OUR MISSION STATEMENT AND COVENANT

We are a liberal religious community seeking transformation in our hearts, our homes, our community and our world.

We come together to:

Create a spiritual community that nurtures and inspires us as we search for meaning in our lives
Reach out and welcome all who wish to be part of our community because diversity of race, culture, sexual orientation, and economic background enriches us all
Guide and challenge our children in their lifelong journey of discovery and spiritual growth
Explore religious and cultural traditions so that we may honor our differences and our common ground
Take responsibility for helping to solve the problems of our community
Promote social and economic justice, furthering our work to dismantle racism, homophobia, and all forms of oppression
Celebrate artistic creation as a spiritual element of life
Respect the beauty and mystery of nature by actively preserving our environment
Invest our personal resources to build and sustain this community of aspiration

Act together to keep this covenant alive.

We are Unitarian Universalists, building upon our heritage as advocates for the rights and dignity of all.

Photos by: David Hanley, Undoing Racism Committee, Judith Rew, and the UU FaithAction New Jersey
2017-18 ANNUAL REPORT
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OFFICE ROSTER
SEPTEMBER 2018

Office Hours: Monday—Friday, 8:00 am to 3:30 pm
67 Church Street, Montclair 07042
Telephone: 973-744-6276
Website: www.uumontclair.org
E-mail: officemgr@uumontclair.org

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Rev. Scott Sammler-Michael .................. Ext. 11
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facilities@uumontclair.org

MUSIC DIRECTOR
Markus Grae-Hauck...............................ext. 15
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ADMINISTRATOR
Danielle Carlo........................................... Ext. 12
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OFFICE & COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER
Jaclyn Puleo.............................................ext. 10
officemgr@uumontclair.org

DIRECTOR OF FAMILY MINISTRIES
Lily Rappaport..........................................ext. 16
dfm@uumontclair.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR
Karrin Perez .............................................ext. 16
readmin@uumontclair.org

BOOKKEEPER
Emilia Sadonis ...........................................ext. 19
accountant@uumontclair.org

PART TIME CUSTODIANS
Dawn Coleman, Marquis Adams, Dajuan Jenkins

COUNSELING
Leslie Trawin ..............................................973-509-9191
OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES
2018-2019

OFFICERS
(One year term; may serve three terms)

PRESIDENT: Susan Raufer (term expires 2020)
VICE-PRESIDENT: Denise Rodgers (term expires 2020)
TREASURER: Dennis Kurtti (term expires 2019)
SECRETARY: Sheila Eby (term expires 2019)

TRUSTEES-AT-LARGE
(Three year term)

Term Expires 2019
Doug Andrews
Peter Arian
Steven Mintz

Term Expires 2020
Brian Crooks
Erin Krupa
Laura Wilson

Term Expires 2021
Kitty Cullina-Bessey
Elaine Gibson
Matt Silverman
In our first year as your co-ministers, Reverend Scott and I have found a home in service to this congregation. We are grateful for the ways the UUCM leadership, staff and congregation have not only welcomed us, but encouraged us to bring our full selves to this co-ministry. Not once this year did we question the call you invited us to embrace.

Our initial conversations with the congregation’s leadership showed us how strongly the events of the interim period had encouraged the UUCM to transform its governance and ministry. Social Justice leaders were making their program more vibrant and integrated. The board was focused on strategic and organizational work to prepare the congregation for stability and growth. The Care Team was looking to develop a program that would serve the whole of the congregation. We learned that many leaders across our various programs wanted UUCM to become a truly welcoming community where newcomers would feel embraced and encouraged to deepen their engagement with the congregation. These are just a few of the hopes we heard.

UUCM did not tell us to tread softly and slowly — to avoid “rocking the boat.” They told us to listen to the deep yearning of the leadership and congregation to help the desired transformation unfold. We feel grateful and gratified that this process is already underway and that many have expressed appreciation for these efforts and changes.

