OUR VALUES

Community • Courage • Love • Diversity • Generosity • Joy

OUR MISSION

The Unitarian Society is a loving community of seekers

Living with Integrity • Nurturing Wonder • Inspiring Action

OUR COVENANT OF GOOD RELATIONS

In my interactions with others in this congregation, I will:

• Be receptive, listening with care and compassion
• Be truthful, speaking with care and compassion
• Speak directly to any person(s) with whom I have a concern
• Be committed to the group as a whole, honoring our long history as a congregation within the Unitarian Universalist tradition
• Expect that there will be differences among us and accept and care for one another despite those differences
• Remain engaged with gentleness and respect when times are uncertain, participate in the process, and do my part to sustain this Covenant
• Honor my responsibility for upholding the spiritual values, traditions, and rituals of our community
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UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF SANTA BARBARA
NOTIFIED AGENDA FOR ANNUAL MEETING
JUNE 5, 2016 AT 12:30 PM, PARISH HALL

1. Opening and Call to Order.............................................................Melinda Staveley, Board President
2. Affirmation of Covenant, Core Values, and Mission, and Ends
4. Additions or Deletions from Agenda if 20% of membership present
5. Election of Board of Trustees............................................Gun Dukes, Nominating Committee Chair
6. Election of Nominating Committee............................................Melinda Staveley, Board President
8. Vote to Adopt Fiscal Plan.................................................................Keith Strohmaier, Treasurer
10. Honor outgoing Board Members..........................................................Rev. Julia Hamilton
11. Installation of Board and Nominating Committee.........................Rev. Julia Hamilton
12. New Business (additional agenda items)
13. Closing...........................................................................................................................Rev. Julia Hamilton
14. Adjournment.......................................................................................Melinda Staveley, Board President

VOTING INFORMATION

- Members who have signed the membership book on or before May 5, 2016 and committed to an annual financial contribution are eligible to vote. (Members may also receive ministerial exemption from financial commitment.)
- Absentee ballots will be available on request by calling the office at 965-4583, or at the Town Meeting on May 22, 2016.
- Members may vote by proxy. Each member attending the meeting may hold one proxy. Proxies should be dated, signed and state the name of the member to carry the proxy.
- The quorum for an annual meeting is one-tenth of the membership counted as present, or voting by proxy or absentee ballot.

Official voting membership at meeting notice: 425
Quorum to conduct business: 10% of total membership (43)
Quorum to make additions or deletions from agenda: 20% of total membership (85)
BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2015-2016

OFFICERS
Melinda Staveley, President
Susan Plummer, Vice-President
Carol Schwyzer, Secretary
Keith Strohmaier, Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS
Craig Bennett, Eileen Bunning, Bonnie Lassen, Charlene Little, Ted Tazer-Myers

BOARD TERMS
Term Expires June 30, 2016: Craig Bennett, Susan Plummer, Carol Schwyzer
Term Expires June 30, 2017: Colin Jones, Charlene Little, Melinda Staveley
Term Expires June 30, 2018: Eileen Bunning, Bonnie Lassen, Keith Strohmaier

NOMINATING COMMITTEE TERMS
Term Expires June 30, 2016: Gun Dukes, Chuck Wolfe
Term Expires June 30, 2017: Sally Hinton, Andrew Rose, Joya Sexton
Term Expires June 30, 2018: Tracy Freeman

STAFF 2015-2016
Julia Hamilton, Lead Minister (805) 965-4583 x222 julia@ussb.org
Caitlin Cotter, Assistant Minister (805) 965-4583 x244 caitlin@ussb.org
Erin Wilson, Director of Administration (805) 965-4583 x225 erin@ussb.org
Jena Foster, Religious Ed. Program Director (805) 965-4583 x227 jena@ussb.org
Tiffany Jolie, Religious Ed. Coordinator (805) 965-4583 x227 tiffany@ussb.org
Adam Shive, Youth Coordinator adam@ussb.org
Megan Moyer, Membership Coordinator (805) 965-4583 x221 megan@ussb.org
Eden Kennedy, Office Manager (805) 965-4583 x224 eden@ussb.org
Greg Otero, Facilities Use Coordinator (805) 965-4583 x223 greg@ussb.org
Rob Brown, Building Manager (805) 965-4583 x230 rob@ussb.org
Ken Ryals, Chancel Choir Director (805) 965-4583 x240 ken@ussb.org
Heather Levin, Pianist heathlev@silcom.com
Jon Diaz, Sexton jon@ussb.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD</th>
<th>LEAD MINISTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Gun Dukes</td>
<td>Rev. Julia Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Ken Ralph</td>
<td>Rev. Julia Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Ted Stern</td>
<td>Rev. Lee Bond-Upson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Program of Distinction: Ministerial Search Committee</td>
<td>Rev. Lee Bond-Upson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Susie DuPont</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Mary Grimm</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Chris Shorb</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Carole Sharpe</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Carol Schwyzer</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Joanie Jones</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Jody Thomas</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>John Gilbert</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>John Warnock</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Kir Zecher</td>
<td>Rev. Aaron McEmrys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Program of Distinction: Ministerial Search Committee</td>
<td>Rev. Joy Atkinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Program of Distinction: Building Project Committee</td>
<td>Rev. Joy Atkinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Patricia Reilly</td>
<td>Rev. Kenneth Collier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Doug Thomas</td>
<td>Rev. Kenneth Collier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Ellen Rockne</td>
<td>Rev. Kenneth Collier</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
MEMBER STATISTICS
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP: 425

NEW MEMBERS
Rachel Aarons        Sue Fisher        Cortis Loukes        Devon Nelson        Deb Stanton
Karen Calzago        Angela Karmis      Kate Loukes          May Osher           Shirin Tolle
Will Dewey           Frances Kretschmer  Rory Moore           Anais Pellegrini
Sean Donovan         Miles Kretschmer   Annette Ndagano      Kimberly Schlesinger

REINSTATED
Fred Becker           Michael Just       Frank Michaelson     Chuck-Hou Yee

RESIGNED
Beverly Appleton     Caroline Chamberlin Bob Fulmer          Laura Kenig         Donna Shinoda
Chris Appleton       Doug Chamberlin    Pat Fulmer           Nancy Palke         Muto Shinoda
Leinie Bard          Tom Craveiro       Virginia Harper      John Romo           Maureen Sullivan
Maggy Cara           Sue Fridley        Sarah Hough          Mary Romo           Caity Young

DECEASED
Paul Blasingame      Lex Crane          Babette Kinkead      Stefan Mason       Barbara Sachs
Ginny Crane           Marilynn Gruber    Wendy Lewis-Rakova   Bill Morton-Smith  George Solinas

MOVED
Sonja Lindstrom       Anna Sweeney       Don Sweeney

REMOVED BY BOARD ACTION
Kari Acuri            Gary Gleissner      Ann Marshall        Heather Slosman
Ross Beardsley        Tina Gleissner     Percy Sales         Debra Stanfield
Joseph Caballero      Nicolas Limthong   Brian Slosman

WEDDINGS
Erik Brinckmann & Liza Messano
Alisha Edmundson & Nick Amland

BIRTHS
Stella Carol Smith, daughter of Elizabeth Schwyzer Smith and Steve Smith, granddaughter of Carol Schwyzer
### PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2016-2017

#### REVENUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015-16 ADOPTE D</th>
<th>2015-16 PROJECTED</th>
<th>2016-17 PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Membership Pledges</td>
<td>$480,000</td>
<td>$430,001</td>
<td>$440,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising, Grants, Administrative Fees</td>
<td>$50,700</td>
<td>$53,379</td>
<td>$48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions Revenue</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$24,793</td>
<td>$34,250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Room Use, Weddings, Rentals, etc.</td>
<td>$214,440</td>
<td>$230,872</td>
<td>$229,010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment Activity</td>
<td>$139,000</td>
<td>$143,511</td>
<td>$142,538</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Revenue</td>
<td>$909,140</td>
<td>$882,564</td>
<td>$893,798</td>
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</tbody>
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#### EXPENSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015-16 ADOPTE D</th>
<th>2015-16 PROJECTED</th>
<th>2016-17 PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Payroll</td>
<td>$495,711</td>
<td>$495,260</td>
<td>$490,030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>$130,224</td>
<td>$156,530</td>
<td>$144,942</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facility</td>
<td>$120,230</td>
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<td>$110,009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>$56,100</td>
<td>$104,304</td>
<td>$110,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplements to Programs</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,617</td>
<td>$13,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District &amp; Association Support</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$11,400</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest Expense &amp; Principal Pay-down</td>
<td>$62,475</td>
<td>$53,387</td>
<td>$53,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves</td>
<td>$9,400</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expense</td>
<td>$909,140</td>
<td>$889,552</td>
<td>$893,798</td>
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#### Net Operating Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015-16 ADOPTE D</th>
<th>2015-16 PROJECTED</th>
<th>2016-17 PROPOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$-6,987</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NOTES ON PROPOSED BUDGET

#### OPERATING REVENUE

- Annual Membership Pledges based upon current year projections, known commitments to current annual campaign, and projections of new memberships.
- Fundraising, Grants & Administrative Fees are based upon current year projections and next year’s plans. Service auction will be held in fall. Administrative fee related to Warming Center Fiscal Agency. No grant income identified or budgeted to date.
- Room use, Weddings & Rentals based upon known contracts and current year projections. This item includes rental for houses at 124 E. Arrellaga and 113 E. La Paz, SK Parent Child Workshop, Knox School, Weddings and other room users.
- Contribution Revenue includes net of miscellaneous gifts and plate collections (for USSB only) less monthly and holiday gifts to outreach.

#### OPERATING EXPENSES

- Staff Payroll reflects fair compensation wages and salaries for staff and contracted childcare workers.
- Benefits includes fair compensation benefits for staff members, including health, retirement, social security, long term disability, and workers compensation.
- Facilities Expense includes property and liability insurance, regular maintenance, major maintenance, contract services for gardening, custodial and security services, utilities, supplies, and organ maintenance.
- Administration Expense includes computer hardware, programs, and maintenance telephone/internet service, bookkeeping, office equipment leases, supplies, postage, and newsletter mailing.
- Supplements to Programs include cost of program supplies and board expenses. Not included are programs’ individual fundraising efforts and registration fees that are not part of our operating budget.
- Denominational Support is based on official membership count of 433 reported February 1, 2016; 53% of Fair Share requested by Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), and the Pacific Southwest District (PSWD).
- Interest Expense & Principal Pay-down includes the paying of interest and principal on mortgage and member loans.
- Reserves includes net income amount of operating revenues and expenses, held for major maintenance items, emergencies, or disasters.
USSB ENDS STATEMENTS, 2013-2018

Living with integrity, we:
• Use our heads and our hearts to develop a deep understanding of our individual and collective values, ethics and personal theologies and align our individual and community actions in witness to those commitments.
• Support each other in life and life’s transitions with loving care, celebration and gratitude.
• Engage in lifelong learning, utilizing reason in the pursuit of truth.
• Care for the earth and its rich web of life.

