



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF MARIN

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025



Monica Steward
office@uumarin.org

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Marin

Congregational Meeting

**To inspire joy and justice in an imperfect world, we:
Share life's journey,
Celebrate many paths, and
Act to make a difference**

**June 8, 2025
12:00 – 2:00 pm**

- Welcome
- Certification of Quorum
- Approval of minutes from February 23, 2025 meeting
- Opening remarks - Susan Mathews, Board President
- Remarks from our Minister - Rev. Cory W. Lovell
- Update on Capital Campaign and Building Project – Christopher Gilkerson & Linda Haumann
- Vote on the proposed 2025-2026 budget
- Acknowledgement of this year's Volunteers
- Vote on the nominations for the Board, Emergency Assistance Fund, and Nominating Committee positions
 - **Nominations for Board:**
 - **President (1 year term)** Ed Berg
 - **Past President (1 year term)** Susan Mathews
 - **Vice President (1 year term)** Lauren Vreeland-Long
 - **Secretary (2-year term)** Katie Morrison
 - **Treasurer (3-year term)** Anne Lamb
 - **General Trustee (2-year term)** David Haumann
 - **General Trustee (2-year term)** Victoria Holdridge
 - **General Trustee (3-year term)** Craig Cohen
 - **General Trustee (3-year term)** Sarah Tiederman
 - **Nominations for Emergency Assistance Fund Trustee:**
 - **Member (2-year term)** Jenny Robinson
 - **Nominations for Nominating Committee:**
 - **Member (3-year term)** Ali Jenkins
 - **Member (3-year term)** Talia Carter
 - **Member (3-year term)** Anne Spatola
- Closing remarks
- Adjournment

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Marin

Congregational Meeting Minutes

February 23, 2025

The congregation's winter meeting began at approximately 12:25pm. Board President Susan Mathews did a reading as the chalice was lit. There were 59 members present plus 6 online, thus establishing a quorum with 43.62% in attendance. The congregational covenant was read as a "call and response" facilitated by Theresa Novak, chair of Healthy Congregations team. Ted Gaebler initiated motion to approve the October 6, 2024 minutes with a second from Veronica Maier and a unanimous vote of the congregation.

Opening Remarks- Board President

Susan Mathews' remarks focused on the internal and external work that has been going on during this Church year. She referred to the review of the internal processes, namely amendments to board policies and bylaw amendments as well as major changes with regard to construction for the capital project. Further, she thanked the board for their part and congratulated the congregation on being awarded the "Good Trouble" designation by the association's UU the Vote. She ended with joy for the future as now we can actualize our dreams going forward with visions of our new space promoting our values.

Remarks from our Minister

Rev. Cory Lovell acknowledged staff and volunteers who had performed outstandingly despite the many challenges of the past several months. He identified individuals who assisted the administrator, joined the finance committee and/or the board, and handled the tech responsibilities (including zoom) for the congregation. He highlighted the growth of our program by the numbers of children attending classes. Rev. Cory expressed gratitude for the Side with Love award for Linda Haumann and Good Trouble. He ended with hope for the future and the incredible work that is on the horizon.

Update on Capital Project

Christopher Gilkerson began his presentation talking about the frantic pace that is expected to occur in the next 6 weeks. With visual effects, we viewed renditions of the wider hallways, restrooms and outdoor performance stage which seats 120 comfortably.

Accomplishments to date include:

- Solar panels
- New sewer line
- Refinished hardwood floors in the sanctuary
- Demolished sheds
- New fence
- Underground drainage

Still to come are benches, shade trees, sunset terrace, planter boxes. Work on the parking lot commences around the first week of March. By the end of March, there will be a "handover" for the project and the punch list at the end of April. The new outdoor venue is in need of a name

and suggestions are being solicited. New rental guidelines are being developed by an ad hoc group.

His final remarks mentioned the water damage resulting from the recent storms and the additional cost of \$25,000 to repair. At this time, we owe about \$1,621,912 with \$827,000 in the bank. The loan from the UUA will be initiated at the end of March.

Linda Haumann reminded everyone that this is our first capital campaign. She thanked the congregation for its generosity. As there is still a potential shortfall in the anticipated capital pledges, she encouraged everyone to fulfill their commitment and consider adding more. Fundraising for the project occurred in the spring with a Garden Party. Many benches, trees and stones were available to memorialize former members or family. This effort generated several thousand dollars and more can be raised with the few items that are still available. New fundraising ideas continue to be explored.

Finance Update

Craig Cohen, Finance Committee member, presented the update of our profile to date. With gratitude to the administrator and the committee, she emphasized that our revenue and spending continue to be balanced. Upcoming expenses include payments for loans to the UUA and our endowment fund. The construction project has impacted the rental income. 68% of pledges have been paid with 4 months remaining for the fiscal year. Expenses currently total \$303,690, which is 60% of the budgeted amount. Last year's surplus has not been spent which puts us on track financially.

Bylaw Amendments

Amendments to 4 Articles were discussed. The detailed changes were sent via email and available in written and digital form at the meeting.

Article IV – **Trustees and Officers** - The Board will increase to ten with half of the board serving as General Trustees. The President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Past President will serve as officers of the Board. If the Past-President has already served 5 consecutive years as a voting board member prior to becoming a Past-President, the Past-President will serve a one-year term as Past-President and as an ex-officio non-voting member of the board.

Article V – **Duties of Officers** - For continuity of institutional memory and knowledge, the Vice President will be the President-elect and serve as President for their second year and the President will then serve as Past President.