Please know how hard your leaders and staff are working. Leading through change is much more challenging than leading through stasis. Still, the work of transformation can be a whole lot of fun. Honestly that’s the word I use most often to describe co-ministry to UUCM. It is great fun to worship with the congregation. Joy emerges even when we focus on the most difficult things — on the memorialization of our dear ones, on a community’s grief following even distant school shootings or on the hard work of freeing our ideas and decisions from the assumptions white culture can engender. Joy arises whenever our witness is shared, when we see a community that is present to our souls’ deep yearning. Joy is also there at our staff meetings and when groups of leaders gather to do the important work that the congregation calls us to do. What a blessing it is to co-minister to this congregation. May we continue to do necessary work together, and may you always feel comfortable reaching out to us to talk candidly about what you experience at UUCM.
**CO-MINISTER’S REPORT**

**Rev. Scott Sammler-Michael**

Reverend Anya and I began our co-ministry at UUCM August 1, 2017. Staff and lay leaders welcomed us warmly, and we worked hard to get to know the congregation’s people, systems and culture. I was interrupted in that endeavor on my ninth day at UUCM by the detachment of the retina in my right eye. It has taken five surgeries over the last year to address this issue, and though my eye is not as well sighted as it was before, it continues to improve. I am now fully functional—and grateful for the congregation’s understanding.

Reverend Anya and I have been delighted in our service here. This congregation is full of doers, people who like to have fun and do good work. Seeing how open UUCM is to experiment and transformation, Reverend Anya and I responded. In our third week we acquired a dumpster to free the facility of years of needless clutter. We transformed the worship service, bringing more music and a lively spirit of love and “yes” into our regular worship life. We began to transform how we pledge and budget, having our first-ever six-week pledge—and we were able to present a surplus budget for the 2018/2019 year. We deepened conversations already happening around financial security and stability.

We enabled donations by text. I also worked closely with Kitty Bessey and Doug Andrews to begin composing real policies and procedures in the event of a violent intruder.

The board has worked with care and energy to make our first year run well. We are blessed that they take their roles so seriously. They model how to be in creative tension and seem to bring to their work the main currency needed for congregational thriving—trust.

There were bumps in the road, for sure. We had eight staff transitions, notably our facilities manager, director of RE and Congregational Life and our longest serving custodian, Danny Guevara. We worked hard to ensure all staff members were serving us ably. During this turnover, the board and the UUCM Personnel Team were responsive and helpful. I hope it hasn’t worn them out!

We conducted two thorough, professional searches to find new staff. Karrin Perez, the RE administrator who recently joined us, is helping us function more smoothly. Our new developmental director of family ministries, Lily Rappaport, has impressed already with her calm, capable manner, bringing all she’s learned in her 23 years serving seven congregations to bear on our own vision and operations. I added director of facilities to my role as co-minister.

Now, as I begin to fill both these roles, I am excited to see how we can bring a more holistic view to all UUCM programs and gatherings. I pray that this experiment will help us better take care of our beautiful building and grounds, inspiring more goodwill, donations and renters to make this place physically and financially secure for decades to come. I am also curious to see if having a minister in the role of facilities manager will erode class assumptions among our community and beyond.

Looking ahead I feel as if, in some ways, the coming program year (2018-19) is really my first year. My energy and health kept me from doing many things I felt necessary in Year One, and I still feel like I am getting to know folks. As we deepen our service to our Mission, I pray that I, and all of us, may connect with one another more authentically. I want to honor our real capacity while still striving after our dreams and taking on big, exciting challenges.
There are two good ways to get the best picture of what the Board of Trustees has accomplished this past year. One is to look at the actions the board has taken during board meetings. The other is to see what the task forces of the board have been up to. Over the past few years, the board has taken the opportunity of the board retreat, held in early fall, to identify board priorities for the year and assign board members to task forces around each priority. This year the priorities were (1) to enhance financial stability by increasing pledges and improving our culture of stewardship (2) to pave the way for a strategic planning process to begin (3) to provide organizational structure, clarify the lines of authority, mutual expectations and deliverables with co-ministers and the Council on Ministry and (4) to create and maintain a robust communications policy and structure. In addition to board members, Rev. Anya and Rev. Scott each sit on two of the task forces.

The Financial Stability Task Force of the board soon determined that their roles were adeptly being handled by the Finance Committee and Stewardship sub-committee, which had been established in the prior congregational year. The congregation is fortunate to have a robust Finance Committee that now reports to the board on a quarterly basis.