Nurturing wonder, we:
• Experience the transcendent that opens us to deep connection and life’s expansiveness.
• Develop intellectual and spiritual personal practices that actively engage us with paradox and mystery.
• Invite the wider world to join us in our exploration of the unknown.

Inspiring action, we:
• Pursue justice and equality courageously through bold individual and Congregational endeavors.
• Integrate joy and service.
• Develop leaders who shift the larger culture toward justice and compassion.
• Welcome and connect with people across differences of ethnicity, class, sexual identity, religion, politics and education.
• Form partnerships beyond our congregation consistent with our mission and values.
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Members of the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara (USSB) are the owners of our beloved society. The Congregation elects its Board of Trustees to provide oversight and governance of the Society’s operations and activities, the goal of which is to fulfill our Mission, Values, and Ends as determined by the Congregation. The Board meets monthly from August through June.

In 2015-16, our Board of nine dedicated individuals (Bonnie Lassen, Carol Schwyzer, Secretary, Charlene Little, Craig Bennett, Eileen Bunning, Keith Strohmaier, Treasurer, Melinda Staveley, President, Susan Plummer, Vice President, and Ted Tazer-Myers) has given its time, talent and treasure to support all aspects of the Society. Building on our Lead Minister, Julia Hamilton’s, first year, and the work of the previous year’s board, we focused on three primary areas of Board governance: Policy, Fiscal Oversight, and Communication.

POLICY

USSB, after several years of exploration and consultation with the UUA and other congregations of like size and development, adopted a form of Policy Governance, shifting the focus of the Board of Trustees from an operational “doing” into an oversight and monitoring role. The Board is responsible for setting the policies by which the Lead Minister, staff, and volunteers carry out the programs and activities of the Society. This year we engaged in assuring that the Lead Minister’s Interpretation of the policies is consistent with that of the Board of Trustees. As we complete this process, the Board will move to implementing a formal Monitoring process and schedule. Policy is not an End unto itself, however, and policies are dynamic. As the Society and the Board mature in the use and benefits of this approach to our governance, with open dialogue and active participation by all members of the Society, we will live our way into the Board’s most efficient and beneficial contribution to our Mission, Values and Ends. The policies are posted on the USSB website.

FISCAL OVERSIGHT

Last year concluded a rigorous review of the way in which USSB accounts for its contributions, other revenues and spending. This year Rev Julia and staff developed a Program Dashboard which is presented on a monthly basis to the Board. These data elements are reviewed and discussed in relation to the Financial Report offered by Erin Wilson, our Administrator. The Finance Committee of the Board, chaired by Keith Strohmaier, after review of the financial reports, brings its assessment, and questions to the full Board. The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara holds hopes and dreams, a vision of our potential impact in the world, larger than our available human and fiscal resources. It is the work of the Board of Trustees to assist the Lead Minister and
staff in determining where and how our finite dollars ought be spent to achieve maximum impact. The work of the Finance Committee and the Audit Committee are key to the health of the Society; and these members, Keith Strohmaier (chair), Bart Woolery, Bill Benjamin, Charlene Little, Dick Jensen, Stephen Young, Mike Noling, Carol Schwyzer, and Jeff Carmody, are greatly appreciated.

COMMUNICATION

As we are human and as Unitarians, humans who value open and respectful dialogue, one of our commitments as a Board this year has been to foster opportunities to enhance communication and dialogue. Our Society, as we all know, is as strong and healthy, as we each give of our wisdom as well as our time and treasure. The specific efforts of the Board this year to enhance communication are the following:

• Posting the Board Agenda and Minutes on the website (we will be more timely and consistent in this communication going forward);
• Posting the Board policies on the website;
• Providing Open Forum routinely on the Board meeting agenda, a time for anyone to bring a topic to the Board’s attention;
• Implementing the Board Is In table on Sunday mornings, hosted by at least one Board member, eager to hear your input, questions and concerns which are then brought to Rev. Julia, Board Chair & Board and/or other responsible member of staff as appropriate;
• Hosting Congregational Forums: this year we held two, each with a particular focus: 1) Input on the RE Program and 2) Outcome Focus; how to best focus the Society’s finite resources towards achieving our Ends for 2013-1017.

The Board, along with the Congregation and staff, welcomed our Assistant Minister, Rev. Caitlin Cotter, in August 2015. As Caitlin nears a full year with USSB, she is finding her opportunities to support and contribute to our journey towards achieving our Ends. One of Rev. Caitlin’s primary focus is our RE Program, both children’s and adult RE, which the Board and those who attended the Congregational Forum, believe is of critical importance to the life of our Congregation.

With great appreciation for their service on the Board and dedication to our beloved community, we acknowledge Carol Schwyzer, who has served two terms on the Board plus an additional year as Past President, in addition served as Secretary this year. We will miss Carol’s always steady and gracious counsel. Ted Tazer-Myers, who came on the Board this year to fill Colin Jones’ last two years, is also rotating off. Ted’s contributions of organizational and leadership insights will be missed.

The candidates for election to the Board are Craig Bennett and Susan Plummer, current Vice President, who are standing for their second three-year term. Onolee Zwicke is standing for election for her first three-year term and Cheryl Snell is on the slate to fill Colin/Ted’s last year, with the understanding that she will stand for election in 2017 for a three-year term. We are grateful to the work of the Nominating Committee, led by Gun Dukes, and to our candidates for taking this step in Society leadership and will welcome them, if elected, to our first meeting of the 2016-2017 Board of Trustees in August 2017.

Submitted by Melinda Staveley

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Committee consists of six members, elected by the Congregation for terms of three years: Gun Dukes (chair), Tracy Freeman, Sally Hinton, Andrew Rose, Joya Sexton, and Chuck Wolfe.

The Nominating Committee is charged with nominating a least one person for each open position on the Board of Trustees, to be voted by the members of the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

This past year the Nominating Committee met monthly to consider and cultivate members for these leadership positions. In addition, a member of the Nominating Committee attended and served as Process observer at the monthly Board of Trustee meetings.

There were four new openings on the Board of Trustees for the June 5, 2016 Annual Meeting: Susan Plummer and Craig Bennett completing three-year terms and Carol Schwyzer terming out on June 30; Colin Jones’ term with one year remaining after the interim-year appointment of Ted Tazer-Myers.

The Nominating Committee developed the following slate of candidates for the congregational vote at the June 5, 2016 Annual Meeting:

• Susan Plummer
• Craig Bennett
• Cheryl Snell
• Onolee Zwicke

Submitted by Gun Dukes
EXECUTIVE REPORT

In the Bridging service this year honoring our graduating high school seniors, I asked them to consider how to “live,” not just “exist.” I shared with them my hope that Unitarian Universalism, and their experiences with this congregation, have given them some tools to live by and some ideas about what it means to go beyond mere existence and into the much richer, more complicated terrain of “living” a full life.

Looking back on this year, what a lot of living we have done! I am astounded at everything that is born into our community and into the wider world because of this congregation. We here at USSB do not just “exist,” but we live our values in meaningful ways, week in and week out. I look at the lives we have honored in our memorial services, I look at the faces of our neighbors without homes who are sleeping on our floors, I visualize the individual sitting in my office struggling with depression who has found comfort among the good people of this congregation. I recall tender moments in hospital rooms, uproarious moments at the annual Auction, and proud moments when I see you showing up for justice in our community.

This year, with so much recent change in our organizational systems, I had been fully expecting to be all about “stabilization.” I had expected to be focusing my energy primarily on building a solid base upon which to stand for the future. And yes, we are on solid organizational ground with healthy, intelligent lay leadership and a wonderful staff team. But we have not held back our prophetic voice, either. This congregation is always ready for a challenge, and you have stepped up in so many ways.

As you read through this Annual Report, remember that there is no single person responsible for any of the events reported here, but rather these actions are the result of an ongoing collaborative project, bringing integrity, wonder and inspiration into a world in desperate need of what we have to offer.

So let's celebrate a year well-lived, and then begin to look ahead at the future, knowing that our work is not yet done. We are a beacon of liberal religion in the Santa Barbara community, and now it is time to invite the wider community to join us in our work for a more just and loving world.

With Gratitude, Rev. Julia Hamilton

WORSHIP AND MINISTRY

The heart of every congregation is what happens in the Sanctuary on Sunday morning, but worship happens in many other times and places as well. Our quarterly, evening Taize-style services continue to inspire, and we also hold family worship in Jefferson Hall from time to time. On Christmas Eve we welcome over 500 people into our building, and our worship team will be exploring even more possibilities for the coming year, including what an outdoor service might be like.

With the support of YRUU, we held a Passover Seder and hope to do it again next year. This year we have also had the opportunity to welcome UU visitors into our sanctuary on several special occasions (an Ordination, an Installation, and a District Assembly) and each time we hear feedback about the wonderful, joyful, and deep spirit that people find in our worship.

We will continue to use a worship “theme” for each month – something to reflect on together in our small groups (like Connection Circles) as well as on Sunday mornings. The worship themes for the past year were: Promise, Grace, Integrity, Wonder, Resilience, Creativity, Renewal, Revelation, Tradition, and Revelry.

We added Rev. Caitlin onto our worship team this year, a team which now includes five lay leaders, two ministers and a choral director. We will be looking for a few new Worship Associates to join our team in the coming months.

ATTENDANCE

This year, our average Sunday total attendance (adults, children, and youth) was 212 people, down from 233 last year. This is continuing a trend in declining Sunday attendance since a high point of 304 in 2011-12. Although tracking methods change over the years, it is clear that Sunday attendance, as a single figure, has been in decline for a while. This mirrors a national trend within Unitarian Universalism (which started to dip nationwide in 2012 in terms of membership and attendance). However, attendance on Sunday does not always represent the full picture of engagement. People
who consider themselves “very involved” in the life of the congregation may only attend two times month, instead of three to four times a month. Our larger culture is shifting, and congregations like ours must be open to reexamining and reimagining new ways of engaging people across the generations.

MUSIC

The music program, led by Choral Director Ken Ryals, created a memorable year for the congregation. Looking back on all that was accomplished, it is clear that everyone involved in music at the Unitarian Society should feel proud! And yes, this includes the whole congregation, who sings with gusto and is willing to take risks and try out new musical forms in our services.

The music on Sunday is provided by one of the three choirs (the Chancel Choir and the Women’s Chorale, led by Choral Director Ken Ryals, and the Men’s Chorus, led by Robin Montz) as well as the newly formed “Wildflowers” group, which debuted on April 17 and brings a bluegrass/folk style with beautiful harmonies into our worship services. From time to time, other small ensembles or guest artists share their work. A highlight of this year was the “Requiem” Sunday, a music-rich collaborative worship service between Rev. Julia, Ken Ryals, and the choir. Beyond Sunday morning, the choir took on many special events this year, including District Assembly, the Love. Period Interfaith Pride Service, the 9/11 Sister City concert, and the Interfaith Thanksgiving service. There was also the Ordination of Nica Guinn and the Installation of Rev. Julia Hamilton.

