

Appendix C

Reports from Senior Staff and Leadership

Executive Director's Report to the Congregation FUUCA – 12/13/2009

Since my report to the congregation a year ago, many things have improved here at the church. This includes things related to the dismissal as well as many completely unrelated things. Overall, we find ourselves on a good path today and have good momentum as we move into the future.

Challenges remain, but we have the time, treasure, and talent here to take them on. Significantly, we are doing a better job of identifying those resources, including many that had previously gone untapped, and finding ways to use them more efficiently.

For 2010, we have a great challenge and opportunity in our work, as a congregation, to prepare ourselves to call our next senior minister. I aspire, and I hope this holds true for each of you, to do everything possible to attract a large pool of enthusiastic, highly qualified candidates. This should allow us to find the best possible match for us: a minister well suited for the church we are today and who can help us become the church we want to become.

My staff and I look forward to participating in this exciting chapter in First UU's life, and continuing to partner with you to make the most of our opportunities.

Program Support 2009 in Review

During the last year, in addition to routine activities, a variety of major events have taken place through volunteer and staff efforts. Among the most significant, we have:

- Hired a New Administrative Assistant – Natalie Freeburg is an experienced, dedicated professional.
- Increased Rental Income – Natalie's skills and talents have allowed her to quickly learn the ropes of our facility reservation system and increase our rental income more than \$15,000 over what we had budgeted. Her other duties include a bit of everything under the sun.
- Hired a New Bookkeeper – Sandra King has taken the place previously occupied by Jim Scott and has already made great strides in cleaning up our records.
- Improved and Cleaned up Financial Data – we have made significant headway in improving the reliability and timely entry of our financial data. We have also corrected many of the errors that had plagued it in the past.
- Improved the collection of credit card pledge payments – in 2008, roughly 25% of credit card pledge payments went uncollected. This year, every bounced payment has received thorough follow up, significantly improving our collections.
- Support for Interim Ministry – in order for this year of interim ministry to produce the best results for the congregation, we provided material and informational support to Rev. Janet Newman.
- Improved internal procedures – from staff time sheets to clarifying the process to reserving rooms, our new procedures have increased efficiency and created more financial transparency.
- Installed an improved phone system – our new phone system takes us from having insufficient lines (we couldn't provide a phone line to our ministerial intern last year) to having plenty of room to add new lines in the future as necessary.

- Improved Photocopier – the new photocopier is more reliable, can make color copies, and has a variety of other improved functions that will reduce our bills for outside printing.
- Addressed Rat and Termite infestations – the termite and rat problems we had earlier this year seem to have been remediated. This has improved the facility's sanitation and helped preserve its structure.
- Set up the Mail Room and Library – these new spaces have helped us to increase office efficiency by decreasing unnecessary disruptions. They have also provided new space for member activities.
- Improved Policies and Procedures – we have helped the board to identify and clean up a variety of policies and procedures that were unclear or just in need of updating. These include facility rental, vacation and sick leave policy, and financial controls.

Program Support Goals for 2010

In addition to continuing routine activities, we have set the following goals for particular attention next year.

- Recycling Program – we aim to get a new, sustainable recycling program up and running early in the year.
- New Church Management System – we aim to have a new data system that will increase staff and volunteer efficiency, collect more relevant data, allow better data access (especially for religious education, stewardship, and membership), and provide us with an online calendar of church activities.
- Improved books and financial reports – we aim to transition in January to a new set of books that improve staff efficiency, produce financial reports that are more user-friendly and show the whole of the church's finances, and produce reports that easily provide relevant data to church departments and groups.
- The Church's Mission, Vision, and Purpose – we will provide support to the Bridge Builder Action Team, Board of Trustees, and membership at large as the church undertakes this project.
- Increase Efficiency – we will continue to seek opportunities to decrease costs, use staff and volunteer time more efficiently, and improve the quality of our work.
- Support for Interim Ministry – we will continue to provide material and informational support to our interim minister so that she (and her successor) can dedicate their time and talents to ministry.
- Increase support for Stewardship Committee – we hope to provide more support to stewardship than in 2009, including technology, services, and information.
- Improve the Sanctuary's Audio System – we aim to complete our project to improve the Sanctuary's audio system. This will include the installation of several top-quality Altec-Lansing speakers that the church received as a donation three years ago.

Other Duties and Activities

Although the core of office work remains administrative, the work my staff and I do goes beyond simple administration. Natalie Freeburg, our able Administrative Assistant, spends roughly 80% of her time managing facilities reservations (for church groups and renters).