The Strategic Planning Task Force of the board began meeting halfway through the year. They developed a framework for the strategic planning process, including beginning to identify roles for the ministers, the board and the Council on Ministries. The board selected board member Laura Wilson to chair the strategic planning process, which will begin in earnest in the 2018 - 2019 congregational year.

The Organizational Structure Task Force was one that was carried over from previous years in order to continue to identify the organizational structure of the congregation. Particularly during this first year of ministry for Rev. Scott and Rev. Anya, it was important for us to continue to clarify not only the ministers’ roles, but also the board’s and the Council on Ministries’s. During this year the board worked together with the ministers in the manner prescribed in the bylaws to re-convene the Council on Ministries (COM).

The Communications Task Force was also carried over from last year. During this year the Communications Task Force created a UUCM Communications policy for internal and external communication, which was adopted by the board. In the coming year a Communications Team will be established to work together with staff to disseminate information utilizing various media in a manner consistent with this policy.

Well into the year, the Board decided also to convene an ad hoc task force to look into ways to address security challenges that our congregation faces both on Sunday morning and during the week. We felt it important that we be proactive about identifying solutions to potential threats and implementing them wherever possible. You will be hearing more about the work of this task force during the coming year.

In addition to all of these committees and task forces, the board has relied very heavily on the expertise of the Personnel Committee (made up of members of the congregation) to handle a variety of staffing challenges over the course of the year. The Personnel Committee has advised the board and ministers, served on hiring committees and has developed position descriptions and policies for board review and approval.

And then there are the board meetings! A synopsis of recent board actions follows this report. The meetings are held every third Tuesday evening of the month and are open meetings for the majority of actions and discussions. (Confidential matters such as personnel issues are handled when necessary in executive—closed—session at the end of open meetings). Please feel free to attend. If you have something that you wish the board to address, please contact board president Sue Raufer at susanraufer@gmail.com.
BOARD ACTIONS: 2017–2018

JULY 2017
• Authorized the transfer of signatory authority from Rev. Justin’s name to Rev. Scott and Rev. Anya’s for the Ministers’ Discretionary Fund.
• Undoing Racism has proposed allowing a gubernatorial debate to take place in our sanctuary Saturday September 16. (Other locations are also being considered.) The board endorsed this proposal. Custodial fees and other charges specific for nonprofits would apply.

AUGUST 2017
• Appointed Jason Fortuna Auction Chair.
• Ratified Executive Committee vote to authorize Personnel Committee to make an offer to the top candidate for the DRE & DMCL position.
• Publicize defibrillator & review instruction.

SEPTEMBER 2017
• The board authorized that $7,138 be taken from the Reserve Fund be used to eliminate the FY 2016/2017 shortfall.
• The board authorized the transfer of the remainder of the money raised two years ago for emergency roof and chancel floor repair ($18,599) to the Reserve Fund, as recommended by the Finance Committee.
• Through the Executive Committee, the Board affirmed the convening of a branding task force by Rev. Anya.

OCTOBER 2017
• Authorized the convening of a task force led by Secretary Sheila Eby to determine how we are saving and making available the minutes and other documents the board uses.
• Created the proposed Social Justice Coalition as a standing committee of the UUCM, replacing the Peace and Justice Coalition as the body responsible for identifying and organizing social action opportunities at the congregational level and functioning according to the Social Justice Coalition Charter dated October 17, 2017. Prior to any action the coalition takes in the name of this congregation, the group will consult the Executive Committee of the UUCM.
• Appointed Steven Mintz to convene and serve as board liaison to the Installation Task Force.

NOVEMBER 2017
• It was resolved that an Investment Committee be created as more particularly described and governed as provided in the document: “Proposal to UUCM Board to create an investment Committee” (“IC Proposal,” which will posted on the Web site along with these minutes); that the board establishes as its Investment Policy the policy set forth in the IC Proposal; that the Board approves initial members of the Investment Committee to be: David Bessey, Ramona Hilgenkamp, David McGowan, Anthony Showalter; that the board authorizes the establishment of a Vanguard brokerage account for the purpose of facilitating investments of its Funds and further authorizes the members of the IC and its officers to sign all documents as are reasonably necessary within the scope of their respective authorities to facilitate creation and management of such account.
• Appointed Peter Arian to serve as board liaison to the hospitality task force reimagining coffee hour.
• Set Installation date for April 15, 2018.