The full report from the Music Ministry Team can be found on page 24.

THE FUTURE OF MINISTRY

This congregation ordained the Rev. Nica Guinn into the ministry on August 30, 2015, and we are proud to see her take up a called ministry with the Conejo Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Thousand Oaks, to be starting in the summer of 2016. For the past year, Nica has been working as the part-time Consulting Minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Studio City.

Lora Barnett is now a Candidate for Ministry in her third year at Iliff School of Theology. She has completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Cottage Hospital and will be starting an internship at Live Oak in Goleta next year as one of the final steps in her preparation for ministry.

Supporting emerging ministers is one way we can have an impact on the future of Unitarian Universalism. As the costs of seminary expand, being a congregation that values and encourages future ministers will become even more important to ensuring a vibrant future for our faith.

WELCOMING OUR NEW ASSISTANT MINISTER, REV. CAITLIN COTTER!

A significant focus for the congregation this year was Religious Education and Lifelong Learning, and one of the markers of that priority was bringing in an Assistant Minister to focus on those areas of congregational life (along with Membership and working in collaboration with Rev. Julia as part of the ministry team). Having an assistant minister who can focus on specific areas of congregational life frees up our lead minister for things like worship planning, increasing our interfaith and social justice connections, and supporting the long range vision of the congregation.

This was Rev. Caitlin’s first year in ordained ministry, as she arrived here a week after her ordination in Knoxville, TN, and this has been a wonderful year of learning for her as she settled into the congregation’s life and mission. Rev. Caitlin is in Preliminary Fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association’s Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) and is actively working towards Final Fellowship. This is a three year process that involves evaluations, feedback, and planning with colleagues, mentors, and lay leadership.

Meeting monthly with Rev. Caitlin as part of her Preliminary Fellowship Committee are Charla Bregante, Chuck Flacks, Catriona Gay, and Bruce Daniels. Rev. Caitlin is particularly excited to continue thinking deeply about how people and families become involved in the life of our congregation and are supported in their spiritual growth as part of our community.
LAUNCHING A NEW COSM — THE COMMITTEE ON SHARED MINISTRY

The Committee on Shared Ministry works to foster healthy communications and good relationships here at USSB among all the various ministries in our congregation—professional and lay-led. This year we launched a brand new COSM process, establishing a table at social hour and inviting the congregation to write a “Note to COSM” with any appreciations, concerns, or suggestions, and COSM will help get this feedback to the appropriate place. So far, we have received a very positive response! Please see the COSM report for more details.

MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Ministry Team is Co-chaired by Catherine Callahan and Laraine Gray, who work with committee members and our Membership Coordinator, Megan Moyer, as well as the ministers. Your Membership Ministry Team Members are the people who help welcome and celebrate our newcomers as well as occasionally host congregation-wide events such as potlucks and dances. The spring April Fools Potluck was a big hit! If you enjoy meeting people, creating congregational events, and if you can represent USSB with love and outgoing sincerity, consider joining this fantastic group! Please see a more complete Membership Ministry report on page 25.

- **Growth**—We welcomed 18 new members so far this year (compared to 29 last year). This seems to reflect the change we made last year in our Path to Membership process, in order to stay in alignment with our bylaws that require a financial commitment at the time of signing the book. As predicted, this has slowed down the rate at which people join the congregation.

- **Sunday Morning “Superstar” Volunteers**—We have a new “Head Usher” volunteer, keeping our usher teams running smoothly — thank you, Gary Welterlen! And of course, on each Sunday of the month we have first service and second service hospitality teams that ensure that our Sunday mornings go smoothly, everyone is greeted with goodwill, visitors are welcomed, our offering is collected and counted, and a hot cup of coffee or tea is ready at hand. These volunteers, supported by our Membership Coordinator, take charge of the many moving parts that make our Sunday experience flow with grace and reliability.

- **Membership Ministry**—This coming year, Rev. Caitlin will be working with the Membership Ministry to take a fresh look at our Path to Membership classes, and consider what changes might be made to the format and the timing of the classes. With the rapidly changing world of congregational life, membership and how it works is continuously evolving.

CONNECTION

Our Larger Faith: Unitarian Universalism beyond our walls.

- **General Assembly**—We had a record number of people attend General Assembly in Portland: 18 lay leaders and 4 staff members. Three of these were youth leaders, who were able to attend because of generous scholarships offered by members of the congregation.

- **District Assembly 2016!**—We hosted the UU Pacific Southwest District Assembly, April 29-30, 2016. Hundreds of Unitarian Universalists joined us for two days of worship, friendship, and workshops to share our best ideas with one another. Thank you to everyone who made this possible, most especially the volunteer coordinator, Chris Shorb.

- **UU Justice Ministry of California (UUJMCA)**—Rev. Julia serves as the President of the Board of this statewide advocacy network, fostering civic engagement, public witness, and social justice leadership among UUs.

- **Commission on Social Witness**—Rev. Caitlin serves on this key UUA committee, working to craft the social witness statements that are adopted at our General Assembly each year and provide resources to congregations around these important issues.

- **DeBenneville Pines**—Many of our families participate in the family camps offered by DeBenneville throughout the year.

CONNECTING WITH EACH OTHER

These are some of the ways members and friends connect with one another and support a sense of community and belonging at USSB:

- **Our Annual Fundraising Auction**—We had a record number of contributions to our auction this year — over 190 events, services, items and special offers were given. The “Wild Wild West” came to
our campus with great live music, fabulous décor, tasty food, and a chili cook-off. This congregation continues to host one of the best UU service auctions in our region!

- **Congregational Potlucks**—Twice a year the Membership Ministry sponsors an all-congregation potluck. This year they hosted the Ordination of Nica Guinn in August and an April 1st “April Fools Day” potluck and joke night.

- **Connection Circles**—Our beloved small group ministry program continues to attract members with 61 participants this year. The coordinators were Gun Dukes and Anita Blume. Next year, Carol Schwyzer and Emily Maynard will take up the coordinator roles.

- **The 20s & 30s Group**—Launched in 2016 by Christina Boardman and Brian Wolden, is hosting monthly Game Nights and bi-weekly discussion groups on our monthly themes. They hope to partner with young adults from Live Oak for future gatherings as well.

- **Women’s Spiritual Reflection Circle**—This small group ministry continues into its second year, launched by Arianna Jansma and Sylvia Casberg in January of 2015.

- **Science Night**—Meets on the Third Tuesday of the month to view and discuss the latest and greatest in science programming.

- **Women’s Group**—Meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday of every month.

- **Men’s Book Discussion**—Meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the Month.

- **Healthy Snacks Team**—Provides delicious, “good for the body and good for the soul” snacks on Sunday mornings.

- **Sunday Book Exchange**—Good books are traded and discussed each week.

- **Library**—Members can check out books and films on Sunday in Parish Hall. Excellent reviews are written up for the Kaleidoscope each month, if you are wondering what to read next!

- **The Alliance**—Meeting on the first Friday of each month, The Alliance is open to everyone! Show up for excellent and thought provoking programs and discussions led by members of USSB and the wider Santa Barbara community. While they are an independent and self-governing organization, the Alliance is a significant program here at USSB. See the full Alliance report for details.

### CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER

- **The USSB Care Team**—Trained lay leaders, working with Rev. Hamilton, have been commissioned by the congregation to provide a caring, compassionate response to members in times of crisis and transition. They have a confidential hotline that can respond to requests for care within 24 hours. The Team continues to offer much needed supportive presence among our community. This spring, the Team offered a discussion series on end of life issues, and continues to identify helpful resources in our wider community, particularly around the issues of death and dying, mental health, medical care, and caregiver support.

- **Pastoral Counseling**—Rev. Hamilton and Rev. Cotter are here to provide counseling and pastoral support in times of crisis and transition, and can help refer members to supportive resources in the community. Please contact them directly to make an appointment.

- **Addictions Ministry Team**—The weekly AA-affiliated “We Agnostics” group has been very popular, and the Addictions Ministry Team continues to keep the congregation aware and informed about addiction and recovery resources. The goals of this ministry team are: To raise awareness about addiction, in all its forms; to develop, and make available, resources on addictions and recovery for the USSB community; and to provide meaningful support to those in the congregations suffering from the effects of addictions.

### CHILDCARE FOR PROGRAMS

We continue to offer childcare upon request for most programs, and we have expanded to include childcare for one of our Connection Circles. If you would like to participate in a program, committee or class at USSB and need childcare during that time, please contact the Religious Education office.
On Saturday, Sept 12, 2015, for the first time in almost two years, we had all our key staff members in one room for a staff retreat—and only three of the ten people in the room were in the same staff position as they were two years ago. To put it simply: there has been a lot of change, and we are building a new team. The staffing structure at USSB is adjusted from time to time to meet the needs of the congregation as best as possible within our budgetary constraints. The Lead Minister is the head of the staff team and works in consultation with the Board, as you can see from the staffing chart below. USSB has made a commitment to fair compensation and treatment of its staff, and we abide by the UUA guidelines for compensation and benefits. If you have any questions about our staffing structure, please speak with Rev. Julia.

We are lucky to be stewards of such a beautiful historical landmark. Day-to-day and ongoing maintenance happens to keep our campus in working order. Several larger projects were at work as well this year, which served to keep our facilities beautiful, useful, and preserved.

Sanctuary
- Installed a new, digital sound system and speakers
- Refinished woodwork
- Cleaned and painted the candle-lighting niche
- Repaired stained glass
- Deep-cleaned the tile flooring
- Significant maintenance and repairs made to the organ

Parish
- Touch-up painting throughout the room
- Installed new sensor sink in women’s restroom
- Installed ‘all-gender’ restroom signage throughout

Lower Campus
- Installed AC units in Blake Classrooms
- Remodeled La Paz Lounge
- Created additional office space next to La Paz Lounge
- Remodeled Blake Lounge
- Remodeled Blake upstairs restroom
- Installed electric hand dryers in Blake downstairs restrooms
- Remodeled RE Office

Grounds
- Installed shade structure on Terrace
- Reinforced courtyard fountain
- Pressure-washed upper campus buildings
- Installed new wireless routers and established new network for faster connectivity
WEDDING AND ROOM RENTAL

Our campus has been a buzz of activity. Congregational activity, weddings, memorials, room users, and two schools continue to keep our grounds active and alive throughout the year.

Wedding bookings have been on the rise. Due to some marketing shifts and additional staff efforts, we were able to host 25 wedding receptions and ceremonies (compared to 18 last year), many of whom rented our on-site equipment (tables, chairs, lighting) as well. These weddings and wedding equipment rentals generated over $68,000 (gross) to our operating budget.