Article VII – **Standing Committees and Teams** – The Stewardship team will fall under the purview of the board as the Stewardship Committee.

Article IX – **Dissolution** – Wording change includes ...” dedicated to advancing” liberal religion in the San Francisco Bay Area “or the most comparable purpose to this aim.”

Ted Gaebler made the **motion** to adopt these amendments to the bylaws and Anise Feldman provided the second with a unanimous vote of 57 in attendance.

Conflict Resolution Policy

The discussion centered around possible format changes to improve readability and placing it on the website. It was suggested that the covenant be read at the beginning of services and meetings. Further, small groups will be formed to gather input for possible changes to the covenant's wording.

Acknowledgement of October, November, December and January Volunteers

October-- Trudy Verzosa for her organization and planning of several karaoke events.

November-- The UU the Vote team for their outstanding work in outreach to expand the electoral process by writing postcards, calling voters and canvassing.

December-- Anne-Christine Strugnell for chairing the Hospitality team and volunteering on the auction.

January – Judy Finn volunteered with handling deposits, reconciliations and verifications of credit card charges.

Closing Remarks

Kate Hudson reminded the group of the Adult Spiritual Development survey. Ginnie Job expressed joy for the past 7 years as a member of the congregation. Her hope is that we continue to treat everyone with compassion.

Adjournment

At 1:50pm, Ted Gaebler made the motion to adjourn with a second from Jim Harrison.

Respectfully submitted by Anne Spatola



President's Report

President's Report for Annual Meeting

By Susan Mathews, President, Board of Trustees

A Year of Delayed Gratification and Exciting Possibilities

This past church year, we have worked through our building renewal project in the midst of a challenging political environment and building disruption. We have witnessed how the strength of our bonds among our membership can be tested and also how they can help us be stronger together as we move into new ways of being together in a world that needs us now more than ever. Our building project will officially be coming to a close next weekend as we gather together for a joyous dedication and celebration. I love hearing the many creative ideas for new uses of our space, and programs that will be coming back to campus.

I would like to call out our recognition this year by the UUA as a “Good Trouble Congregation” in acknowledgement of our deep participation in community partnerships and mobilization to help citizens recognize their ability to advocate for a government that aligns with their values. Only approximately 80 UU congregations nationwide achieved this distinction. Let's keep working to help lead the way to more good trouble! All of you are a part of making that possible.

Caring for Our Building and Grounds

In the last two years, we launched the first capital campaign in the history of our congregation. Our motto has been “Our Community, Our Turn” reflecting on the investment that all of us are called to make to ensure that this community remains a beacon for those in Marin who need a spiritual home for more generations to come. During this past year, we went through the most disruptive phase of this project. Thank you to all of you who kept us going through the months of room disruptions, water intrusion, and ever-changing work-arounds! We have made it to the other side, and now have ADA-compliant entrances, spacious hallways with smooth walking surfaces, enhanced sound and video capability in Fellowship Hall, fully accessible restrooms, and a reimagined courtyard with safer walking surfaces and enhanced areas for gatherings or quiet contemplation. Due to the careful management of our construction funds, we have also been able to address some of the other building priorities that were uncovered during our reconstruction. As a result, we will soon have a newly refreshed Wright Room, and new windows and doors for staff offices as well. Special thanks to our campaign co-chairs, **Linda Haumann** and **Christopher Gilkerson**. And thank you to all of you for helping this dream come true!

Caring for our Members

This year, we have seen strong membership growth and a steady stream of visitors despite our challenging physical conditions. Now, with the major construction behind us, we are poised to expand our offerings to members. Lifespan Religious Education will be able to meet in-person on more days and evenings in our beloved space on the Hill. In the fall, we will be launching an exciting initiative to make Wednesday evenings at UU Marin a concentrated time for activities and a shared evening meal. We hope that the opportunities for a variety of learning, music, sharing, and expression will feel like a mini-retreat in the middle of your week. We also think

this will present us with more opportunities to strengthen bonds between members and help us engage in intentional multi-generational growth.

The Pastoral Care Team is recommitting to its work to help us all feel supported and held by one another during times of challenge. Thank you to **Lauren Vreeland-Long** for recently stepping up as the new chair of this Team! Please let Lauren know if you would like to be part of the love team to help send cards, provide a ride, run errands, or deliver meals for members who could use some support.

This year, our congregation said some difficult goodbyes to several cherished long-term members who have shaped us into who we are today. We are so glad that our new outdoor spaces will soon be ready to receive the plaques and memorial dedications to honor those who have given so much to our community over our first 75 years! Stay tuned for more details on our new memorial dedications soon.

Some Highlights to Look Forward to Next Church Year

As we move into the next church year, we have some events already taking shape that we hope will bring health and joy to our community.

We are working with the UUA and Hope for Us to help our congregation dig into the way we deal with conflict and how we can improve the ways we communicate and work together. This investment of our time and attention is an invitation for all of us to explore what we hope this community will become and what we can do to help that future become a reality. If we have learned anything through our first seventy-five years as a congregation, it is that change is inevitable. But how we respond to that change and invest of ourselves in the process determines whether we will grow and thrive as change happens.

We are in the early stages of planning a joyous dinner and auction in the fall where we can formally celebrate our 75th anniversary and help us raise a few resources for keeping us thriving into the future. Some of the most successful auction “items” from this year’s auction were parties and gatherings that have been happening throughout the year. If you are interested in helping with this next auction, please contact **Monique Webster**.

