seminary in Kolosvar, visited during Heritage Week, preaching and offering several presentations. Sandor Kovacs was actually the first Balaz scholar many years ago and people really enjoyed his provocative mind and spirit. He met with other

scholars in the Twin Cities and thoroughly enjoyed his time at Unity. It has been reported that the Unity trip is often a real highlight for the scholars. Several team members also went to Transylvania on their own this year. The spring flower sale continues to be a major fundraiser. The team is engaging a deep conversation about the future mission and vision of their work, as well as leadership transition. Some folks are stepping down from leadership having been involved since 2001! We appreciate their loyal and dedicated service.

### ***Rainbow Chalice Alliance Ministry Team***

*Community Partners: Minnesota School Outreach Coalition (MnSOC) and Out for Equity*

Team members participated in and supported the annual MnSOC Q-Quest gathering for over 300 LGBTQA high school students from across the state who came together for a day of workshops and community. Q-Quest was held this year in the fall for the first time. They also raised significant funds for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual community LGBTQ spring high school prom, through the much-in-demand Unity Pi Day Pie Sale. In addition to supporting the prom, they also assisted the first LGBTQ middle school dance, which was held this year in response to students' requests. The team once again took a lead role in coordinating and organizing the UU presence at the annual Twin Cities Pride Parade.

### ***Sustainable Living Group***

The Sustainable Agriculture Interest Group changed their name to the Sustainable Living Group to more broadly reflect their focus. They continued to lead Unity's composting efforts, increasing the volunteer base and coordinating with Unity staff and food ministry volunteers. The team sponsored and cooked a Wellspring Wednesday sustainable meal as an educational experience, and sponsored special Earth Day programming. They also raised awareness of the Community Solar Garden Project, through tabling and presentations in cooperation with MUUSJA (the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance).

### ***Racial and Restorative Justice Ministry Team***

*Community Partners: Amicus (Second Chance Coalition), Rondo Circle of Peace, Children's Defense Fund Freedom School*

The team articulated this theme for their work this year: "We are listeners, learners and builders who recognize the value of every voice and cultural perspective. We work in partnerships to widen the circle of power and participation." They reviewed, researched and reaffirmed their community partnerships. With Amicus, they ran a hugely successful Winter Warm Up Drive for clothing, sundries, and other basic necessities for men and women just getting out of prison. They supported the Second Chance Coalition Day on the Hill which advocated for restoring the right to vote to people released from prison. Many Unity members participated in one on one mentoring and pen friends through Amicus programs. Unity also wrote a letter of support for Amicus' Men of Rafiki grant, which was awarded. The team continued their ongoing meal support for the Monday night Rondo Circle of Peace, but also stepped forward to actively work with Russel and Sarah Ballenger in expanding their food ministry to the new circles being created with the \$75,000 Saint Paul Foundation grant that was awarded in the fall. Many members and friends served in a variety of roles in the six week 2014

Children’s Defense Fund Freedom School, an enrichment school for over 350 children, predominantly children of color. Dr. Darcel Hill, Director of the Freedom School, expressed her gratitude that Unity Church offers the largest group of volunteer support to their efforts. Team members also sponsored and led several awareness raising programs at Unity Church on such topics as unintentional bias and health care equity. They supported the continued Beloved Conversations efforts and the local and national Selma Anniversary events. They were also instrumental in bringing Emily Baxter and her “We are All Criminals” exhibit as a Parish Hall artist and Samuel Morgan Forum presenter.

*The circle of Peace is working to rebuild community, create conversations and allow us once again to turn to one another for support.*

The Circle of Peace  
Movement



November 12, 2015

Unity Church Unitarian  
732 Holly  
Saint Paul, MN 55104

The Circle of Peace would like to thank Unity Church Unitarian and its members. We appreciate your support and are extremely grateful. Thank you for partnering with us in our efforts to engage and rebuild community, turning towards one another instead of away. Your generosity, cooperation, collaboration, participation and help are an inspiration to all of us. The support given the circle since its inception well over 5 years ago have indeed been remarkable and invaluable.