We have also been the hosts to dozens of regular room users, including:
- Divinitree and Accessibility Yoga Conferences and Trainings
- Academy of Healing Arts
- Al Anon
- Early Morning Exercise
- Family therapy Institute
- Food & Water Watch
- Foundation for Economic Democracy
- Hard Light Center for Awakening
- Mankind Project
- Master Gardeners
- NY Baroque Dance Company
- Refuge Recovery
- SB Improv
- Jazzersize
- SB Master Chorale
- SB Rape Crisis Center
- SB Revels
- Sierra Club
- Toastmasters

Revenue from our regular, ongoing, and one-time room-users brought in $43,000 in income towards our operating budget.

As you can see from the charts below, weddings take up the least number of hours of facility use, but bring in a large share of the revenue. We continue to concentrate our efforts on this important revenue area.

RENTAL PROPERTIES

Our rental properties at Arrellaga and La Paz, including two garage storage spaces, have been occupied the majority of the year, with rental income (over $65,000) helping to offset our mortgage on the properties. This year, our rental property at La Paz changed lessors, and we made some upgrades and improvements to the property.

Starr King Parent-Child Workshop and Knox School continue to lease this year. Both schools are thriving and have made great use of the space available to them. Our contract with Starr King was re-negotiated for another 10-year term this year, and our lease with Knox school is negotiated on an annual basis.

FINANCES

We are fortunate to have a depth of lay leaders, committees, teams, and staff to carry out the financial management of the Society that supports our vision, mission, and ends.

STEWARDSHIP

Our Stewardship Committee was key this year in facilitating fundraisers, assisting in oversight and messaging for the Annual Pledge Campaign, raising funds for the new sound system, and providing donor cultivation and appreciation.

Annual Auction

Our Wild West Annual Auction was a huge success. Over 190 events, outings, services, parties, and dinners were donated to over 200 bidders, generating $35,400
towards our operating budget. We were able to save on expenses for the auction with volunteer donations of food and props. The auction was supported by an amazing volunteer planning committee, led by Gun Dukes, as well as the support of Staff. Our next Auction Committee will begin planning in July for our October 15, 2016 event.

**Sound System Mini Capital Campaign**
In December we launched a campaign for a new sound system. Our old system was outdated and malfunctioning. Over 200 donors gave $33,200 towards the project and we were able to begin installation of the new system in mid-March. The new sound system boasts new microphones, multiple new Bose speakers, a new mixer and sound board, and plug-in capability to our sound looping. Thank you to all the donors who made a more clear, rich, and vibrant Sunday experience possible. As with any new technology, it can take a while to get the hang of a new system, so please let us know about your sound experience so we can continue to improve our work.

**Planned Giving**
Planned Giving made major strides this year, hosting a Chalice Circle event in February for our Chalice Circle Members which included historical facts, photos, and information about our congregation. The February event was well-attended, and sparked a now quarterly ‘breakfast with the Minister’ for our Chalice Circle Members, which began in May. For more information about the Chalice Circle, you may contact our Planned Giving Advisor, Gary Welterlen.

**Annual Campaign**
Our Annual Campaign kicked off in April. This year’s theme was ‘All In’ as we asked for all of our members to make a financial contribution to the campaign. At the end of May we have received pledges of support from 233 Pledging Units. That is, 218 Member Households and 15 Friend Households (Friends are people who have pledged to the campaign, but have not signed the Membership book). Of these 233:

- 42 pledging units increased their pledge from last year by an average of 23%, totaling a combined increase of $11,946!
- 25 pledging units were new this year, meaning they were new to our congregation or unable to pledge towards the last campaign. This group generated a combined increase of $10,805!

Annual Campaign follow-up continues to a group of 80 pledging units we have yet to hear from, and we will have an announcement of our pledge campaign’s outcome in late June.

**Fashion Fling**
Our Annual Fashion Fling happened on Memorial Day weekend, generating over $1,800 towards the Operating Budget. Huge thanks to Sally Hamilton and all the volunteers who continue to make this fun, annual event a success!

**FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT**
With Lay Leaders and Staff in place to keep us on sound footing, financial oversight takes place on many levels with checks and balances.

**Finance Committee**
The Finance Committee has monitored financials and reports from staff on a monthly basis. With financial procedures more clearly defined last year, this year the Finance Committee has concentrated their time and research on maintaining monthly, expanded reports to the Board as well as researching the feasibility of establishing a cash reserve.
Audit Committee

Our Audit Committee and Auditor conducted an internal audit of the 2014-15 fiscal year finances, returning with a clean audit.

Budget Planning

Our Budget Planning Group was able to assist Staff in recommending a balanced budget to the Board and congregation for approval. The Board-approved proposed budget is up for vote at our annual meeting. This year, we have begun a quarterly review process with all staff members to be able to more closely monitor our budget on a regular basis, to identify trends, and get an earlier indication of needs for future years.

Endowment

Our Endowment is overseen by four Endowment Board Members. Per congregational vote at our 2014 Annual Meeting, the Endowment has been divested from fossil fuels. Investments are now managed by Trillium, an investment management company who specializes in socially responsible investing, including fossil-fuel free investment portfolios.

Communication

Website

With the help of our gifted Office Manager, Eden Kennedy, we continue to improve the usefulness and visibility of our website. The website is, and will remain, a work in progress as we strive to make www.ussb.org a one-stop shop for members of the congregation, visitors, room users, and community at large.

Database

We have identified a church database system that will allow our staff and volunteers to more easily record information on membership, including: volunteer interests, contact information giving history, familial connections, and committee and small group involvements. This database will help consolidate our current multiple systems into one multi-dimensional system. Consolidating systems will not only reduce staff/volunteer time on data entry, but reduce the potential for data errors, and allow for easier access to reports and information needed by staff, ministry teams, and the board. Implementation of the new database system will begin in early June, and we anticipate rolling it out to the congregation in August.

Lifespan Learning

This year brought us changes to the staff structure of our Lifespan Religious Education program. The new Assistant Minister for Congregational Life and Learning, Rev. Caitlin, is overseeing this aspect of our programming, working with Jena Foster, who directs the Children’s Religious Education Program, as well as Adam Shive, our YRUU High School Youth Group Coordinator. One of our key organizational goals is to become a more multi-generational community. This work will take time, as we discover and experiment with new ways of bringing our generations together, but the congregation has recognized that cultivating a multigenerational community is central to fulfilling our potential as a beacon of progressive religion in Santa Barbara.

Adult Religious Education

Since 2010, our Adult Religious Education mission statement has stated that our programs “seek to foster life-long learning, spiritual growth and community building through a variety of classes, workshops, retreats and events throughout the church year. Rooted in the Principles and Practices of Unitarian Universalism, the program provides a supportive, engaging environment for congregants, newcomers and visitors to expand and deepen their experiences of themselves and others beyond the Sunday morning worship services.”

These programs are where we learn about Unitarian Universalism and other religious traditions, continue our spiritual journeys and religious development, connect to each other in our learning, and explore our own understanding of different topics and practices. This year we have been particularly focused on classes and workshops, such as the Great Decisions program run by John Wannock and Dave Henneman, the workshops on Aging and Dying led by our Care Team, and the many offerings that were part of our Wellspring Wednesday program.

Over the past years Wellspring Wednesday became the primary way we do Adult Religious Education in our congregation. Wellspring Wednesday is a model for Adult Learning where everyone gathers together for food and some small worship component on a Wednesday evening and then splits up into different classes. We have discovered that doing the meal and worship component of Wellspring Wednesday weekly is a difficult commitment to sustain without significant volunteer support. We’ve had some wonderful mealtimes together,
but interest in this aspect of volunteer work has been waning. This year our staff and ministers, in conjunction with our Wellspring Wednesday Task Force, experimented with doing food for Wellspring Wednesday in different ways, and finally came to the conclusion that we need our programming to evolve. The success of the Great Decisions program as well as several other alternative offerings has shown us that we need to be able to offer classes at different times and on different schedules than the Wellspring Wednesday model permits. Going forward we are excited to take the things that made Wellspring Wednesday such a wonderful part of congregational life and fold them into Adult Religious Education in new ways.

Youth Group

The youth have done so much this year! From leading a class with SPAN on Environmental justice and the work they’ll be doing on their service trip to New Orleans, to social events like overnight marathons of the Star Wars Films, to workshops with the Santa Barbara Transgender Advocacy Network. They played “muggle quidditch” (a Harry Potter reference) with the youth of the nearby Episcopal Congregation, they ran numerous fundraisers and events, and had amazing conversations about racism and privilege. They are on the front edge of social justice work in our congregation. We currently have 22 youth involved in our program, all of them actively engaged. This year the service–learning trip to New Orleans is the biggest in our history, with 18 youth and four adults traveling together. The youth have raised about $22,000 with a combination of their creativity, drive, and hard work—and your generosity! We also received two grants from the Unitarian Universalist Association for this work: a $300 Youth Leadership Grant and a $2,000 grant from the Katie Tyson Fund. We’re looking forward to the work they are planning for after their trip to the Center for Ethical Living in New Orleans, and to a continuation of their interfaith connections. This is an enormous project that our youth is taking on, which will culminate in a presentation at General Assembly in 2017!

Children’s Religious Education

While our Children’s Religious Education (CRE) program looked much smaller this year, we felt no lack of love and dedication to the children and families of this congregation. Parents and volunteers came together to support one another as they explored Unitarian Universalist Association’s Tapestry of Faith curricula designed to guide youth and adult leaders deeper into the Seventh Principle, UU values, and ethics. In addition to our three Workshop Leaders and three Journey Guides, RE Coordinator Tiffany Jolie was a warm and steady presence in the classrooms.

Though the year presented many challenges in staffing volunteers, it was also an exciting and inspiring time of visioning our ideal CRE program. The RE Vision Team along with Lead Minister Rev. Julia Hamilton, Assistant Minister Rev. Caitlin Cotter and Religious Education Program Director Jena Foster gathered information from observations of CRE, casual conversations with RE parents, board forums and a congregation-wide survey. In answering the call of the congregation, the intentional and wonderful work of our RE Vision Team has led to many brilliant and exciting ideas about ways we can support our multigenerational community and has shaped our new CRE Mission Statement:

Children’s Religious Education at the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara:

Together we create a fun and supportive multigenerational community that fosters curious minds, generous hearts, and a passion for justice.

This coming year will joyfully shake up the presence of CRE on Sunday mornings and should have something
to offer just about everyone. Please visit us in Jefferson Courtyard or swing by the RE Table on Sundays to learn more about this ministry!