We will be launching a Joy and Justice Concert Series in our new Courtyard space this summer. The first concert evening will be July 26. More details will be coming out soon.

Volunteers

Our work as a congregation could not happen without the work of many volunteers. Please note in the rest of this report the many good Committees and Teams that help us live out our values on a daily basis. The Board has also voted to give special recognition to the following Volunteers of the Month this past church year.

- July 2024 – **Rich Cohen** for his work on the Finance Committee including organizing our chart of accounts and rental data
- August 2024 – **Sally Schroeder** for her commitment to the Sunday Touch of Beauty and by providing beautiful arrangements.
- September 2024 – **Monica Steward** for her dedication to the children’s program by volunteering Sunday mornings and assisting with the youth.

- October 2024 – **Trudy Verzosa** for organizing two successful and well-attended karaoke parties.
- November 2024 – **Sarah Tiederman** for her incredible work coordinating UU the Vote efforts for UU Marin.
- December 2024 – **Anne-Christine Strugnell** for taking on leadership of the Hospitality Team and serving as emcee for our auction.
- January 2025 – **Judy Finn** for outstanding work on the congregation's finances including reconciliations and verifications of accounts.
- February 2025 – **Rev. Theresa Novak, Linda Haumann, Sande Kiriluk, Dick Park, Barb Patterson, Mikey Songster** for their work on the Healthy Congregation Team, especially their development of new policies for the congregation.
- March 2025 – **Heather Lamb** for her extraordinary service to the Worship Team, Committee on Shared Ministry, and Task Force on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- April 2025 – **Christine Kraemer, Anne Lamb, Jerry Moore, Patrick Patterson and Milton Wong** for their enriching and entertaining music salon performances.
- May 2025 – **Christopher Gilkerson and Linda Haumann** for their tireless work on our Capital Campaign

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the entire board of trustees for their many hours of dedicated service and visionary leadership this church year. **Vice-President Ed Berg, Treasurer Judi Purdom, Secretary Anne Spatola, and general trustees Rich Cohen, David Haumann, Victoria Holdridge, Katie Morrison, and Lauren Vreeland-Long** have been a great team. Their love for this community and for our work has been shining through in all that they have done this year.

Gratefully,

Susan



Capital Project and Capital Campaign

Christopher Gilkerson, Linda Haumann

Milestones for the Project

- Ground breaking on the building project (the demolition) began around July 10, 2024.
- Landscape project began in mid-October.
- Front paver path to the front door completed in time for December 24 evening service.
- Subcontractor delays (among other reasons) pushed the building project well past the planned 6-month project completion date.
- Rainy weather through February resulted in further delays and complications.
- By end of April, the new hallways and restrooms were in place although not yet completed.
- June 4 final fire inspection approval.
- June 5 final City of San Rafael inspection approval.
- Dedication Celebration will be June 13.
- To come: installation of new Memorial Wall, Capital Campaign Donor recognition board, and bench / tree / stone inscriptions. Upgrading of security alarm.
- To come on June 10: rekeying all the locks to start fresh for security and convenience reasons.

Project Components

- Sewer line replacement from building to street in 2023.
- Solar panels installed July 2023 – meeting almost all of our electricity needs saving money and the environment.
- Fellowship Hall floor refinishing March 2024.
- Professional service retention: contractors, architects, engineers, surveyors, etc.
- Audio and visual upgrades to Fellowship Hall and outdoor stage capabilities.
- Parking lot: New ADA compliant parking spaces and sidewalk path of travel.
- Entryway: Sign relocation and new walkway to the front door. New ADA bollard with push button door opener. New fenced-in trash can enclosure. New exterior paint for entire front of building.
- Manzanita courtyard: new sidewalk, plantings (including Dick's Tree), drainage, and fence.
- Landscape: new grading and new drainage in courtyard and around building to address historical water incursion problem. New concrete walkways throughout, interspersed with trees and plant islands (over 80% natives). One-of-a-kind water fountain in **Memorial Garden** enabling wildlife to drink. Pavers at the new **Gallery Entrance** and in front of the **Performance Stage** which has electrical outlets. Landscape path and stage lighting. Planter boxes with cobblestone and motion sensor lighting around perimeter of building.
- New shed out back next to Fireside Room.
- Level and safe "Sunset Terrace" with benches behind Fireside Room.
- Lobby: New floors, ceiling, lighting, and thresholds.

- Fellowship Hall: sanded and painted columns, seismic reinforcement, large screen TVs, new speakers, microphones, and cameras.
- Hallway: Enlarged hallways with new tile flooring, glass walls and sliding doors. New motion sensor lighting and directional lighting ready for art installations. New doors throughout.
- Restrooms: Two all-gender restrooms, each with an ADA stall and a regular stall (4 stalls total) with floor to ceiling doors. No-touch sinks with hand dryers in-sink to promote hygiene and save the environment.
- New storage room for custodial and building supplies behind restrooms.
- Administrator and Director of Family Ministry offices and Clara Barton: new plaster on walls, ceiling, paint, and lights. New carpeting for the two offices.
- Wright Room downstairs: Removal of moldy ceiling tiles and carpeting. New electrical sub-panels, ceiling, paint, and flooring (to be installed).
- Throughout the first-floor new areas: new energy-efficient HVAC system.
- Throughout the entire building: new fire emergency pulls with 24-hour monitoring with audible and light flash signals.