Likewise, I spend my time in a variety of ways. At present, the bulk goes towards improving processes here at the church so we can function with improved efficiency, transparency, professionalism, and accountability. I estimate that my time for 2009 breaks roughly into the following categories:

- 25% - Routine Program Support & Administration
- 50% - Improvements to Program Support & Administration
- 10% - Board and governance support
- 5% - Stewardship
- 5% - Facility
- 5% - Volunteer recruitment and coordination

As time passes and we have completed major improvements to program support and administration, that should allow more time for other projects. This might include new services or direct support and enhancements to key program areas.

Volunteers

Thank goodness for the talented volunteers who have been so generous with their time this year. They have provided critical support in a variety of areas, without which things would look very different around here. For sake of brevity (and fear of leaving someone's name off), I won't name everyone here. Please know, however, that staff feels great gratitude to all of you and everything you do to help keep operations smooth and bring life to this community.

---Sean Hale December 13, 2009

Director of Music Report to the Congregation

December 2009

It has been an exciting year of music and spirituality in the FUUCA Music Program. Despite the turbulence and change of the past year, the program continues to grow and thrive. Below are some highlights from 2009:

FUUCA Adult Choir

The FUUCA Adult Choir has undertaken a number of exciting and ambitious projects this year. In addition to our large-scale chamber orchestra collaborative works (Bach "Der Herr denket an uns" in June and our recent Buxtehude/Vivaldi holiday celebration on December 6th), we've had numerous collaborations with our Children's Choirs, premiered a brand-new work by FUUCA choir member Dave Jellison, and celebrated in music many holidays (Passover, Easter, Yom Kippur, Thanksgiving, Mother's Day, Black History Month, Christmas, etc).

While we lost a number of key music program volunteers in the wake of the dismissal, the group really pulled together as a community in the face of challenging times. I am so very proud of them and the work they've done this year.

FUUCA Children's Choirs

Since its initiation in 2007, the FUUCA Children's Choirs continue to grow in terms of membership and musicality. It has been an extremely rewarding couple of years, and the program has proved to be a vital bridge between the RE and Worship areas. Many thanks to all of the kids, their dedicated parents, the supportive folks in RE, and of course our highly credentialed and experienced choir teachers Danielle Solan (Primary Choir Director) and Kelan Latimer (Youth Choir Director).

Many thanks are due to our parent coordinators Chris Heidel and Vicki Almstrum. Their organization help has been invaluable to the growth and success of the program.

Given the budget shortfall for next year, the program will once again be partially funded for 2010 (\$5000 compared to 2008's funding level of \$9000). I am concerned that a second year of half-funding will quickly become the established funding level for Children's Choir for future years - with the expectation that fundraising cover the other half. Many sources will say that funding staff positions in this manner is ill-advised and ultimately unsustainable -- it is therefore my hope that we can do far better for this important church program in 2011.

Musical Guests

FUUCA services were enhanced by appearances by numerous guest musicians throughout the year. Among our special guests were:

Joe Jencks; Jim Scott (in collaboration with the Adult Choir); Chuck Pyle; Roy Zimmerman; Paula Held; 1001 Nights Orchestra; Bob Livingston; Conspirare soloist

Gitanjali Mathur (who was most recently featured in Conspirare's PBS special); Michelle Schumann; Kay Race; Central Texas Viola Society; Texas Choral Consort.

When we are not graced with the presence of guests such as these are continue to enjoy the in-house talents of staff pianists John Sanders and Bryan Uecker.

Featuring this caliber of guests in 2010 will be challenging in face of budget cuts, but I will to work hard to continue bringing in these folks who enrich our worship experience.

Austin Chamber Music Center – FUUCA's Artists-in-Residence for 2009-2010

In August 2009, the FUUCA Music Program entered into an artistic partnership with the Austin Chamber Music Center. Their entire 2009-2010 season occurs at the church, with vastly discounted tickets (half-price) available to our membership. They will also lend their world-class musical talents to our services. I've long desired for such a musical partnership, but never imagined the first one would be with a program as prodigious as the APMC. I consider us very lucky to be working so closely with them, and look forward to their continued musical gifts in the new year.

Outreach

On December 4th, the FUUCA Adult Choir participated in the annual North-Central Caregivers Christmas Concert, alongside 11 other area choirs.

A small vocal ensemble from FUUCA was invited to sing and play for services at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Waco on August 20th. We were featured in a service focusing specifically on music and spirituality in collaboration with UUFW music program. It was a lot of fun!