**Teaching and Curricula—Preschool-7th Grade**

- 16 children were registered for CRE; 38 children regularly attended, with a weekly average attendance of 19
- Children grades K-2 participated in OWL and World of Wonder; grades 3-5, Toolbox of Faith; grades 6-7, Amazing Grace
- Astrid Nelson taught a total of 10 workshops and helped with an additional three! Yolanda Yturralde taught four workshops and Mindy Nelson taught two. We are very grateful for their time and presence with our children.
- Our dedicated Journey Guides each supported CRE once per month throughout the year. Thank you to Julie Lopp, Nancy Murdock and Roberta Parkinson.
- The RE Vision Team consisted of Bonnie Lassen, Reanna Rich, Geraldine Otte, Mindy Nelson, Kate Loukes, and John Hartman. We are grateful for their time and energy.

**Our Whole Lives—Sexuality Education for grades K-2**

- Taught by John Hartman and Kelly Bednard
- 11 children were enrolled and completed OWL
- Children reported positive experiences with the program and looked forward to attending OWL
- Parents expressed satisfaction with the program, gratitude for Kelly and John and the fact that healthy and interesting conversations were taking place at home.

**Coming of Age**

- Led by facilitators Kir Zecher and Nate Rich
- Five youth and five adult mentors participated in the program
- Youth and adults surmounted many obstacles—ranging from scheduling challenges to dangerous storm systems—as they journeyed through this cornerstone program
- The youth participated in 7-9 OWL, fall 2014 and so participated with grades 6-7 in Amazing Grace in the months preceding Coming of Age

**Special Events**

RE children and families enjoyed many traditional and some new special events this year, including:
- Summer Sundays
- Kickoff Carnival
- El día de los muertos Service and Fiesta
- Parent Potlucks
- Parents’ Day Out
- Holiday Craft Party
- Holiday Play and worship service, *A Pirate’s Christmas*
- Parents’ Night Out
- Hunt for Justice—our social justice focused Easter celebration
- Multi-gen Beach Clean Up with Santa Barbara Channel-Keepers
- Multigenerational End of Year Potluck BBQ
- Summer Solstice Craft Party

**OUR 2015-2016 CHILDREN’S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION VOLUNTEERS**

Thank you for creating excellent programs and events! **Children’s RE Vision Team:** Mindy Nelson, Geraldine Otte, Reanna Rich, Kate Loukes, Bonnie Lassen and John Hartman. **Children’s RE Volunteers:** Astrid Nelson, Julie Lopp, Nancy Murdock, Roberta Parkinson, Yolanda Yturralde, Mindy Nelson. **Our Whole Lives Volunteers:** John Hartman and Kelly Bednard. **Coming of Age Volunteers:** Kir Zecher, Nate Rich, Michelle Bednash, Kelly Bednard, Cortis Loukes, Chris Shorb, Laura McGlothlin. **Special Event Volunteers:** Hathor Hammett, Kelly Bednard, John Hartman, Mindy Nelson, Marc Diraison, Monica Bucher-Smith, Ted Smith, Charla Bregante, Gun Dukes, Michelle Bednash, Kate Loukes, Ellen Durham, Koreen Pagano, John Pagano, Barbara Sanchez, Sheri Mobley, Christina Boardman, Carol Schwzyzer, Janet Brinkmann, Devon Nelson, Sara Carr, Laraine Gray, Daniel Foster, Emily Shaeer, Reanna Rich, Sarah Schroeder, Kevin Cooper, Mónica Cooper, Michael Guinn, Ted Bookin, Kathleen Boehm, Nancy & Alan Edmundson, Chuck Flacks, Marisa Pasquini, Julie Lopp, Nancy Bessier, Judy Fontana, Marika Davideck, and Astrid Nelson!
Social Justice and Outreach

Here are some highlights from this past year’s social justice and outreach activities:

- We were part of the planning team for the first-ever Santa Barbara Interfaith Pride Service, “Love. Period” held on July 12 in the Sunken Gardens and hosted by PFLAG. Over 20 faith communities participated, a turnout that was far beyond what we expected. Ken Ryals was hired by PFLAG to be the choir director, and our choirs turned out in beautiful harmony to participate. We have held workshops for the congregation as well as for our Care Team about how to welcome and support transgender individuals as well as advocate for justice in our community at large. Members participated in the November Transgender Day of Remembrance vigil, an annual event at the Courthouse.

- Members of the congregation turned out for a Labor Day rally in support of raising the minimum wage in Santa Barbara — and we can now celebrate the raising of the wage state-wide! Interest in labor issues continues to grow.

- We were well represented at the Climate Justice March that took place on December 13, and families participated in a spring Beach Cleanup hosted by ChannelKeepers.

- The launch of the interfaith “Showers of Blessing” project has gone very well, with Ken Ralph taking the lead as the downtown coordinator. We have raised thousands of dollars and volunteers have stepped up to offer free showers and clean clothes from a mobile trailer every Thursday afternoon.

- A new task force against Gun Violence was convened to discuss ways USSB might respond to this issue in the future, working with partner like the Coalition Against Gun Violence and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense. Judy Fontana took the lead with this group, and there are more event emerging for this fall.

- Racial Justice is an issue that is on everyone’s mind, and a small group formed around a discussion of the book by Ta Nahesi-Coates, Between the World and Me, led by Rev. Julia.

- We welcomed Evan Junker, the Executive Director of the UU Justice Ministry of California (UU-JMCA), into our pulpit in December to hear more about the statewide work of our UU witness and advocacy projects.

- SPAN: Seventh Principle Action Network was formed in 2012 and continues to offer resources at social hour and sponsor programming on ecological and environmental concerns, grounded in the principle of the interconnected web and focused on a systems approach to problems. This year, SPAN partnered with our YRUU program for a film series. Please see the SPAN report for more details.

- In partnership with C.L.U.E., on December 21 Rev. Hamilton presided at the Longest Night vigil on the steps of the Courthouse to honor the lives of people who died on our streets in 2015.

- Dozens of gifts were collected and distributed by Domestic Violence Solutions as part of our annual holiday outreach.

Outreach Offerings

We have increased our Outreach Offerings by nearly 46% percent this year, giving away $19,687—well over our total of $10,544 last year. This is a combination of money raised from the 25% of the undesignated funds collected each Sunday, 100% of our Christmas Eve offering, our District Assembly, Ordination, and Installation offerings, as well as direct donations made to the monthly recipients.

The recipients of our offerings this year have been: Pacific Pride Foundation, Just Communities, the UUA Fund for the Living Tradition (Nica’s Ordination and Julia’s Installation), UUSC Syrian Refugees fund, Interfaith Worker Justice, UU Justice Ministry of CA, The Santa Barbara Foodbank, The International Council of Unitarian Universalists Burundi Fund, the YRUU Youth Service Trip, the RE Hunt for Justice, Planned Parenthood, Santa Barbara ChannelKeepers, the Freedom Warming Centers, the Showers of Blessing, and D.A.W.G.

Community Capacity and Coalition Building: Our Community Partners

- Raise the Wage Coalition: Rev. Julia has been a member of this wonderful coalition of local nonprofit, labor and faith leaders that is examining issues of economic justice here in Santa Barbara county, sup-
ported by the Fund for Santa Barbara and CAUSE as well as local unions. Originally organized to discuss raising the minimum wage, the coalition is ongoing in our work to examine and improve conditions for low-wage workers in our community.

- **Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, Santa Barbara:** USSB members Wayne Mellinger and Becca Claassen continue to serve on the board of this local chapter of a national justice organization.

- **UU Justice Ministry, CA:** Rev. Julia is the President of the Board for the UUJMCA.

- **PFLAG, Pacific Pride, and SB Transgender Action Network (SBTAN):** We have a close relationship with our partners at Pacific Pride and we are working with PFLAG as one of the sponsoring congregations of the Interfaith Pride Sunday Celebration. Our youth group has partnered with SBTAN and we look forward to more work together in the coming years!

- **Planned Parenthood:** Rev. Julia attended a clergy meeting to discuss upcoming issues of reproductive justice in our community.

- **Coalition Against Gun Violence:** We continue to build our relationship with local organizations working to reduce gun violence in our community by partnering with them in public witness and advocacy work.

- **Domestic Violence Solutions:** We collect dozens of gifts for women and children living in the DVS shelters during the holidays.

- **Interfaith Festival of Lights:** Rev. Julia participated in this interfaith holiday program on December 10 at the Faulkner Gallery.

- **Not In Our Name:** An interfaith march in solidarity with our Muslim neighbors and friends, Rev. Julia participated in organizing and speaking at this public witness event in December.

- **Starr King Parent Child Workshop:** Our collaboration with Starr King Parent Child Workshop and SB City College remains strong. See separate report from SK PCW for more information.

- **AHA! Academy for Healing Arts:** This local youth organization meets on weekday afternoons in Jefferson Hall and provides a wonderful program for teens in need of a supportive, positive, creative environment.

- **Interfaith Thanksgiving service:** Rev. Julia, Ken Ryals, and our choir participated in the annual Interfaith Thanksgiving service at First United Methodist Church.

- **Freedom Warming Centers:** From November 15 through April 30, the Freedom Warming Centers (FWC) activated on 43 nights, serving over 1,000 guests, with an average of 85 beds filled each night. See the FWC report for details.

- **Renewing our connection with Hopi and Navajo:** A small group traveled to the Hopi Reservation in Arizona this spring to volunteer for a week and renew the relationship with our partners in this unique outreach work. Another trip for adult volunteers will be planned for the spring of 2018—keep an eye out for more details next year!

- **UU Minister’s Association:** Rev. Julia is participating in a six-month study group with the UUMA called “The Theological Ground of Social Witness.”

The staff would like to share our sincerest thanks to the congregation and lay leadership for making this year a success. Without your support, time, talents, and treasures, we could not live out our mission and ends.

In gratitude, the USSB Staff

*Julia Hamilton, Caitlin Cotter, Erin Wilson, Ken Ryals, Jena Foster, Eden Kennedy, Megan Moyer, Greg Otero, Rob Brown, Tiffany Jolie, Jon Diaz, and Adam Shive*
COMMITTEE ON SHARED MINISTRY (COSM)

The Committee on Shared Ministry serves as a conduit for the congregation to communicate appreciations and concerns to the Board, ministers and staff; in addition, we assist the ministers with any issues they need and want to discuss during our meetings.

COSM members include Susan Neufeldt, Kate Mead, Mike Gorodezky, Kathy Eastman, Richard Dow, Doug Thomas, and Deborah Wolfe, who is on sabbatical at present.

This past year, COSM assisted in Reverend Julia Hamilton’s Installation, and helped to welcome Reverend Caitlin Cotter as our new Assistant Minister.

COSM has had a significantly increased presence in the garden between worship services, actively soliciting “appreciations and concerns” from the congregation. We implemented a process for following up on any such feedback we’ve received such that appropriate staff are involved as needed. This is the first year we’ve had such a consistent public presence, but so far we believe this approach to be an effective way to “listen” to the congregation. Come find us in the garden some time, and tell us what you think.