Financial

- Capital campaign has raised \$2,377,740.
- Benches, trees, and stones adoption raised close to \$100,000 (most of which was recorded in above total).
- There are \$50,801 of unpaid pledges.
- Two loans:
 - \$150,000 interest-only loan from the UU Marin Common Endowment Fund (issued in December 2024). Principal is due at the end of year 6.
 - \$520,000 building improvement loan from the Unitarian Universalist Association, with \$3,752.49 monthly payments over 5 years with a balloon payment due in month 60.
- Expected: \$17,324 solar rebate from the IRS.
- Projected overall capital project cost: \$3,065,000.

People

- Christopher Gilkerson served as volunteer project manager for the building and landscape construction.
- Christopher and John Eller coordinated with the contractors, architects, and engineers.
- Margy Eller was capital campaign and capital project treasurer.
- Rich Cohen oversaw the technology enhancements.
- Christopher Gilkerson and Linda Haumann served as co-chairs of the capital campaign.
- The Board of Trustees and Rev. Cory provided input and made prioritization decisions.
- Many members made generous contributions of both money and suggestions.



Minister's Report

Rev. Cory W. Lovell

Dear UU Marin,

I've got a joke for you.

Why did the 75-year-old Unitarian Universalist Congregation cross the road?

Well, we met a challenging year with ingenuity, persistence, courage, grace, and an unwavering faith that we'd cross over into something new.

Now we have a beautiful revitalized spiritual home where we can live out our shared values in an ambitious vision of congregational community rooted in love, justice, fellowship, and faith formation.

Despite all the challenges of construction, we still welcomed newcomers through our doors. Still inked new names into the sacred pages of our congregational roll -- spiritual siblings who will share their life journey with us, bringing fresh perspectives and unique energies to our community.

We lost some dear friends along the way. But as I walk these widened hallways, I still feel the presence of Carole, Marge, and Bonne. I know the love and joy and kinship we fill this new space with will honor their memories and the memory of everyone who has come before us, giving so much to this congregation before joining that mighty cloud of witnesses.

We rallied through periods of intense anxiety, grief, disappointment, and conflict.

We ended up joining closer together in hope, faith, vulnerability, and empathy.

This year wasn't easy. We knew it wouldn't be. But I mean it when I say...the other side is here.

We made it across.

Through the election.

The construction.

The fears and doubts.

The ups and downs.

The old patterns and new challenges.

We are now on the other side of the road.

And so the fun part begins.

Who are we now? What do we hope to be?

How do we inspire joy and justice for all who so dearly need it?

In the next few months UU Marin will begin to explore congregational life on the other side of radical transformation.

- Launching Wednesday night multigenerational programming.
- Implementing technologically advanced hybrid worship.
- Renewing our commitment to social change through new alliances and deep engagement at the local, national, and international level.
- Cultivating a new cohort of congregational leadership who will pick up the baton and cross the next road.

We may be 3/4 of a century old, but we've only just begun to learn how to be together, just starting to understand how much we can do as one loving community on this incredible journey.

May the Divine Spirit of Life bless and keep you always. And may we keep on rocking in the free world.

Blessed Be, y'all!

- Rev. Cory W. Lovell



Family Ministries Report

Alexis Lovell, Directory of Family Ministries

Affiliations: Member of UUMA and LREDA; Aspirant with the UUA; Master of Divinity student at Eden Theological Seminary

This year in Family Ministries has been shaped by resilience, adaptation, and long-term vision. While construction limited our access to classrooms and outdoor space, we focused on strengthening the systems and structures that support lasting spiritual growth.

We completed a full revision of the Child Safety and Protection Policy, aligned with California law and UUA guidance, and developed tools for volunteer onboarding, curriculum evaluation, and programming rooted in UU values, connection, and a deep respect for children's wholeness.

Plans for a new Lifespan Religious Education Team are underway, integrating children's, youth, and adult faith development into one intergenerational structure. This shift reflects a renewed commitment to shared spiritual formation and collaborative ministry.



The strength of this work lies in the people who make it possible. Our staff—Luka, Aaron, Debra, and Monica—have shown up with deep commitment to our children, youth, families, and the future of this congregation, along with consistent Sunday volunteers Anne Lamb and Monique Webster. Our paid teen staff, Audrey and Esme, have contributed joyfully and responsibly.

We may not have done everything we hoped this year, but the foundation we've built positions us to grow in depth, clarity, and connection in the year ahead.

Construction made many aspects of working at UU Marin tough to handle this church year but everyone who is a part of Family Ministries showed up with happy hearts and optimism, to make it work the many different ways that were needed. It's time for a new chapter of RE. Cheers to our new space!



Administrator's Report

Monica Steward

It has been an interesting year with the construction of our stunning new building. Now that the project is completed, it feels great to be in this updated, inviting space. It has been delightful to share this with our ongoing and potential new renters and the community at large. They have all been patient and understanding throughout the past year. I have been working as rental coordinator with an anticipated workload ramping up in the fall. Unfortunately, we have lost several renters due to the construction, but I feel confident we will be able to attract new renters with the gorgeous new building we now have. We have held several events during the construction and they have gone well; I can only imagine how nice it will be to share the space with new groups.

I have had the opportunity to be a consistent presence in the nursery on Sundays, and it has been a joy that I look forward to each week, as well as connecting with our congregation.

I look forward to our dedication of the new space on June 13th, as it will be an opportunity to gather with our community and delight in new beginnings.