Music Library Overhaul

For the past year, our music librarians and I have been going through our extensive musical archives to a) make better use of limited storage space, b) weed out outdated holdings, and c) make room for more recent acquisitions. This work would not have been possible without the creative energies of our librarians, Barbara Tuttle and Douglas Manger.

10 years!

August marked my 10-year anniversary of serving as FUUCA's Director of Music. As difficult as it is to believe it's been that long, it has been a pleasure working for you all!

Respectfully submitted,

Brent D. Baldwin

Director of Music

Religious Education Report to the Congregation December, 2009

Lara Douglass, Director of Religious Education
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin

The following are examples of how our Religious Education (RE) programs for children, youth, and adults have carried out the mission and vision of our congregation during the past six months.

Vision Statement

As an inclusive religious and spiritual community, we support each individual's search for meaning and purpose and join together to help create a world filled with compassion and love.

Inclusiveness: Adult Religious Education (ARE) offers classes, which reflect the inclusive nature of First Church. For example, Yoga and Tai Chi classes are offered to the church and the wider community on a weekly basis. Spiritual Movie Night has been revived and now includes a children's movie, while the adult movie is playing.

The Adult OWL class concluded late in the Spring and got overall positive reviews. The class was featured in the Oprah magazine in July 2009 and we got much positive feedback from both the class and the national coverage of the class. Michael West and Barb Tuttle lead this class.

Building community: RE held and participated in several events in the last six months, which strengthened our community.

RE again offered the Harry Potter Camp experience for 60 campers, 12 junior counselors. The weeklong event was held from July 31 to August 4. The camp was open to church members and to the community. We had many volunteers from both the church community and the wider community.

This Fall, Children in RE are studying the Christianity curricula.

The Middle School and High School are using the curriculum, *Neighboring Faiths*. The classes visited the Congregation Agudas Achim for a Friday night service. The youth had an extended talk with Rabbi Neil Blumofes.

On Saturday, October 24, the annual Halloween Party was combined with a Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) party for the children. The children prepared an ofrenda (Day of the Dead altar) in the foyer. All of the church members were invited to bring mementoes of their loved ones to place on this beautiful altar. This altar was moved into the sanctuary for Rev. Newman's sermon the next morning.

The Adult RE department hosted a church-wide "Night at the Opera" which was a glorious intergeneration event viewing of the opera, *Carmen*. The youth helped prepare and serve the hors d'oeuvres during the two intermissions of the opera. It was a wonderful evening.

Teaching compassion and love: RE children have participated in several Social Action projects, which teach love and compassion for all. Every Sunday, the children bring food to be donated to Caritas when they come forward for the children's story during both worship services.

During the summer, as a social action project, the children reached out to the older, ill members of our congregation. The children prepared gift baskets and made cards, which were delivered to three members of our congregation.

Mission Statement

- **Create and sustain a joyful, caring, involved church community.**

As previously mentioned, RE sponsored and co-led many church events, birthday celebrations, and intergenerational worship experiences.

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First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin

Teachers in children's and youth programming recognize and greet their students by name.

- **Promote intimacy, support and fellowship to foster the individual spiritual and emotional growth of our members.**

The Adult RE program, continues to provide programs which both inform us and nurture us. The Sunday morning book groups and the philosophical discussion group continued to meet all year around. The attendance is growing.

These groups are open and inviting to visitors and new members.

- **Offer inspirational and challenging worship services.**

This Fall, RE participated in two very different worship experiences, an RE teacher dedication, in which all church RE staff were recognized and participated in a covenanting worship service,

In November, RE, along with Rev. Newman, and Brent Baldwin, Director of Music, held an intergenerational service during the regular Sunday worship hours. It was a rare and wonderful opportunity to worship together.

- **Provide ritual and ceremony for rites of passage**

During the period of transition, without a minister, we have not been able to have child dedication ceremonies. However, the middle school children who advanced to High School this Fall had a large lock-in to welcome and acclimate them to the High School classes and YRUU.

- **Provide progressive religious education for all ages**

Religious Education is provided to children based upon developmentally appropriate curricula. Fortunately, the church has a wealth of curricula written by professionals and purchased by RE through the UUA and directly through the curriculum authors.

We are currently using a rotation system of curricula. We offer curricula based upon our sources (Judaism, Christianity World Religions) in the fall. In the spring we offer curricula based upon our UU identities and history. In the summer we focus on ethics and social action.