*Thank  
you*

*Russel & Sarah Balenger*

*Our mission: "We are a grassroots organization dedicated to ending inner city violence and promoting racial healing".*

## **Hallman Ministerial Intern Lindasusan Ulrich**

### ***Worship***

Lindasusan Ulrich led six Sunday worship services during her time at Unity Church and served as a Worship Associate at the Blessing of the Animals, Tolling of the Bells, and the morning service on Christmas Eve. (Unfortunately, illness interrupted her plans to take part in the two evening services.) She also helped coordinate and lead the Black Friday and Winter Solstice services, and participated in the quarterly Worship Associate retreats.

### ***Rites of Passage***

Lindasusan officiated at two memorial services, both for women who died quite suddenly and unexpectedly. Kathleen Mirsch's service was held at a funeral home on October 11. The service for Sharon Rice Vaughan, a national leader in the domestic violence movement, was held at Unity on April 2 and drew approximately 400 people.

### ***Wellspring Wednesday***

Along with Ministerial Resident Danny Givens, Lindasusan co-led the weekly chapel services as part of Wellspring Wednesday. These intergenerational services included songs, sharing of joys and sorrows, storytelling, and active participation from those present, especially youth. Attendance remained consistent and solid throughout the year, averaging approximately 35-40 people per week.

### ***Beloved Conversations/Selma Pilgrimage***

In March 2015, tens of thousands of people traveled to Alabama to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery march. Among them were 70 people from St. Paul brought together by Unity Church, with Lindasusan serving as one of the lead organizers. This was by far her biggest project of the internship. The contingent included people from Unity, Above Every Name Ministries, Ujamaa Place, other Twin Cities churches, Black Lives Matter, St. Paul and Metro Transit police, NAACP, educators, students, foundations, and community leaders.

Preparation for the pilgrimage began long before then, however. Initial conversations began in September, and a new round of Beloved Conversations took place in January and February. The team of Beloved Conversations facilitators (Lindasusan, Ashley Horan, Danny Givens, Marea Perry, and Drew Danielson, with support from Dr. Mark Hicks at the Fahs Collaborative) adapted the curriculum for this extremely diverse group of participants.

The pilgrimage itself—which concluded with a bus ride to Memphis to visit the National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Hotel—was powerful. Not surprisingly with 70 people involved, it was also somewhat unwieldy: different itineraries (attending the UU Living Legacy conference, visiting sites around Birmingham, traveling to Tuskegee), different levels of bonding (those who had experienced Beloved Conversations, those who joined the process later), different expectations about time to reflect together in Alabama, different experiences based on a wide diversity of backgrounds, different long-term goals, different reasons for traveling to

Selma in the first place. This led to challenges as well as creative possibilities. It also led to a recommitment to the relationships that form the foundation of reconciliation and progress.

### ***St. Paul to Selma and Return***

One of the goals of the Selma pilgrimage was to create lasting change in St. Paul in the area of racial justice. To that end, further events were planned once the group returned. These included a debrief meeting for participants, a concert by Kim and Reggie Harris (who had performed at the UU Living Legacy conference in Birmingham), and a Wellspring Wednesday panel presentation about the pilgrims' experiences. In each case, Lindasusan played a key role in organizing or facilitating the gathering. She also took part in meetings with an ad hoc committee charged with figuring out how to harness the energy of this transformative experience and channel it into next steps.

Lindasusan also participated in early planning for the local commemoration event, including the initial luncheon that Unity convened to gauge interest among other faith leaders. "Crossing Bridges: Selma to Minnesota," which mirrored the March 8 bridge crossing in Alabama, began at the State Capitol and ended at Central Presbyterian Church in downtown St. Paul. The march drew approximately 2,000 people and the church was filled to capacity for the program.

### ***Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT)***

In working with the ARLT, Lindasusan helped the team think through its revised structure and reflect on how they might best leverage their role under policy governance.