Membership Changes

New Members

Barbara Kovac
Lee Larsen
Patricia Russell
Ramsey Reston
Cindy Ruiz
Anne Lamb
Tony Hansen
Charles Strickfaden
Edward Curran
Leah Curran
Carol Cavanaugh

New Friends

Angel Kwolek-Folland
Rosy McCloskey

Deceased

Bonne Gaebler
Marge Hollinger
Carole Rosvold

Resigned

Karen Auroy
Kat Braeman
Glynda Christian
Juliet Christian-Smith
Jim Harrison
Dave Hudson
Kate Hudson
Kristin Jensen
Ginnie Job
Jerry Job
Linda Klein
Karen McCann
Rich McCann
Rich Panter
Joan Smith

Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM)

Members: John Eller (Chair), Yasmin Mogul, Heather Lamb, Trudy Verzosa, Anne-Christine Strugnell

The Committee on Shared Ministry is a mission focused group of Board confirmed members representing a broad swath of congregational demographics. To fulfill our purpose 1) We develop short-term goals, a long-term vision, and a strategic plan to achieve success in the shared ministry of the congregation. We act as thought partners and focus on promoting our congregational Mission and Board Goals. 2) We pay attention to how the programs of the congregation align with our Mission and monitor congregational vitality. 3) We work with the Healthy Congregations Team to support Shared Ministry and Right Relations and jointly educate the congregation about what that means and looks like. 4) We facilitate conflict engagement and resolution between members of the congregation and the minister. 5) Each member of CoSM has a liaison relationship to an aspect of Shared Ministry including Pastoral Care, Membership, Social Justice, Family Ministries, Communication & Outreach, Tech/AV and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

CoSM meets monthly across the church year to be a resource and sounding board for Rev Cory. This year has been a process of refining the understanding of our purpose and elevating the awareness of our roles and responsibilities. Rev Cory shared his vision as well as valuable resources from the UUA that helped bring clarity to how CoSM is evolving in relation to Rev Cory's ministry and UUA recommendations.

We conducted a joint retreat with CoSM, Healthy Congregations and the Board of Trustees that focused on right relations and identifying, and dealing with, disruptive behaviors. This was a successful effort that encouraged the plan to conduct an annual joint retreat for topics appropriate to the moment.

We have participated in the identification and resolution of disruptive behavior of a member. This came with some cost as some members left the congregation in sympathy. We are acknowledging that the upset of our Capital Campaign construction has been real and celebrate that it has come to a successful conclusion. We are enthusiastic and strong in our belief that the improvements made will further our goals and align with our efforts to live into our mission. Based on what we have seen and learned from the congregation, there continues to be great enthusiasm for Rev Cory's ministry. We have discussed his demonstrated strength in providing high quality Sunday services. It is a testament to the strength of our ministry that we continued to attract new members throughout the disruption of our construction.

We are looking into the UUA program of Hope for Us that offers a cultural inventory and follow up facilitation over a period of years.

Stewardship Team

Margy Eller

Stewardship Activity

- Set up 64 pledges totaling \$310,060 (so far) for 2025-2026. Down from 96 pledges totaling \$342,497 for 2024-2025
- Used more in-service pledge messaging. Handed out pledge cards to simplify process. Suggested appropriate ranges based on ability to give and presented a range of giving from past pledges as examples.
- Publicized progress of pledge drive.
- Kept tight timeline. Emphasized the importance of growing giving and membership.



No Rose Legacy activity to report

Stewardship Chair position is open for 2025-2026.

Touch of Beauty

Sally Shroeder

Touch of Beauty is a long tradition at UUCM and it has one goal: to provide flowers -- or some other beautiful object -- to adorn a space in the front of the worship center. Any congregant may volunteer to take a Sunday, and provide the beauty! People enjoy doing this, and some see it as a ministry. New volunteers are welcome (and there are no meetings!) at any time.

In July and August, there is no specific schedule. Just bring flowers, arranged or single, and there will be a place for them.

Contact Sally Schroeder for more information.



Endowment Funds and Investments

Committee

Christopher Gilkerson

Mission and Purpose

“The Endowment Funds and Investments Committee (EFIC) is the protector and promoter of the UU Marin General Endowment Fund (GEF) and Religious Education Endowment Fund (REEF), with promotion served by having a persistent presence in congregational matters relating to the long-term financial health of our congregation. EFIC also oversees the investments for the Emergency Assistance Fund (EAF) and the Minister Housing Assistance Program (MHAP) consistent with those non-endowment funds’ objectives.

“EFIC actively monitors the investment performance of and makes investment decisions for the two endowment funds (GEF and REEF), the EAF account, and the MHAP account. EFIC advises the Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees on appropriate annual draws on the Endowment Funds, and on occasion larger proposed withdrawals, consistent with the long-term goal to preserve principal and use investment proceeds consistent with each fund's charter. Although each Endowment Fund has a different purpose, they share the objective of meeting current and future needs of the Congregation generally beyond typical operating expenses.”

Fund Balances (as of 4/30/25)

- General Endowment Fund: \$355,369. This account is held at the Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund. The balance reflects a \$150,000 withdraw in December to fund the loan to the UU Marin congregation for the building project. The loan was approved by the congregation at the 2024 annual meeting.
- Religious Education Endowment Fund: \$121,940. This account is held at the Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund. The fund account balance remained stable year-over-year even after the 4.5 percent annual draw. The annual draw will continue to fund additional paid positions for religious education teachers under the Director of Family Ministries.
- Minister Housing Assistance Program: \$143,507. This account is held at Vanguard and is invested in ESG funds. Over the past two years this fund has made two loans to Rev. Cory to help pay for security deposits and related expenses for his family’s housing here in Marin County.
- Emergency Assistance Fund: \$91,425. The account is held at Vanguard and is invested in ESG funds. The Emergency Assistance Fund Committee makes confidential determinations for grants out of this fund to help members or employees in need, while the EFIC oversees the investments.