DECEMBER 2017
• The board authorized that a $5,000 bequest from the late Alicia Rehl be designated to the Capital Fund, as recommended by the Finance Committee.
• The Annual Meeting date was set for May 13th (Mother’s Day) 2018, consistent with current bylaws which state that the annual meeting must take place in the month of May. (We will recommend a change to this particular bylaw at the annual meeting.)
• The board approved a regular quarterly reporting structure for the Finance Committee (January, April, July, October) and for the Personnel Committee (February, May, August, November).
JANUARY 2018

- Authorized the increased staff hours for the RE Administrator and the Office Administrator to cover duties of Director of Religious Education and Congregational Life, Chris Buja who resigned effective 12/31/2017.
- At the request of the Undoing Racism Committee the Board Executive Committee voted to approve to have UUCM listed as a supporting organization for a campaign to restore voting rights for incarcerated individuals. This action was subsequently affirmed by the whole board.

FEBRUARY 2018

- The board authorized the establishment of a Vanguard brokerage account for the purpose of facilitating investments of its Funds and further authorizes: Susan Rauper, President; Dennis Kurtti, Treasurer; and Sheila Eby, Secretary, acting individually, to sign all documents as are necessary for the creation of such account; and it is further resolved the Romona Hilgenkamp, member of the Investment Committee to act as the Society’s representative for such account as the board shall determine.
- The board directs each ministry team, committee and/or volunteer activity group to submit an annual report of its previous year’s activities, to be completed at the end of the congregational year or soon thereafter.
- Laura Wilson was appointed to chair the Strategic Planning Committee to be convened after the Installation.

MARCH 2018

- The Board formalized a process by which delegates be appointed to represent the congregation at GA. Specifically that delegates self-nominate by April 30th and that the Board decide in executive session at the May board meeting.
- The Board approved a one-word administrative change to the bylaws to be voted on at the next congregational meeting that would allow the congregational meeting to be held in “Spring” rather than “May”.
- Approved the formation of a congregational Communications Team, and the disbanding of the Financial Stability Board Task Force.

APRIL 2018


MAY 2018

- Approved the slate of six Council on Ministries candidates.
- Convened a Task Force to work on Terry Cummings’ Ordination in conjunction with the Paramus Congregation.

JUNE 2018

- Approved the slate of GA delegates.
- Approved the new COM Candidate.
- Approved the Worship Team charge.
- Approved the change of the MESH collection from a second collection the second Sunday of the month, to the collection on the fifth Sunday of the month.
- Approved the August expenditure of $2,181 for musical soloists.
- Approved the expenditure of $1,500 for a music workshop to take place in August with guest UU Minister Jason Shelton.
- Approved the payment of $1,500 to be made to Stearns Matthews for services provided for a cabaret to be made out of the proceeds of the cabaret, and a commitment to establishing a procedure going forward for such authorizations.
MUSIC DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Markus Grae-Hauck

This past year our music program benefited from the presence of our new senior co-ministers. In addition to inspiring renewed energy and excitement, they’ve brought valuable musical ideas, a commitment to collaboration and an interest in multisensory, integrated worship. In addition, Rev. Scott has played drums or guitar in several worship services.

Some highlights from this past year:

- Hosting the 5th Annual Interfaith Music Festival.
- Participating in the statewide MUUsic Fest, this time hosted by the UU Church at Washington Crossing.
- Installation service on April 15, which featured a choir of 30+ singers, soloists and nine instrumentalists, including several youth.
- ReqUUest Hour Cabaret on May 19, with many members of the congregation performing on stage in Fletcher Hall.

On April 1, our Assistant Music Director, Stearns Matthews, left UUCM to become the music director of the Morristown UU Fellowship. We are grateful for the more than 4.5 years of service he gave us. Although his departure leaves a significant gap, the fact that we have enabled him to grow from a section leader/soloist into a professional who is now capable of leading his own UU music ministry is a credit to our staff. Stearns will continue to collaborate as much as possible.