As recommended by most religious education professionals, we provide separate programming in five categories, preschool, kindergarten to grade 2, grade 3-5, middle school, and high school.

The Adult RE programs offer Sunday morning classes, as well as classes during the week and special topic explorations.

During the Summer, RE sponsored 4 lectures on Family/Church Systems Theory conducted by Rev. David Jones, the Director of the Ministry Program at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. These four sessions were very popular and Rev. Jones came back in the Fall to conduct a two-day, intensive workshop on the theory, which was well attended.

- **Enrich our community through music, drama, and the arts**

The Children's Christmas Pageant will be presented again this year on Wednesday evening, Dec. 16, after the Meet and Eat. Rev. Newman will be our narrator this year.

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First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin

As mentioned earlier, an opera was sponsored and offered as a gift to the First UU congregation by Adult RE.

- **Empower and encourage members toward social and civic leadership.**

Youth Members have been greeters and ushers all year long.

- **Share our values and gifts with the larger community.**

The class offerings of the adult RE program continue to attract members of the wider community. Ongoing classes such as Yoga and Tai Chi make it possible to share our values and talents with the larger community.

Our Summer Harry Potter Camp Program attracted many children and adults from the wider community, as well as church members.

- **Strive to create a more diverse church community.**

Many visitors are awed and remark to me that the RE children and Youth programs of our church are the most diverse populations they have ever seen in any church. I agree. We are now reaping the benefits of our long time welcoming congregation where everyone is valued and loved.

Contact Information

If you would like to know more about our Religious Education Programs or to discuss Religious Education in our church, please contact me (Lara Douglass, DRE) or any of the RE staff or committees. You may contact me at (512) 452-6168, ext. 305 or email, lara@austinuu.org.

We invite you to contact a committee member or attend a meeting of the Religious Education Committees.

Children's Program Committee: Meets the fourth Sunday of each month in room 9 from 1pm to 2:30pm. Vicky Bailey Miller is, is our current president. .

Adult Religious Education Committee: Meets the second Thursday of January, March, May, July, September, and November in room 9 from 7pm to 9pm and as needed for time-sensitive matters. Michael LeBurkien is the Chair of this committee.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lara Douglass
Director of Religious Education
First UU Church of Austin
December 13, 2009

Social Action Committee Report: Accomplishments in 2009 and Goals in 2010

Respectfully submitted by Corinna Whiteaker-Lewis & Eric Hartman, co-chairs

The Social Action Committee has much to be proud of in 2009. This past year we had 13 projects coordinated by the fifteen church members who comprise our committee. The chart below not only speaks to their commitment to social action, but also that of our entire congregation. In rough figures, over 450 of us expressed our UU values through social action in the community at large. We worked close to 3000 hours in service and gave over \$26,000 to organizations that are changing the world for the better. This commitment is a significant reason why our church matters – we are walking our talk, and making a difference. In 2010, our committee will continue to help our congregation in this mission. We will covenant together to envision how we can be most successful in the coming year. We will determine how to best:

Serve those in need,
Advocate for change,
Educate our congregation, and
Welcome others to work with us.

	Coordinator/s	# of Years at FUUCA	# of Volunteers	# of New Volunteers	# of Volunteer Hours	Funding from SAC Budget	Direct Donations (in-kind has been conv. to \$)
Alternative Gift Fair	Judy Sadegh	4 or 5 years	7	3	27		\$1500
Caritas Canned Food	Joan Forbes & Barbara Owens	20+ years	6	3	90		\$1200
First Sunday Suppers	Betty Wood & JH Webber	4 years	48	12	160		
Freeze Nights	Mary Ann Stafford	11 years	150	10	250		\$600
Hands on Housing	Beverly Donoghue	15-20 years	74	38	300	\$1000	
Hunger Walk	Eric Hartman	10 years	45	20	120		\$1600
NAMI Walk	Kathryn Govier & Donna Pauler	4 years	35	28	220		\$5500
North Central Caregivers	Marilyn Wilson	17 years	8	1	1000		
People's Community Clinic	Sheri Overton & Nancy Neavel	3 years	37	15	531		\$300
Sack Lunch Program	Mary Jane Ford	3 years	40	4	170	\$1000	\$1690
Split-the-Plate	Eric Hartman	10+ years	25	10	120		\$12,000
UUSC	Judy Sadegh	8 years	2	2	5		
UUs at the UN	Judy Sadegh	10 years	1	1	3		\$140
Totals:			470	146	2996	\$2000	\$25,430