Accomplishments and Activities this Year

- Welcomed new member Henry Kingdon to join continuing members Christopher Gilkerson (chair), Margy Eller, Moni Miller, and Judi Purdom (Treasurer).
- Continued scrutiny of the UU Common Endowment Fund (“UUCEF”) which holds our GEF and REEF assets. In recent years, UUCEF has consistently underperformed its peers in terms of investment return but receives high marks on community and values investing. The Committee has determined that the only practical alternative is to move some of the endowment fund money to Vanguard where we have the EAF and MHAP accounts. This will be a topic of ongoing conversation next year.
- Recommended to the Board of Trustees and Finance Committee maintaining the annual draw of 4.5% in 2025-26 with some caveats due to the uncertainty cause by Trump policies and the relative underperformance of the UUCEF.
- Documented the \$150,000 loan from the General Endowment to the congregation for the capital project.
- Objectives that will roll over to next year: Recruitment of a new member and creation of a succession plan for the Chair. Drafting a more formal investment policy statement. Reviving legacy Sunday with recognition of Rose Circle members plus education on estate planning gifts.



Nominating Committee

Janice Prochaska, Chair

The Nominating Committee, comprised of Janice Prochaska (Chair), Jim Finn, Craig Cohen, Jennifer Robinson, and Christine Kraemer, with Victoria Holdridge as Board Liaison, met starting in January of 2025. The committee recommended a slate of nominations to the Congregation for 2025-2026. Janice Prochaska, Jim Finn, and Craig Cohen will be rotating off the Committee starting June 30, 2025.

Social Justice Team

Victoria Holdridge, Chair

Leadership: Victoria Holdridge, Chair; Linda Haumann, Past Chair; Secretary position is vacant; Dick Park, Treasurer; David Haumann, Board Liaison.

Members: Emily Belo, Celine Berman, Carol Cavanaugh, Jean Bee Chan, Terry Chriss, Craig Cohen, Katherine DaSilva Jain, Norm Davidson, John Eller, June Fesler, Judy Finn, Lee FitzGerald, Christopher Gilkerson, Mary Gilstrap, Susan Ingersoll, Heidi Iorio-Chriss, Ali Jenkins, Margaret Johnston, Candace King, Laura Knipmeyer, Barbara Kovac, Christine Kraemer, Gretchen Leavitt, Walt Littrell, Laura Luz, Kate MacLaughlin, Susan Mathews, Yasmin Mogul, Jeremy Nelson, Theresa Novak, Ellie Packer, Trevor Palacio, Barbara and Patrick Patterson, Andrea Pino, Janice Prochaska, Judi Purdom, Joyce Rhodes, Jenny Robinson, Cindy Ruiz, Sally Schroeder, Anne Spatola, Jeanine Strobel, Joyce Tarlton, Sarah Tiederman, Kathy Tom, Naomi Tutti, Trudy Verzosa, Lauren Vreeland-Long, Karen Walter, Garen and Pamela Wilding.

Mission: To act to make a difference in our own congregation, the local community, the Bay Area, and ultimately the country. Our Social Justice program is guided by our Unitarian Universalist principles.

Victoria Holdridge is completing her second year as chair. Kate Hudson resigned from the congregation a few months ago, and we are still in need of a secretary. Linda Haumann continues to be a mentor and guide.

The Social Justice team has participated in many actions and causes in our local community. We collaborate with other community groups whose goals intersect with ours. The following highlights represent some of our actions.

The Marin Organizing Committee and Housing/Homelessness

Advocacy for Project Homekey is ongoing through our connection and membership with the Marin Organizing Committee (MOC). Several team members serve on the affordable housing team and have urged various jurisdictions to approve their housing elements through letter writing campaigns, and in-person advocacy at Board of Supervisor, Board of Education and city council meetings. The affordable housing team meets quarterly with Sarah Jones, the Director of Community Development for the County of Marin. We will continue to fight against NIMBYism in housing.

In 2024, MOC lead the charge to promote the bond measure for affordable housing in the wider Bay Area through the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority providing civic academies – teaching sessions – to inform the community. As a result, BAHA received the Heart of Marin Excellence in Innovation Award.

Lauren Vreeland-Long and Victoria Holdridge attended a three-day leadership training in San Jose by the Industrial Areas Foundation.

The Social Justice team collected and donated nine large boxes of coats, hats, gloves and other warm things to the Street Chaplaincy.

A recent member, Carol Cavanaugh, has been actively involved in volunteering at local food banks.

Marin Interfaith Council

Eight UU Marin members attended MIC's annual prayer breakfast on May 7 along with 200 members of the interfaith community.

Multicultural Engagement

UU Marin promotes Showing Up for Racial Justice in Marin via their weekly newsletter which is distributed to the team with notes about actions to be taken and events to attend.

The Social Justice team has also made connections with Pastor Floyd Thompkins from St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Marin City. Pastor Floyd hosts a program called Come to the Table to bridge gaps and foster understanding between Marin City and Marin County folks. Many UU Marin members have attended the ongoing monthly dinners and forums.

Social Justice will be partnering with the Multicultural Center of Marin in our immigration advocacy work.