We are currently exploring options to staff our music program for greater inclusiveness and sustained growth.
We faced unexpected steam boiler repairs this winter, causing us to close the year with a $12,573 deficit – a sum we tapped the capital fund to cover. Yet there were a great many positive factors in our finances, driven largely by the Stewardship Committee, formed to oversee pledges, fundraising, the capital campaign and legacy giving. The committee’s guidance enabled us to raise our pledge income, auction revenue and member bequests. And their work with Reverend Scott, our administrator and our Personnel Committee kept our expenses in line with budget projections, even as we experienced staffing changes.

Pledges for the coming year grew and now account for 75% of our operating budget, moving us closer to our goal of 80%.

We increased funding for Full Employee Fair Compensation by $18,000, building maintenance and repair by $6,000, social outreach by $10,000, Sunday Experience (Coffee Hour & Child Care) by $2,000 and funded the Strategic Planning Committee with an initial $1,000.

Recognizing the aging of our facility, we increased our budget for maintenance and repairs.

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**Worship Committee**

**Lead:** Laura Anthony  
**Email:** laura.anthony@gmail.com

**MISSION**

The purpose of the Worship Committee is to support the ministry of worship, led by Anya and Scott. We serve as a reflective body representing the voices of the congregation and we develop the Worship Program to serve an ever-changing, growing congregation.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Worship Committee has had a really lovely and effective transitional year. Thanks to the former chair’s capable leadership, our lay and guest ministry schedule was firmly in place at the beginning of the 2017-2018 calendar, and the liturgist schedule was well maintained. The committee itself went through a big transition: we re-envisioned what the committee would be under our new senior ministers and now have a new Worship chair. In that re-envisioning, we came up with a charge for the Worship Committee, solidifying its vision, mission and responsibilities.

Next year we plan to focus on the ways pulpit guests are selected, and will further strengthen our charge with a best practices document. We are planning on developing Worship Summits, as well as having a Worship Design Workshop in October, in addition to our regularly scheduled meetings.

**UU Greeters**

**Lead:** David Hanley  
**Email:** davidhanley@verizon.net

**MISSION**

To provide an inviting, pleasant and welcoming experience for all who come through the Congregation’s doors on Sunday morning.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Besides being Greeters at both services, the committee takes up the collection and sometimes helps with the UUMESH collections. The committee also covers special events like Christmas Eve service, and this past year provided coverage for every aspect of the installation service for our two co-ministers. The Greeters’ Committee also keeps abreast of where classes are located and for which age group. We also keep information on various committees in case someone is interested in contacting one.
Music Committee

**Leads:** Charles Loflin and Judie Rinearson  
**Email:** charles@loflinspace.com, judierinearson@gmail.com

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Our music programs continue to be strong and vibrant under the leadership of Markus Grae-Hauck. The Chalice Choir, Chamber Chorus and Youth Band contribute regularly to the worship experience. Special musical events and services—including the Christmas Eve service, the Montclair Interfaith Music Festival, and the Faith Action NJ Music Festival—provide additional opportunities to highlight the gifts and talents of our congregation. This year’s All ReqUUest Music Cabaret was a success and we continue to enjoy the talented contributions of our Composer in Residence, Dr. Tom Parente. Of course, this year we were saddened to bid farewell to our Assistant Music Director Steams Matthews but celebrated the beginning of the next phase of his music ministry. As we conclude this year, the Music Committee is looking forward to the upcoming workshop with Jason Shelton in hopes of envisioning the way forward for the program to continue to shape our worship and help expand this beloved community.

Connection Cafe

**Leads:** Nicole Gray, John Lytle, Sandra Boone, Christine Grasso  
**Email:** nicolesgray@gmail.com, Lytlejv@gmail.com

**MISSION**

Our mission is to provide a space where we gather to serve one another, nourish bodies and souls, connect to congregational life and build a beloved community.

**OVERVIEW**

We are rebranding Coffee Hour as Connection Café. Our goals include communicating via Facebook and connecting our mission to the broader mission of the congregation. We have had challenges since Danny, our longtime custodian, left, taking with him his longstanding knowledge of the institution. We are fortunate that Dawn Coleman has stepped in. Our coffee urns are somewhat old, and we need to reinvigorate our recruitment process, but we are working on all of these things as we look forward to the fall.