Submitted by Doug Thomas

WORSHIP REPORTS

MUSIC MINISTRY

The Music Ministry Program is a ministry that seeks to inspire and connect with the congregation and the greater community through the shared joy of music. The program, providing music for all the services with a diversity of repertoire and choral groups, offers music that integrates mind and heart. The program consists of three choirs – Chancel Choir, Women’s Chorale, Men’s Chorus, with an average of fifty singers per week, and various small ensembles. Ken Ryals, our half-time choir director, works closely with the Music Ministry Team, the Ministers, the Worship Associates, and guest instrumentalists to ensure smooth functioning of the program and clear connection with the themes of the service.

This year has been a blossoming of different elements that have jelled in the most positive and proactive way for the music program and the congregation. Much of this has to do with the collaborative spirit of the current staff, and Ken is deeply grateful for his job and the existing work environment. Thanks to the hard-working members of each choir and the presence and commitment of this congregation and the ministerial team, we have made this year one of the most fruitful, both musically and ministerially. We continue to develop functions that can streamline choir operations and communications.

This year has brought so many great musical moments to the hearts of the community that it is hard to point to any one example. For the Chancel Choir and the Women’s Chorale, this year has been a series of events that has brought our musical levels to a new, higher place. The Women’s Chorale, in particular, has overcome challenges in membership that affected overall sound. Finding the voice for this group has resulted in some truly moving payoffs in services and outreach performances. Robin Montz has developed a great sound with his Men’s Chorus.

Some major highlights for the year for the choirs were the:

- USSB Music Service
- Julia’s Installation
- Multiple Holiday Services
- District Assembly Services and workshop presentations by Ken
- Requiem Service

In addition, the choirs were very active with outreach events:

- Interfaith Pride LOVE
- 9/11 Concert at the Faulkner Library
- Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Ken Ryals attended the summer UUMN Conference in Boston and brought back several ideas for the program.

This has been a wonderful year for the Music Program, and we will continue to aim to create an atmosphere where spiritual reflection and growth may flourish.

Submitted by Carol Sharpe
MEN’S CHORUS
The USSB Men’s Chorus enjoyed its fifth year of exuberant singing and fellowship this year. They sang at the Society on the first Sunday of each month and also performed for the Live Oak Services Auction in March. The group met in the home of Robin Montz, the group’s director, every Friday from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m., and developed a male chorus sound featuring a variety of genres. The Men’s Chorus would like to expand to more members and would encourage any men who like to sing to come to a rehearsal and just sing along. No tryout is needed, and the musical abilities of the group vary widely, but they have a lot of fun!

Submitted by Robin Montz

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
We believe the Membership Ministry Committee’s major contribution to our congregation is to embody the welcoming spirit of our community in all our contacts, activities, and in our vision. Perhaps the single most important thing we do is to mingle at Coffee Hour, talking to visitors, friends, potential new members, and members in general. We are also beginning to coordinate our activities with those of the Stewardship and Music Ministry Committees, with an expectation that our coordination will continue and bear fruit in more consistent new member pledges and coordination of potlucks, etc. with Music Committee events. We are also defining our vision of what the Membership Ministry contributes to overall community building.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
• A fall Congregational BBQ with entertainment
• An experiential retreat focusing on communication skills and our intended audience, as well as Rev. Julia and Rev. Caitlin’s vision for the committee
• Redesigning and holding five Path to Membership classes for those interested in joining or in who we are
• Two New Member Services and New Member Luncheons
• A Joke Night all-congregation potluck in the spring
• The Friends of Membership Committee, a group of former Membership Committee members who are willing to help with special events

IN PROCESS
• Planning a potluck to go with a music department concert this fall
• Helping with online member directory and pictures if needed
• Developing ways to attract younger age groups

SHOUT-OUTS TO . . .
• Rev. Caitlin, who is bringing forth new ideas for our committee
• Megan Moyer, staff person extraordinaire
• Sally Hamilton, who has mentored the new chairs all year
• Laraine Gray, who volunteered to co-chair and was launched immediately
• Catherine Callahan, who keeps coming back

Submitted by Catherine Callahan and Megan Moyer

The Men’s Chorus

The Membership Committee
WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Worship Associates at USSB are a five-to-seven member lay-led team of individuals committed to creating beautiful, meaningful worship services for the congregation. We support the ministerial leadership during worship and host lay-led worship services when the ministers are not in the pulpit.

Our team this past year included the following members: Michael Guinn, Koreen Pagano, Isabella Gay-Livingstone, Chuck Flacks, and Jack Rief. Michael served as Chair during the year. We were also joined by our inimitable Music Director, Ken Ryals, who brought a lot of experience and perspective on music and the flow of worship services to the meetings. Rev. Julia brought a lot of organization to our group with online resources like never before. We now have access to a national archive that makes planning a worship service easier. We also welcomed Rev. Caitlin’s to her first year of worship team meetings.

This was a year of transition for the Worship Associates as some of our more experienced members with many years of service termed out. So we were a “younger,” less experienced team in some ways. Our monthly meetings were warm and thought-filled as we discussed the month’s theme and how that might affect what we wanted to bring to worship services. Our discussions of the themes that permeated each month have been fascinating conversations about what comes up for each of us and how that might be wrapped into how we reflect about them in services.

Submitted by Michael Guinn

PROGRAM REPORTS

CONNECTION CIRCLES

Connection Circles are groups of eight to ten members who meet twice a month from October through May. The purpose of the groups is to strengthen and expand the life of the congregation. Connection Circles provide an opportunity for individuals to make deep and meaningful connections which sustain them and our community as a whole. Members learn to listen deeply, without interruption or feedback, while sharing stories around the monthly themes of the congregation. Each group is led by a facilitator and follows a format designed to give each person the space and safety to share. Sign-ups for the groups occur in late August and in September of each year. This year, the members of the steering committee of the Connection Circles are Anita Blume and Gun Dukes.

Submitted by Anita Blume

ADDICTIONS MINISTRY

The Unitarian Society’s Addictions Ministry has maintained its’ presence, primarily by offering resource materials at the Pastoral Care table each Sunday. I refresh these materials on a regular basis which indicates that people are taking the flyers and other materials for their use or the use of others.

The “We Agnostics” AA meeting has been ongoing now for three years and attendance has been good, averaging 4 to 12 people per meeting. We are attracting participation from the USSB community as well as by members of the community at large.

Our goal is to provide information and referrals for those living with addiction or coping with a family member’s addiction and we will always be able to provide confidential conversation and a compassionate ear.

Submitted by Megan Moyer
SEVENTH PRINCIPLE ACTION NETWORK (SPAN)

The Seventh Principle Action Network of the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara (SPAN) is a group devoted to learning and advocacy around the Seventh Unitarian Principle: “Respect for the interconnected web of all existence of which we are a part.” Formed in the Summer of 2012 and installed by the Congregation and Ministers of USSB, SPAN takes as points of entry into this systems-based paradigm (1) the scientifically-established need to keep most remaining reserves of all fossil fuels in the ground and urgently scale up clean, safe energy and (2) the urgent need to assure access worldwide to safe, clean, affordable water.

In keeping with the holistic view that SPAN is based upon, the topics of our programs this year were themselves more intersectional. Our Wellspring Wednesday Film series in the fall, “A Climate of Hope: Caring for Our Common Home,” took its inspiration from Pope Francis’ Laudato Si which intertwines the care for the earth with care for all peoples. Featured films and videos considered such things as how to approach challenges to food security as a result of loss of pollinators, the use of biomimicry as a model to solve problems, indigenous people’s struggles for reparations for contamination of their land, water, and bodies, and “climate, capitalism, and community” in the film The Wisdom to Survive. In the winter, we worked with YRUU on an intersectional curriculum for their Wellspring Wednesday series “Why We Go” that included environmental justice in the Gulf South as well as race and poverty issues. In the spring, we invited the Congregation to share their discoveries in a climate art-finding/art-making project. SPAN also had representation this year at advocacy gatherings for a habitable climate and clean water in Bakersfield, SLO, Ventura, Oxnard, and LA, as well as SBC, and supported individual congregants’ explorations of justice issues by sharing related learning materials.

Submitted by Cheryl Snell

WOMEN’S SPIRITUAL REFLECTION GROUP

The UU Women’s Spiritual Reflection Circle was formed with the goals of deepening individual spirituality and fostering more intimate connections between our members. The group has very successfully completed almost one-and-a-half years together. Six women have met twice monthly under the leadership of Arianna Jansma and Sylvia Casberg to meditate, share deeply from their hearts, and discuss questions addressing spiritual concerns.

Submitted by Arianna Jansma
WOMEN’S GROUP

The Women’s Group is a discussion group that meets the second and fourth Monday of each month from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. in La Paz Lounge. Over the past year we have been regrouping in an effort to re-energize our group and bring new interest from old and new members. In an effort to formalize our purpose, we recently held planning sessions and agreed on the following:

“Our purpose is to support open discussion, in a small group atmosphere, about topics that affect women’s lives, through sharing personally, intellectually, and spiritually. We encourage caring for and supporting one another, receiving from others, and listening to and laughing with others. We address issues in our own lives, and in the world, and encourage outreach within the group and out to the community. Our emphasis is on interaction and participation by ALL, in discussions and in program presentations.

come and join us and bring your ideas to share with us!”

Submitted by Joya Sexton

WEDNESDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

What was called the Wednesday Reading Group (and listed by USSB as “Wednesday Book Discussion”) has been in existence for many years at various venues and at USSB for the past 18 years. This group is open to all—USSB membership is not required.

Gene Waller, the founder, continues. He keeps things and us together by researching literature reviews, reviewing story and essay collections and novels, bringing possibilities to our attention, and eliciting suggestions from all of us. Final selections are made by consensus. Gene keeps our discussions on track, thoughtful, and civil.

PROCEDURES

At each meeting, we come prepared to discuss short stories (usually two) and one essay, a total “assignment” of about 50 pages.

Over the years, we have read from a wide variety of stories and essays from a number of sources. Our current story collection is Selected Stories, by William Trevor. [William Trevor, KBE, is an Irish novelist, playwright and short story writer. One of the elder statesmen of the Irish literary world, he is widely regarded as one of the greatest contemporary writers of short stories in the English language. Please see William Trevor via Google.]

For essays, we continue with The Borzoi College Reader, Sixth Edition, a rich collection selected by Charles Muscatine and Marlene Griffith.

Each year, we also take on several novels. We meet to discuss each, usually on a Sunday afternoon. The meeting always includes a wonderful potluck.

CONCLUSIONS

This is a wonderful, collegial group that loves literature. Most have been participants for years but that should not discourage others from joining—we welcome new members. Anyone interested is encouraged to contact the USSB office or any participant.