Environmental Justice

We continue engaging with Katherine DaSilva Jain via her work with Elders Climate Action.

The Social Justice team has advocated for repair fairs, clothing swaps, and Resilient Neighborhoods.

Elections 2024 and Non-Partisan Postcarding

Sarah Tiederman has led an ongoing group, including UU Marin members, who continue to meet weekly to write postcards to districts around the country to encourage them to vote, register to vote and become aware of their rights as citizens to combat voter suppression. Sarah has been distributing ROV/Common Ground postcards to our UU the Vote team. She also led an Elections 2024 workshop at the retreat. Community engagement was robust with UU the Vote. Social Justice is very proud that UU Marin earned the Good Trouble Congregation designation.

UU Marin hosted a League of Women Voters forum on the California state propositions. Lauren Vreeland-Long is in leadership with the League. Lauren was instrumental in planning and running this forum which was held during construction. There were many volunteers, participants and attendees.

Sarah Tiederman, Victoria Holdridge, Anne Spatola and Lauren Vreeland-Long have joined a group called Marin Action for Protest to collaborate with local advocates around the issue of protesting.

Basket Shares and Side With Love Award

The following organizations received basket shares this past fiscal year: Reclaim Our Vote/Center for Common Ground, Temple of the Forgotten, Partner Church in Sovata, National

UU the Vote, *Come to the Table* Program, Side with Love awarded to Linda Haumann with the basket share for the UU Service Committee, Marin Interfaith Council's Network of Accompaniment Congregations, Resilient Neighborhoods, and the National Alliance for Mental Illness. The basket share for June is in the works.

Victoria Holdridge is responsible for coordinating the basket share program. Gretchen Leavitt has recently volunteered to assist with the program going forward.

Narcan/Naloxone Program

Victoria Holdridge has obtained 96 doses of Narcan from the County, along with a bright red box to dispense free doses of Narcan. Now that the construction is nearly complete, the NaloxBox will be installed outside of the entryway soon.

Meaningful Movie

Social Justice co-hosted a meaningful movie on racial justice in collaboration with the Adult Spiritual Development team.

Goals

- Recruit a secretary.
- Host a social justice fair in the courtyard to engage participation and determine which topics folks are ready to tackle with their ideas, energy, and time.
- Continue to show up as a group for civic actions, rallies, and meetings in our ongoing work with partner organizations, the MOC and the Marin Interfaith Council.
- Support various MOC teams on Affordable Housing, Renter Protections, Youth Mental Health, Services for Aging/Disabilities, and the In-Home Support Services living wage issue.
- Advocate for individual housing projects as they arise in our county, including the Northgate Town Square redevelopment.
- Recruit a volunteer or two to monitor and refill the Naloxone box.
- Continue to work on racial justice and multicultural engagement, especially regarding immigration issues.
- Reinvigorate food bank volunteerism.
- Continue the basket share program with monthly themes representing the organizations that fall within our focus areas.

Healthy Congregations Team

Rev. Theresa Novak, Chair

The Healthy Congregation Team (HCT) of UU Marin is entrusted to help the congregation practice faithful communication and creative conflict based on values of mutuality and consent, with the goal of helping the congregation live into our covenants. The HCT may offer conflict engagement services to individual members. When appropriate, the HCT may make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The HCT cannot offer mediation between family members, offer facilitated conversations to address conflict with people not bound by our covenant; nor intervene in a conflict involving staff (in which case the minister takes the lead) or the minister (in which case the Committee on Shared Ministry should be contacted).

Accomplishments of the last six months:

- Recruited two new members: Mikey Songster and Barb Patterson
- Completed work on conflict resolution and destructive behavior policies which the board of trustees approved
- Assisted in attempting to bring a member with a long history of destructive behavior into some awareness of the harm she was causing and encouraged her to change that behavior
- Made a recommendation to the board for action on that same member under disruptive behavior procedure
- Assisted several members by providing coaching on ways to approach disagreements and conflict while staying in the right relationship

We always appreciate help from other teams/committees in following and promoting the awareness of our right relations covenant:

- Respect others; their person, ideas, and spiritual/theological beliefs
- Speak the truth with love, care and sensitivity
- Listen carefully
- Respond with respect
- Act with kindness

If a conflict does arise, we covenant to follow the conflict resolution policy in effect at that time.

Current HCT members: Rev. Theresa Novak (chair), Linda Haumann, Dick Park, Mikey Songster, and Barb Patterson



Adult Spiritual Development

Janice Prochaska

Our Mission

We offer opportunities for members and friends to explore and to grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually, to learn from and to strengthen their connection with each other and the world.

Members: Janice Prochaska, Sarah Tiederman

• **Small Group Ministries**

These small groups enhance deeper connections and ask us to think and share deeply about spiritual topics:

- We have two ongoing Soul Matters Groups, which started in the fall of 2024.
- In 2025, we added Creativity Matters, a new small group with monthly themes that engage members in creative exploration with various media, photography, and more.
- We plan to offer two Soul Matters groups again in the fall of 2025, one in person, one online.

• **Classes**

- **Ongo:** compassionate communication in-person class and small groups, focusing on communication skills.
- **Meditation**
 - *Still Waters* meets weekly on Zoom on Tuesday afternoons.
 - *Spirit Journey Meditation* meets weekly on Saturday mornings in a member's home.