### ***Pastoral Care***

Lindasusan was a regular part of the Pastoral Care Team during her time at Unity Church. She made pastoral calls, facilitated the meetings in October, February, and March, and opened discussions with the group that helped further deepen their work. Particularly during the senior ministers' sabbatical, she served as one of the point people for pastoral needs.

### ***Elders' Circle***

The monthly gatherings for the Elders' Circle ran from December through May, with variable attendance. The group shared holiday and family stories, discussed the Buddhist Eightfold Path, reflected on Earth Day quotations, and compared strategies for living with uncertainty.

### ***Women's Ensemble***

To avoid the dullness that can come from all work and no play, Lindasusan joined the Women's Ensemble in the fall. She thoroughly enjoyed the chance to sing on a regular basis and to get to know the others in the group. Participating in Foote Sunday and performing "Sing, Wearing the Sky" together was a particular joy.

### ***Denominational Activities***

During her internship, Lindasusan achieved a major milestone: passing the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (the body that credentials UU ministers) and being welcomed into preliminary fellowship. She also worked with Ruth Kirkland from the Denominational Affairs

Team to gather Unity members going to General Assembly in Portland, Oregon, to discuss workshops and what to expect.

### ***Religious Education***

Lindasusan took part in religious education for both children and adults. She stepped in for some of the workshop rotation classes, met with the Coming of Age youth, led a discussion on the Doctrine of Discovery, and created an intergenerational class on improve as a spiritual practice. She also had the chance to meet several times with KP Hong to talk about the philosophical and theological underpinnings of Unity's RE program.

### ***Writing and Practical Arts***

One of Lindasusan's favorite aspects of her internship was the monthly theme meeting; out of these rich discussions, she crafted the cover article for each month's newsletter. She also brought her writing skills to the spring canvass and grant proposals for the Circle of Peace Movement. As a final project, she designed a file structure for the shared server that will streamline the system and lay the groundwork for future staff transitions.

## Resource Development

This annual report to the congregation includes highlights and accomplishments of the 2014-2015 church year. A report in the area of resource development defies this timeline because the church's fiscal year is a calendar year. We are including highlights of Fiscal Year 2014, statements of financial condition as of December 31, 2014 as prepared by Schechter, Dokken, Kanter, and an update of 2015 resource development through June.

### ***Fiscal Year 2014***

We received a total of **\$104,228 in Sunday Offerings** in 2014. \$59,561 was given to community organizations that were nominated by our members and friends. \$18,129 was earmarked for dedicated Unity Church funds like the Justice Learning Scholarship Fund, the Arthur Foote Music Fund, the Hallman Endowment, the Partner Church Team, and Project Home. The remaining \$26,538 went to the operating budget to support our Community Outreach programming.

Our budgeted goal for **2014 Operating Pledges** was \$1,206,151, and we ended the year with pledges totaling \$1,221,149 from 720 households, including 107 new pledges. This became the basis for our pledge projections in the 2015 budget. On November 15, 2014, the congregation approved a 2015 operating budget with an operating pledge goal of \$1,242,311.

Our **Unrestricted Year-End Gifts** totaled \$21,609, compared with a budgeted goal of \$21,000.

Our 2014 operating budget included \$20,000 net income from **fundraisers**. Our spring and fall fundraisers, "Dance into Spring with Buddy and the Blue Dogs" and "Turning Over a New Leaf" raised \$44,159 of income and cost \$26,046 for the purchase of the prizes (including the car) and other related fundraiser expenses. The resulting net income was \$18,113.

One other uncanny thing happened here... The winner of the car donated it back to the church and another church family purchased it at the same price we paid for it. So, we were able to receive an additional unrestricted gift of ~\$20,000!

In 2014, members and friends made additional **Unity Tomorrow Capital Campaign commitments** in the amount of \$109,818, increasing total *Unity Tomorrow* commitments to \$6,828,587. We received \$1,087,496 in payment of those commitments in 2014, and made principal payments ahead of schedule on our construction loan with Western Bank. This is important because it reduced our interest expense on the remaining balance.