The Flower Committee

**Lead:** Elizabeth Walsh  
**Email:** elizabethwa015@gmail.com or 201-725-9181

**MISSION**

The Flower Committee seeks to contribute to the beauty of the Sunday experience at the UU by coordinating the flowers in the sanctuary each week.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

As she has done for many years, Lori Alexander continued to coordinate the flowers for our chancel each week, providing a great opportunity to remember a birthday, anniversary, group or person that holds a special place in your heart. Acknowledgements of flowers are posted in the Sunday announcements, accompanying the order of service. Thank you, Lori. Elizabeth Walsh is now assuming this responsibility and can be reached at elizabethwa015@gmail.com or 201-725-9181.
COMMUNITY/MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Membership

Lead: Tanya Dixon  
Email: k.tanya.dixon@gmail.com

MISSION

The Membership Committee makes sure that visitors and new members are welcomed through monthly meet-and-greets with the ministers and through the Pathways to Membership classes. We are in the process of reworking a lot of what we do and setting up several subcommittees to share the wealth of our work.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We’ve established and scheduled a new Pathways to Membership format. We need to get to work on our mission, vision and values and work together to expand what we do.

UUCM Senior Lunch Bunch

Lead: Gary Sanderson  
Email: wheelmangary@gmail.com, gwsanderson@verizon.net

MISSION

The Senior Lunch Bunch meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at noon in the Peierls Room. We eat lunch together (each person brings his or her own lunch) and share conversation for an hour and a half. This gives us a chance to get to know each other better and to share ideas about topics and news that are on our minds.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

• We shared ideas on current public policy issues (especially those coming out of the White House), and discussed what we might be able to do about these issues that most affect senior citizens.
• We attended the play “The Man in Room 306” at Luna Stage in West Orange, N.J. and we took refreshments at a local restaurant afterward which gave us a chance to discuss the play.
• We moved the venue of one meeting in June to have lunch in Jennifer Bakshi’s Garden at 91 South Mountain Avenue in Montclair to enjoy the greenery and learn more about this special place.
• Several members visited an individual member of the ‘Bunch’ in rehab after that person had a serious stroke.
• We attended the Memorial Service for Mahama Glynn, a group member who had been in town for a relatively short time and had relatively few acquaintances.
• Our challenge is making our group and its program better known to members of UUCM.
COMMUNITY/MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Care Team Ministries

Lead:  Arlene Marin and Melissa Mintz  
Email: Arlenemarin@hotmail.com, whit.mintz@verizon.net

MISSION

The goal of the Care Ministries is to create a network within the congregation linking those in need and those who serve, understanding that this weaving together of our members makes us all stronger.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We set up a team leader and volunteer structure to support our mission statement, provided meals for families in the congregation, facilitated the transportation of members to and from services, sent cards of support, followed up with personal phone calls, visited members at home, in the hospital and/or nursing homes, created a resource document of outside providers of service, supported memorial service repasts, shared flowers from the Chancel and had monthly meetings of team leaders. The success of this first year was due entirely to the commitment of the team leaders and their volunteers and Rev. Anya’s guidance. Our challenges include creating greater congregational awareness of the services we offer and recruiting both new leaders and additional volunteers, especially those who can provide transportation for members outside the Montclair area.

Men’s Group

Lead: Christian Turek and Dan Silver  
Email: capturek@gmail.com, dansilver2225@gmail.com

MISSION

The UUCM Men’s Group gathers monthly to share members’ journeys as UU men through a complicated world. We discuss our experiences, challenges, aspirations and disappointments in a safe, confidential environment.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We have grown in the last year from having 10 to 15 weekly attendees in the last few years to 15 to 20 regular attendees. As a result we expanded our meeting times and now have a second meeting the fourth Monday of the month (offsite from the U). We have hosted or participated in several events at the U including coffee hours and memorial services for Ed Harris and Joe Thomasberger. Individual members have been active in personal pastoral care for ailing congregants and we have experienced the deaths of several former members. We held an annual retreat, which was a success.
COMMUNITY/MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Harvest the Power

Leads: Laura Kushner, Patty Dow
tenwil@verizon.net, pattydowma@comcast.net

Leadership Team (known as Facilitators)
David Bronstein dbbronst@gmail.com Patty Dow pattydowma@comcast.net Roz Gohagan rgohagan@gmail.com Laura Kushner tennwil@verizon.net

MISSION
Harvest the Power is an intensive seven-month lay leadership development program. Associate Minister Judy Tomlinson and congregant Courtney Allen brought it to the UUCM out of recognition of the need for lay leadership development and a shift in the culture of service from one of desperation and scarcity to one of calling. The program had been developed by the UUA as part of the Tapestry of Faith offerings. Our congregation has one of the most vital and long lived Harvest the Power programs in the denomination.