NEW STUFF

The foregoing is another truncated version of reports submitted in prior years. As noted, the group always has been open for anyone to join. Several USSB members have tried the group for short periods, but only two ongoing participants are current USSB members. From that standpoint, the group’s status, “USSB Educational Activity,” is essentially meaningless. Consequently, we
do not compete with other USSB activities for room assignments.

Facilities Manager Greg Otero really worked to find a suitable room that would be available every week, but this was not possible. However, he was able to offer the La Paz room once each month, with the possibility of a second room, also monthly. The members discussed this possibility, but we reached consensus to go with one meeting a month. We are now the USSB-Third-Tuesday-Each-Month-Reading-Group (TTEMRG), a.k.a., “Book Group.”

Submitted by Al Melkonian

THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Library Committee procures and maintains the books and movies that can be enjoyed by the members of the congregation without charge. We are Lana Haskett, Sharon Harris, Tom Moore, Kim Schlesinger, Jody Thomas, and Ellie Tuazon.

We work in two shifts on Sunday mornings. The first shift, from 9:10 to 10:10 a.m., opens and places all movies on special racks, all new and specifically relevant books on one of the tables, and sets up all supplies for the lending process. The second shift, from 10:10 to 11:20 a.m., helps congregants with signing out their selections. During this time we get to know our customers and we welcome their feedback.

Once the second service begins we replace things in their cabinets and drawers, count what has been signed out, and lock up. The key is kept in the church office.

Our current budget is $2,054.00. Since we no longer have fund raisers, we are frugal with our money. We have been fortunate to get donations of great books and movies from church members.

We review a book and a movie from our library every month in the Kaleidoscope.

We ask that members of the committee help at least one shift per month, either 9:10 to 10:10, or 10:10 to 11:20, or until everything is stored away. Specific procedures for the process are available.

On a monthly basis we loan out approximately 50 books and 70 movies. The library committee was started many years ago. Lana has been a volunteer for 26 years, and Sharon for 20.

Our contact is Ellie Tuazon at (805) 963-0164; ellietuaz@yahoo.com.

Submitted by Ellie Tuazon

FASHION FLING

The Fashion Fling is a fund raiser for the women of our congregation. During this “girlfriend” event, women bring clothing and jewelry they no longer want, which we spread out on racks and tables in Jefferson Hall to sell to each other at thrift store prices. We eat donated snacks, listen to music, and try on clothes. It’s an event with no planning meetings, no extra frills, and lots of fun!

The Girlfriend Night was Saturday Night, May 28, and the public was invited on Sunday, May 29. We made $1,814.00, which was donated to USSB. Unsold clothing was donated to the Alpha Thrift Store.

Thanks to the many helpers who handed out flyers, set up the tables, and helped with sales, especially Nancy Edmundson, Kathleen Boehm, Julie Lopp, Catherine Callahan, Florence Michel, Gun Dukes, Kathy Eastman, Suzanne Fairly, Donnis Galvan, Bonnie Jensen, Kate Mead, Pat Mitchell, Mary Moore, Laraine Gray, Patricia Reilly, Catherine Woodman, Valerie Watt, Barbara Alderson, and Eileen Bunning.

Submitted by Sally Hamilton
A foreign policy discussion forum was formed this year utilizing the excellent resources published by the Foreign Policy Association and commonly known as the Great Decisions program. Each January a study guide is published describing eight major foreign policy challenges confronting the U.S. This is accompanied by a DVD presenting a 30 minute lecture on the selected eight topics. Participants watched the DVD, and then divided into small discussion groups each of which is lead by a facilitator who kept everyone on topic and guided the discussion utilizing the questions proposed by the editors. The discussions were highlighted by the personal experiences of those participating and the commitment that everyone had an opportunity to express their ideas.

When first introduced to the congregation by organizers John Warnock and Dave Hennerman, the program attracted thirty plus members and with added publicity over sixty five members and friends signed up! Participants purchased a study guide from the Foreign Policy Association for $25. To accommodate all those interested an afternoon session was offered as well as an evening session held respectively in Parish Hall and in Jefferson Hall. The subjects covered this year included: Changing Middle East Alliances, The Rise of ISIS, the Future of Kurdistan, the Koreas, Migration into Europe, Climate Change, Cuba, and the United Nations. In addition, on April 3, Professor Kathleen Moore, Chair of the UCSB Religious Studies Department, lectured on ISIS and Islam in a Parish Hall event that was attended by more than 65 people.

The following members served as facilitators and significantly contributed to the success of the program: Adam Shive, Sue Fisher, Joe Fior, Michael Gorodezky, Dick Jensen, Hod Gray, Mark Hamilton, and Rory Moore. In addition to being a facilitator, Adam Shive presented a lively illustrated lecture on each topic to the delight of those attending the afternoon sessions.

Given the significant interest in the subject matter, plans are being made to continue the program in 2017. The proximity and resources available from the University and City College offer multiple opportunities to enrich the program for next year. Anyone interested participating in attending as well as serving as a facilitator speaker coordination is invited to review the website at www.greatdecisions.org and to contact organizers John Warnock at johnwarnock@gmail.com or Dave Hennerman at hennerman@att.net. While the program was lead by the coordinators and facilitators, the staff support supplied by Eden Kennedy, Greg Otero, and Jon Diaz was exceptional!

Submitted by John Warnock
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

TREASURER REPORT

The role of the Treasurer, a board position, is to serve as a liaison between the Director of Administration and the board to assure that the board required regular reports and any special reports requested by the board are made available by the Society’s bookkeeper to the Director of Administration and reported to the Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees on a timely basis. The Treasurer serves as the Chair or Co-Chair of the Finance Committee and sits on the Budget Committee, and the Endowment Committee, each of which have submitted their annual reports.

Submitted by Keith Strohmaier

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee continued in its role of advising the Board of Trustees and Director of Administration on fiscal matters and strategic issues impacting the Society’s fiscal efficiency and health. The Finance Committee reviewed the monthly Profit & Loss and Balance Sheet and discussed reports from the Director of Administration and input from the Treasurer at its monthly meetings.

In 2015, the following initiatives were outgrowths of Finance Committee discussions:

• Review of documents prepared by the Society’s bookkeeper for the Finance Committee
• Repayment of the loan from the Endowment to the Clergy Housing Fund
• Continued discussion on the establishment of a cash reserve fund, resulting in a Kaleidoscope article summarizing our process for preparing a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. This process will be completed next year

The 2015-16 Finance Committee Members included: Keith Strohmaier (Chair), Bill Benjamin, Dick Jensen, Charlene Little, Bart Woolery, and Steven Young. The Chair would like to thank all members of the Finance Committee and guests for their commitment to USSB’s fiscal health. We would also like to acknowledge the dedication and detailed work of our Director of Administration, Erin Wilson, and Bookkeeper, Cindy Young.

Submitted by Keith Strohmaier

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Board Appointed Audit Committee (Committee) members for the June 30, 2015, Audit were Jeff Carmody, Dick Jensen, Chair Mike Noling, and Carol Schwyzer.

The USSB financials are audited by an Independent CPA every three years and they are “internally reviewed” in the interim two years. The June 30, 2015 year end is the first interim “internal review” year. The financials will have a full audit again for the June 30, 2017 year end.

On October 27, 2015 Audit Committee members Bill Benjamin, Jeff Carmody, Dick Jensen, Mike Noling, and Carol Schwyzer met at the Society. Rev. Julia Hamilton, Director of Administration Erin Wilson, and contract accountant Cindy Young of Accountability Plus attended the meeting.

The Audit Committee brought questions and thoroughly reviewed and discussed the June 30, 2015 audit formatted financials and notes and compared them with the June 30, 2015 operating format financials. Cindy Young and Erin Wilson had distributed the reports to the Committee in advance. All questions raised in the discussion were effectively answered by the staff and bookkeeper. There were edits and revision updates to some of the notes, but no unresolved issues. The revised audit formatted financials and notes were circulated to the Committee for their review.

The audit format financials and accompanying notes, as revised, were forwarded to the Board. The Board accepted the financials.

The Committee again noted that these audit formatted financials will be very useful to readers, as well as being necessary for the required June 30, 2017 audit.

Julia Hamilton and Erin Wilson confirmed that the ministers would complete and submit their Clergy Housing Forms to the Board in December as required by the IRS for ministers.

Copies of the “internally reviewed” and the audited financial statements and Audit Committee minutes are available from the Director of Administration, Erin Wilson.

Submitted by Michael Noling
AUDIT COMMITTEE POLICY
The USSB by-laws require a full audit of our annual financial reports by an outside CPA every third year.

CHARTER RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

- Recommends to the full Board, the retention and termination of the independent auditor (retention and discharge of the independent auditor is a Board responsibility).
- Negotiates the independent auditor’s compensation on behalf of the full Board.
- Oversees management’s review of internal controls and fraud prevention and detection activities.
- Confirms that the Ministers complete and submit their Clergy Housing Forms to the Board each December.
- Confers with the auditor and participates with staff to satisfy the Board and members that the financial affairs of the Society are in order.
- Reviews and determines whether to accept the full audit conducted by an outside CPA for subsequent transmittal to the Board.
- Reviews and determines whether to accept the annual financial reports in non-audit years for subsequent transmittal to the Board.
- Reviews the Auditor’s Letter of Reportable Conditions/Recommendations (if any) and subsequent Response by the Finance Committee/Director of Administration and recommends action to be taken by the Board.
- Monitors the Implementation of the Recommendations/Response by the Finance Committee/Director of Administration.

MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS
Annually, the Board Chair proposes to the entire Board, for approval or rejection, the names of five candidates for membership on the Audit Committee and also recommends one of them to be the Chair. One shall be a member of the Board, one shall be a member of the Finance Committee, one shall be a member of the Endowment Board, and the remaining two members shall be at large members. The term of each member shall be one year with a limit of five consecutive terms.

ENDOWMENT FUND
Endowment Fund (the “Fund”) is a separate corporation, and its directors receive, hold, and administer bequests and gifts for the benefit of the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara (“Society”). These gifts are intended for long-term investment and for providing future cash payments to the Society for operations expenses, while preserving or increasing the assets of the Fund.

GIFTS
In 2015 and year to date thru March 2016, the Endowment Fund has received most generous gifts totaling $12,103.

FUND VALUE
As of December 31, 2015, the value of the total assets of the Fund was $1,386,757. Fund assets had a total return of -5.1% in 2015, net of the approximate 6% annual distribution to the Society. At year end, Fund assets were over double their amount ten years ago after distributing 6% annually, all the result of favorable investment performance and generous gifts to the Endowment.

Since the Fund’s inception in 1983, it has received gifts and bequests of $1,180,186 (the Fund’s principal). For the 2015-2016 USSB fiscal year, the Fund distributed $83,919 to support the Society’s operating needs. These distributions were in the form of two semiannual payments to the Society, the first equal to 3% of the average working asset value over the prior two years and the second equal to 3% of the average working asset value over the prior three years. The Fund is complying with new Federal and State regulations to average the asset value quarterly over three years and under new Endowment By-laws to distribute no more than 6% of that amount annually subject to a detailed determination of prudence by the Endowment Board.