In our fall pledge drive, we introduced the idea of **Ongoing Capital Giving** and asked for capital pledges for 2015, 2016, and 2017. As of June 30, 2015, we had received pledges totaling just under \$540,000 from nearly 250 households that will be paid over the next three years. This capital giving will enable us to shield the operating budget from debt service, strengthen our long-term note negotiations with banks, and pay for a sprinkler system in the sanctuary.

In early 2014, funds that had been held at The Saint Paul Foundation were moved to Unity Church, and the **G. Kent and Ariel W. Dickerman Building Endowment** was established at Unity Church. The dividends from the endowment distributions are intended for the purpose of

upgrading the facilities, replacing major appliances and equipment, and redecorating from time to time, and not for ordinary annual maintenance.

In 2014 we received a **legacy gift from the estate of Joan Lovrien**, long-time member of Unity Church. We dedicated this gift to upgrading our Sanctuary sound system and to our long-term investments.

### ***Fiscal Year 2015***

**As of June 30, 2015, our operating pledge base** was at \$1,155,543 from 658 households including 56 new pledges. Additionally, our spring canvass reached \$31,825 from 66 households, leaving \$54,943 to be raised before the end of 2015 to reach our approved budget goal. The Executive Team projected a year-end pledge shortfall of \$28,000. In discussions with the Board of Trustees, it was agreed that the Executive Team would continue to make every effort to close the gap and that any year-end shortfall would come from reserves.

As of June 30, 2015 total **Unity Tomorrow Capital Campaign commitments** were at \$6,831,137 and we had collected \$6,142,935 with a remaining \$688,202 collectible by the end of 2016. The total project costs were \$7,977,426. We will be collecting capital campaign commitments through the end of 2016, including a real estate gift.

By June 30, 2015, we had fully satisfied the principal payments for our short term *Unity Tomorrow* construction loan, and were confident of making additional principal payments in 2015 to further reduce the principal. The remaining balance is scheduled to convert to a long-term note on January 1, 2016. The plan is to prepare proposals to present to Western Bank and one or two other lending institutions.

## **Administration**

The administrative staff is a hard-working, talented team of people who support every aspect of church life. Martha Tilton, Coordinator of Communications; Song Thao, Financial Assistant; and Marcy Mann-Anderson, Office Manager and Wedding/Memorial Coordinator comprise our administrative team.

Our paid staff is supported by dedicated and hard-working front desk volunteers who play an important role in greeting people, answering phone calls, and helping with various projects. The Memorial Service Reception Team also serves a critical role in providing food and support for memorial service receptions, and we are very grateful for their work.

## **Facilities**

Our hard-working, dedicated facilities staff was kept very busy in the 2014-2015 church year supporting the full program and worship life of the church. Additionally, they accomplished maintenance projects, including cleaning, repair, painting, snow removal, and grounds maintenance at both the church and the church-owned duplex.

Our garden group worked diligently to provide beautiful landscaping, particularly in the courtyard at Grotto and Portland. Other individuals continued to move us toward sustainable recycling and composting systems and we became a site for a level one fast charging station for electric vehicles.

One Voice Mixed Chorus rents office, rehearsal, and meeting space at Unity. Above Every Name continues to worship at Unity on Sunday afternoons. Unity also hosts the Minnesota Hungarians who hold occasional dinners, dances, and fundraisers at Unity and have added Hungarian language classes for children. The New Century Club holds meetings at Unity, as well as the Osher Life Long Learning Institute, and various 12-step groups.

Our Archive Team sorted through and filed archival material in the lower level storage area and is now working with the Minnesota Historical Society to store some of our materials there. We are also embarking on a project to digitize our archival materials.

The Art Team became energized with old and new members and is going beyond the responsibility for Parish Hall art shows to creating an electronic inventory of the entire art collection at Unity Church!