• **Meaningful Movies**

We offered five movies across the year with support from the Social Justice Team – one feature film, four documentaries:

- Documentaries written and directed by Rich Panter:
 - *Micro-Credit, the Business of Survival*
 - *When Rice Was King*
 - *Fathers and Sons*
 - *In Siberia*
- *Rustin* – Feature film about the life of Civil Rights activist Bayard Rustin and the 1963 March on Washington

• **Summertime Common Read:**

- The book *Compassionate Conversations* was offered in the summer for participants to read on their own and then come together to discuss in the fall.
 - Creates a shared experience and offers healthy ideas for communicating around conflict and across differences.
 - In-person and online discussions were offered about the book and how we might utilize its ideas.

- **Adult Spiritual Development Plans for 2025-2026**
 - **Classes**
 - Support and promote any class that Rev. Cory wishes to lead.
 - Consider offering other classes based on emerging needs and interests.
 - Consider offering classes available from UUA.
- **Support DEI efforts**
- **Support Social Justice efforts**
- **Work With Family Ministry to plan intergenerational events.**
- **Be open to ideas that come from the congregation.**

Worship Associates

Members: Heather Lamb, Emily Belo, Veronica Maier, Judi Purdom, Alexis Lovell, Kate MacLaughlin, Heidi Isern, Sher Sheldon, Katherine DaSilva Jain

The purpose of the Worship Associates team is to coordinate a group of worship associates who have committed to a three-year term as lay leaders, helping the minister or guest speaker lead the Sunday service and share life's journeys. We collaborate with the Minister, musicians, and other speakers to ensure an alive and dynamic worship experience 52 Sundays per year.

The Worship Associates team meets monthly to review past worship services and plan for upcoming service support. The team reviews feedback on worship services and works to address congregational needs, while aligning with the congregational mission and worship leadership from the minister. Individual worship associates serving on a given Sunday coordinate ahead of time with service participants and guest speakers to plan the service, write and deliver *Sharing Life's Journeys*, deliver routine parts of the Sunday service, and prepare and clean up worship items in Fellowship Hall.

Accomplishments of the 2024-2025 church year:

- Supported Sunday service delivery during the frequently changing conditions of the construction and renovation of our facility
- Held annual worship planning retreat in June 2024 to plan thematic worship for 2024-2025
- Supported Sunday service delivery each Sunday of the 2024-2025 church year
- Resourced and coordinated with guest speakers as needed to support ministerial leaves
- Recruited and onboarded new worship associates to replace those who are completing their three-year terms or who will be moving over the course of Spring and Summer 2025
 - Worship associates who completed their term or departed during 2024-2025: Dave Hudson, Juliet Christian-Smith
 - New, or soon to be starting worship associates: Katherine DaSilva Jain
- Will hold the 2025-2026 annual worship planning retreat in Summer 2025
 - Train new worship associates
 - Plan for delivering transcendent worship during the coming year

Membership Team

Pamela Berg, Christine Kraemer, Gretchen Leavitt

Purpose: To provide a warm welcome to visitors and newcomers, answer their questions about the congregation, follow up with them, usher them along the path to membership - if that is their desire - and to active participation in the congregation.

Growth of our Membership and Family Ministry Program in 2024-2025

This year, we have seen moderate growth in our congregation with 11 new members. We also experienced a significant increase in the number of congregants who have departed, along with three members who have passed away. The Religious Exploration program continues to thrive, with four youths bridging to adulthood in June. The Membership Team and Greeter Team have continued to welcome visitors each week and noted that some regular visitors have not yet decided to sign the book so there is certainly a future opportunity to grow and strengthen our congregation.

Roles

- Greeters, led by Christine Kraemer, welcome visitors at the front door.
- Connectors, led by Pamela Berg, assist at the welcome table and follow up with visitors after each service and via email within 48 hours.
- Ushers, led by Gretchen Leavitt, provide a second line of welcome at the door to Fellowship Hall.

Activities

- The Connector program continued throughout the year, though is currently considered in-transition due to changes within this group.
- Integration of the Connector program with the Greeter program
- Identification/review of members who have become less active or been categorized as inactive

Congregational Member Statistics

- Visitors: 67+ visitors filled out forms at the Welcome Table in the foyer between June 1, 2024 and May 30, 2025.
- New Members: 11 new members signed the book and became members of our congregation.
- Note: There are several visitors who attend UU on Sundays but have not yet decided to sign the book.
- Resignations/Inactive status: 15 members have resigned or have become Inactive.

Needs and Suggestions for the Next Six Months

- Scheduling quarterly or semi-annual new member ceremonies for Sunday worship services
- Recruiting more Connectors and Greeters/Membership Team Members (1 new person has committed to joining the team), along with training of these new team members.

Partner Church Team

Ali Jenkins, Chair

Members: Ali Jenkins, Janice Prochaska

Committee on Shared Ministry Liaison: Yasmin Mogul

Purpose: To support the connection between UU Marin and our partner church, the Unitarian Church of Szováta, Romania

Activities:

- Organized a *Basket Share* on Sunday Sept. 8, 2024; the congregation raised \$395 to support our partner church
- Planned and hosted a Transylvanian *Dinner for Eight* as an auction item
- Communicated throughout the year with Reverend Csongor Benedek of our Partner Church
- Participated in global networking calls related to creating and maintaining robust partner church relationships.
- Ali was able to attend a concert in Massachusetts of a Transylvania youth choir from the large Unitarian community in Kolosvár, Romania.
- The team is exploring the possibility of a trip to Transylvania in 2026 for interested UU Marin members.



Notes