OPERATIONS
Historically, Fund assets were invested in a variety of equity and bond funds held at Vanguard and all asset allocations and adjustments were made and approved by the Endowment Board. As of June, 2015 (to respect
the congregation’s expressed desires of investing consistent with the Fossil Fuel Divestment 2014 Business Resolution of the UUA), the custodian of the Endowment funds has been moved to Charles Schwab and investment management services have been provided by Trillium Investment Management in a fossil fuel free and socially responsible portfolio. Asset allocation and performance will continue to be monitored by the Endowment Board and reported to the Society Board of Trustees quarterly with report copies available from the USSB Director of Administration.

Current directors of the Endowment Fund are: Keith Strohmaier (Treasurer), Jeff Carmody (President since 3/15), John Gilbert (Vice President and Secretary) and Gun Dukes (Director). Keith serves as a director in his capacity as Treasurer of the Society. The directors, assisted by the USSB Director of Administration, Erin Wilson, meet at least quarterly to review and approve the Endowment reports to the Board, and to review the performance of the Fund and to consider changes to the investment strategy. Directors are appointed annually by the Board of Trustees of the Society and may not serve for more than two consecutive three-year terms.

Any member or friend interested in the financial support of our Society is encouraged to make a contribution at any time and/or to include the Endowment in their estate plan and be welcomed into the Chalice Circle for recognition. A Planned Giving program, described elsewhere in the annual report, facilitates anyone interested in supporting our Society through the Endowment Fund and provides a variety of tax-advantaged ideas for making contributions.

Submitted by Jeff Carmody

PLANNED GIVING

It is my pleasure to present the 2016 Planned Giving Report. The goal of Planned Giving is to encourage members to make legacy gifts to the Unitarian Society through their estate plans. A planned advisor is assigned who assists members who wish to make legacy gifts to the Endowment Fund (the Fund) or directly to the Society; or a major gift during their lifetime to the Society. In doing so, Members and Friends are invited to be members of the Chalice Circle in recognition of their living or legacy commitment. On December 31, 2015, the value of the total assets of the Fund was $1,386,757.00. Through semi annual payments to the operating fund, the Fund offers members a continuing legacy to the Society, providing long-term financial support of our mission and values for generations to come.

Approximately twenty percent of the Society’s members are in Chalice Circle and last year we welcomed three new members. In recognition of our Chalice Circle members a program was held on Heritage Sunday featuring a social and presentation of an historic timeline of the Society that emphasized our story from 1876 along four parameters, the building, the ministry, members of note and our legacy. Approximately 50 members attended.

Gary Welterlen served as chair in 2016 and will lead the efforts in 2017. The goals of 2017 will be Chalice Circle member retention and recruitment. Retention of Chalice Circle members will focus on more frequent communication with our membership, providing opportunities to meet on selected subjects, engage with our ministers and staff, and holding our annual Chalice Circle recognition event. Recruitment will focus on educating members of the Society of the importance of legacy gifts to the Society, the value of the gift to the donor and their family and when ready, encouraging membership in Chalice Circle.

Submitted by Susie DuPont
As always, the boots on the ground are our Planned Giving Advisors, a small group of carefully chosen Chalice Circle members, each who has years of experience with the Society in a wide range of leadership positions. As part of the shared ministry of the congregation they are available to meet with members on a confidential basis to help with estate planning, financial and health care agents, real estate matters, planned giving opportunities and provides names of respected professionals in town. Our Planned Giving Advisors are: Gun Dukes, Nancy Edmundson, Dick Jensen, Mike Noling, Carol Schwyzner, Ted Stern, and John Warnock.

To find out more about Planned Giving opportunities contact Erin Wilson, Director of Administration, who will direct you to a Planned Giving Advisor.

Submitted by Gary Welterlen

THE ALLIANCE

The Alliance, a non-profit organization, is supported by its dues-paying members. Members are men and women of the USSB congregation who wish to be part of the efforts to support community and UUA organizations and particular needs of USSB. Members and non-members alike are welcome to gather monthly to learn of social, political, and cultural issues and to socialize with each other. These meetings take place the first Friday of the month October through June. An elected board of directors conduct the business of arranging programs, staying in touch with the members and managing its funds.

Presentations for this year were:

- Rev. Caitlin Cotter
- Rev. Frank Schaefer, author of Defrocked: How A Father’s Act of Love Shook the United Methodist Church
- Carol Sharpe, soloist, and Ken Ryals, music director
- Hod Gray, ambassador to UU Social Justice CA
- Alan Stachle, former Police Chief, who spoke about his perspective on community relations
- A Single Woman, a film about the first woman member of the House of Representatives, Jeannette Rankin
- Gina Fischer, Public Affairs Director for Planned Parenthood
- Marissa Pasquini, Alpha Resource Center Program Director
- Anita Blume, who spoke on Nepal before the earthquake

During 2015-16 Alliance members approved donations to UU Women’s Federation, UU Service Committee, Alpha Resource Center, and the USSB Sound System.

The Alliance Board of Directors for 2015-16 are: Kathleen Boehm, Anita Blume, Claire Chytilo, Betty Beckwith, Mary Moore, Rita Shaw, Janet Brinckmann, Sylvia Abualy, Alice Edwards, Cheryl Jones, John Warnock, Dorothy Warnock, and Gun Dukes.

Submitted by Kathleen Boehm
PARTNER REPORTS
ACADEMY FOR HEALING ARTS (AHA!)

Jennifer Freed, Ph.D., and Rendy Freedman, MFT founded AHA! (Attitude. Harmony. Achievement.) in 1999. Their mission: “Development of character, imagination, emotional intelligence, and social conscience in teenagers.” AHA! provides social-emotional learning (SEL) and character education to teens in Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Carpinteria. They empower youth to stop bullying, create peaceful and socially equitable environments, improve their own campus climates, communicate effectively, and deal with strong emotions constructively. They offer invaluable support and healthy community to 150 at-risk youth per year in their after-school and summer programs, which they offer by donation.

In 2015-16, AHA! served 3,000 youth in popular programs in-school, after-school, and in summer. Facilitators are present in at least a 1:6 ratio with youth, providing mentorship and support that many youth served could not access otherwise. Since the organization began, AHA! has held many of its after-school and summer groups on the USSB campus in Jefferson Hall. Their work dovetails beautifully with the values of USSB. “We are incredibly grateful to the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara for the use of their beautiful space,” says Dr. Freed.

To address the strong need to build more positive campus climates, AHA! developed its new Peace Builders in-school program in 2013; since then, this program has empowered 250 youth to outreach to 8,000 others through Connection Circle leadership. Students in this program on four area campuses also receive training in ways to peacefully resolve conflict and intervene in bullying situations. AHA! Peace Builders is receiving national attention and is helping AHA! reach more youth and community members. Their hope is to eventually reach every public middle and high school student in Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Carpinteria with their in-school programs while maintaining their thriving out-of-school programs.

AHA! after-school was chosen by the Susan Crown Exchange as one of the top eight out-of-school programs in the U.S. providing SEL-based programs for teens. Over the course of 2014 and 2015, Dr. Freed, Ms. Freedman, and core AHA! staff members participated in research and roundtable gatherings to help create of a best-practices guide for out-of-school programs nationwide. The guide was published in January 2016 and can be downloaded for free at www.selpractices.org.

Submitted by Melissa Block
STARR KING PARENT CHILD WORKSHOP

On behalf of Starr King membership, I would like to extend a special thank you to the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara’s Board of Trustees for your continued support over the past 67 years. Together, we’re able to offer a model parent-education program that brings together and grows healthier parents, many of whom move on to build community and serve children in and around Santa Barbara and beyond. It’s a unique experience that combines parent education with leadership development.

Recently, the Starr King board shared memories of positive Starr King experiences and summed them up with one word: community. We have a community with many open-ended choices for children; we allow children the freedom to move about according to their interests and at their own pace; we have older children demonstrating leadership skills by teaching new children. The teamwork, relationships, inclusion, self-organization, conflict resolution, adult/child interactions, children and parent growth, appreciation, empowerment, and awareness—all part of our community.

Thanks to our collaboration, families leave Starr King with memories that will carry them into the larger community for many years to come.

POPULATION SERVED
Starr King served 71 families this year, totaling 132 adults and 80 children.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT
Thirteen families received financial assistance in the form of work exchange. Work exchange allows for parents to exchange services in lieu of half of the monthly tuition for a 3-month term. In addition, families facing crises were assisted via the network of family support, which included meals, childcare, and transportation.

PARENT EDUCATION CURRICULUM
- Class Title: Parent Ed. In a Cooperative Preschool Setting
- Fall Term: Child Development—An Overview for Parents
- Winter Term: Parent/Child Relationships
- Spring Term: Family Education and Community Resources
- Special guest speakers: David Sobel and Michael Katz

AFTERNOON INCLUSION PROGRAM
Santa Barbara Unified School District is taking over special education services that were offered by Santa Barbara County Education Office.

CHILDREN’S CURRICULUM
Traditional experiences and festive celebrations continued this year. We appreciated the Glendessary Band, which played again this year for our May Day celebration. They really do make the celebration complete.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS
We maintained grounds as usual, installed shade in the lower yard, and remodeled the entryway. Picture below: New entrance includes archway, painted concrete, planters, risers (behind the arch), painted walls, and new outdoor carpet.

ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE
Next year the rummage sale will take place at Earl Warren on February 4, 2017.

I would like to appreciate Rev. Julia Hamilton, Rev. Lee Bond-Upson, Erin Wilson, Eden Kennedy, Greg Otero, Rob Brown, Ken Ryal, Jena Foster, and Jon Diaz for their help throughout the year.

Submitted by Yolanda Medina Garcia,
Parent Education Instructor, Director
During our seventh season, the Freedom Warming Centers were activated 43 rainy and cold nights between November 15 and April 30, serving over 1,000 unduplicated guests county wide. This season, with the expectation of an El Nino year, the Warming Centers also paired up with Central Coast Collaborative on Homeless and the County of Santa Barbara’s Board of Supervisors to provide Day Centers for guests to find shelter on rainy days which activated 14 days at Earl Warren Showgrounds.

Over 70 USSB members provided warm meals and hospitality to guests during USSB activation nights. The names of these volunteers appear below. Thank you for your hospitality and dedication! You worked in the cold and rain to make sure that the most vulnerable of our neighbors on the streets have a dry, warm place to sleep and a hot meal before bedtime. You cleaned up the next morning, you worked on short notice, you prepped and froze food in advance.

The Warming Centers, and USSB’s commitment to this program makes a huge difference here in Santa Barbara, and we inspire other communities to respond with compassion to people living on the streets.

Thank You!