## Unity Consulting

Unity Consulting is a wholly owned subsidiary of Unity Church whose mission is to liberate and empower the leadership of progressive religious congregations and institutions to awaken compassion, transform lives, and bless the world. We help congregations articulate the difference they seek to make in the world and then align their work and ministries to enable them to make that difference. Our primary tool is Policy Governance® as we've learned to adapt it for congregations.

5% of Unity Consulting's fees go to support Unity Church's operating budget. Unity Consulting also provides pro-bono services to the denomination through governance consulting with denominational and congregational leaders.

Highlights from this past year's work include:

- Significant work to advance a proprietary product of Unity Consulting, currently called SpiritMap. More details to follow as we work toward an October Kickstarter launch to fund the product development.
- Consulting services, which include both on-site retreats and hourly virtual coaching, provided to nineteen congregations over the course of the year, seven of which were new clients.
- Completed a three-year governance transition process at a large Congregational church.
- In 2014, \$1,767 went to the Unity Church operating budget from Unity Consulting fees.

## **Denominational Relations Ministry Team**

The DRMT's purpose is to increase Unity's awareness and connection to the work of the MidAmerica Region and the national Unitarian Universalist Association. The MidAmerica Region is made up of 186 UU congregations (affiliated with the UUA) spread across 13 states. The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) is the central organization for the UU religious movement in the United States and Canada. The primary purpose of the Association is to serve the needs of its member congregations, organize new congregations, extend and strengthen UU institutions and implement its principles.

Unity has long been a contributor to the national UUA leadership. Most recently some examples include Rev. Janne Eller-Isaac's work as a Ministerial Settlement Representative, working with the Appleton, WI, UU church, supporting the work of their search committee and offering guidelines for the process. We are also very proud that Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs serves as a member of the UUA Board of Trustees, which conducts the affairs of the Association and carries out policies and directives, acting for the Association between General Assembly gatherings.

Unity Church also plays an important role as a teaching congregation through the Hallman Ministerial Intern program. Each year a seminary student/graduate is selected to receive training by hands-on work with our church. In addition, Unity Consulting, headed by Unity member Laura Park and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Unity Church-Unitarian, works to give congregations and institutions the tools they need to be specific, strategic and accountable in pursuit of their stated ends.

In May of 2015 the DRMT made a presentation to Unity's Board of Trustees outlining some of the issues the UUA is currently dealing with. We highlighted the presentations made at the MidAmerica Regional Conference that we attended in April 2015 – especially the opening service conducted by Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs and Rev. Danny Givens, Jr., Unity's Ministerial Resident. It was a profound chronicle of their experience during the pilgrimage to Selma and the march across the Pettus bridge in recognition of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1965 "Bloody Sunday" demonstration for voting and civil rights.

The DRMT's upcoming plans include a program to study "Escalating Inequality," an issue selected to be the 2014-2018 Congregational Study/Action Issue by the UUA General Assembly. We are also planning to attend the MidAmerica 2016 Regional Conference at the end of April here in Saint Paul, and the 2016 UU General Assembly in Columbus, OH, in June. We are in the process of preparing a workshop to present at the MidAmerica Conference. Mostly, we hope to keep our Board and the congregation aware of the rich connections we have with our fellow Unitarian Universalists locally and nationwide.

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**  
(See Independent Accountant's Review Report)

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
<i>Assets:</i>		
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 314,695	\$ 183,002
Receivables:		
Current portion:		
Operating pledges, net	903,722	1,013,990
Unity Tomorrow capital campaign commitments, net	500,394	820,619
Capital pledges, net	144,673	
Other receivables	61,833	45,222
Investments	16,279	9,466
Prepaid expenses	<u>14,311</u>	<u>12,899</u>
 Total current assets	 <u>1,955,907</u>	 <u>2,085,198</u>
Property and equipment:		
Land and land improvements	167,320	167,320
Buildings and building improvements	11,527,855	11,526,449
Equipment	753,262	740,671
Artwork	<u>81,300</u>	<u>81,300</u>
	12,529,737	12,515,740
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>3,472,378</u>	<u>3,218,338</u>
	 <u>9,057,359</u>	 <u>9,297,402</u>
Other assets:		
Cash restricted for long-term purposes	237,652	236,037
Operating pledges, net of current portion	1,259,861	
Unity Tomorrow capital campaign commitments, net of current portion	52,190	747,542
Capital pledges, net of current portion	328,274	
Deferred finance costs, net of accumulated amortization of \$19,873 and \$11,356 at December 31, 2014 and 2013, respectively	25,551	34,068
Investments	680,158	285,097
St. Paul Foundation holdings	129,435	127,417
Beneficial interest in Diether perpetual trust	<u>478,958</u>	<u>492,423</u>
	 <u>3,192,079</u>	 <u>1,922,584</u>
 Total assets	 <u>\$ 14,205,345</u>	 <u>\$ 13,305,184</u>

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
DECEMBER 31

	2014	2013
<i>Liabilities and net assets:</i>		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 35,661	\$ 18,452
Accrued expenses	96,781	99,103
Current portion:		
Long-term debt	300,000	400,000
Capital lease obligation	8,091	5,743
	440,533	523,298
Capital lease obligation, net of current portion		8,091
Long-term debt, net of current portion	2,358,464	3,158,464
Loan from donor advised fund	232,275	250,000
	3,031,272	3,939,853
Total liabilities		
Net assets:		
Unrestricted	813,544	885,795
Temporarily restricted	9,124,862	7,505,656
Permanently restricted	1,235,667	973,880
	11,174,073	9,365,331
Total net assets		
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 14,205,345	\$ 13,305,184

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**  
(See Independent Accountant's Review Report)

	2014			Total
	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily restricted</u>	<u>Permanently restricted</u>	
Support and revenue:				
Pledges and gifts	\$ 174,892	\$ 3,023,254	\$ 269,339	\$ 3,467,485
Sunday collections	24,002	98,703		122,705
Grants		75,000		75,000
Program fees	102,931			102,931
Investment income	25,121	25,067	3,895	54,083
Change in value of:				
St. Paul Foundation holdings			2,018	2,018
Diether perpetual trust			(13,465)	(13,465)
Rental income	31,324			31,324
Unity consulting income	41,161			41,161
Miscellaneous income	51,579			51,579
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>1,602,818</u>	<u>(1,602,818)</u>		
Total support and revenue	<u>2,053,828</u>	<u>1,619,206</u>	<u>261,787</u>	<u>3,934,821</u>
Expenses:				
Program	1,598,200			1,598,200
Management and general	429,402			429,402
Fundraising	98,477			98,477
Total expenses	<u>2,126,079</u>			<u>2,126,079</u>
Change in net assets	(72,251)	1,619,206	261,787	1,808,742
Net assets, beginning	<u>885,795</u>	<u>7,505,656</u>	<u>973,880</u>	<u>9,365,331</u>
Net assets, ending	<u>\$ 813,544</u>	<u>\$ 9,124,862</u>	<u>\$ 1,235,667</u>	<u>\$ 11,174,073</u>

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND  
CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31

2013			
<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily restricted</u>	<u>Permanently restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
\$ 45,480	\$ 954,237	\$ 8,423	\$ 1,008,140
26,107	111,831		137,938
182,850			182,850
3,261	82,532	12,605	98,398
		13,563	13,563
		26,054	26,054
25,675			25,675
69,915			69,915
11,732			11,732
<u>1,572,263</u>	<u>(1,572,263)</u>		
<u>1,937,283</u>	<u>(423,663)</u>	<u>60,645</u>	<u>1,574,265</u>
1,634,532			1,634,532
478,438			478,438
<u>74,773</u>			<u>74,773</u>
<u>2,187,743</u>			<u>2,187,743</u>
(250,460)	(423,663)	60,645	(613,478)
<u>1,136,255</u>	<u>7,929,319</u>	<u>913,235</u>	<u>9,978,809</u>
<u>\$ 885,795</u>	<u>\$ 7,505,656</u>	<u>\$ 973,880</u>	<u>\$ 9,365,331</u>