PURPOSE
Harvest the Power helps us explore and identify the purpose of our service. It helps us look at the theological underpinnings of how we make decisions. It encourages us to make sure we care for ourselves while we care for others. We learn how we can maintain our integrity, use our imaginations and creativity, listen more deeply, ask the right questions, provide both leadership and management in our leadership roles, all while cultivating concrete leadership tools and strategies and building relationships.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Approximately 120 of our members have gone through the program.
2017/18 was the eighth year of Harvest the Power at UUCM and it presented many challenges, while also yielding some great gifts.
Reverend Judy Tomlinson, the constant driving force of the program, retired from our congregation, and among the facilitators and participants there were issues of health, deaths in the family, employment, school, and UUCM staffing. Getting through this year was a challenge but the program did get through, probably our biggest accomplishment of the 2017/18 Harvest year. We persevered and ended successfully.
Among the gifts of the year were our new ministers, who brought support and enthusiasm for the program at heretofore unseen levels. Harvest was represented, visible and accessible to the congregation at large; was at the table for the first calendar meeting; was included in the Order of Service and weekly announcements.

DECLARED AREAS OF SERVICE
When participants sign on, it is made very clear that they will have the seven months of the program to discern where they are called to serve. At the last class session, they declare what area(s) of congregational life they will commit to in the following year. Declarations of the Harvest the Power Class of 2017/18 included: Aesthetics, Rainbow UU, Undoing Racism, Interfaith Hospitality Network, UU Market Place, Rainbow UU, Future Board Member, Religious Education Committee Chair, General Assembly, MESH Cafe, Harvest the Power Leadership Team, After School Tutoring Program, Religious Education Teacher’s Aide, Religious Education Committee Youth Member, Board of Trustees Youth Member, Young Adult Group for 20-30 something year olds, and Harvest the Power Leadership Team Leader and Coordinator.
Small Group Ministries/Covenant Groups

Lead: Claudia Sanders
Email: claudiasanders18@gmail.com

MISSION

The purpose of the Covenant Group Ministry is to develop and support a ministry of small groups, accessible to the whole congregation, that enable experiences of intimacy and service. In addition to Positive Place and the Poetry Group mentioned elsewhere in this book, additional covenant groups include the Women’s March Covenant, the Short Fiction Reading Covenant Group, the Food Diplomacy Covenant Group and Art and Soul.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Not only was this our first year with Reverend Anya guiding and supporting the covenant groups, but we had eight new leaders. Some of them were members of existing groups, while others were completely new to their organization. We revised the training manual and held two orientations for new leaders. The challenge was in getting the new group, with new leadership, to reach a level of cohesiveness. This was accomplished, and all but one leader has agreed to lead his or her group again next year. A major accomplishment was in the group Reverend Anya formed, and co-led, for new members. It was a success and there are plans for another one to start in October, using leaders she recruited from the New Member Group.

THE GROUPS:

NEW MEMBER COVENANT GROUPS
The first New Member Covenant group began in the fall of 2017 under the leadership of Rev. Anya and two relatively new members, Kazys Varnelis and Beth McGrain. Two more groups are slated to begin in the 2018-19 congregational year.

This six session adventure helps new members develop community and learn about our congregation and about one another.

Contact: RevAnya@uumontclair.org

ART AND SOUL
Third Thursdays, 7:30pm
Our group creates art while making connections.

Contact: Nick Lewis ozballnick@gmail.com

FOOD DIPLOMACY
Second Sundays, 6pm
Our group explores the world though our tastebuds as we build community.

Contact: Nelia Sellers NELIA@jabramsonlaw.com

OUR POSITIVE PLACE
First Sundays, 12:30pm
Our group supports one another as we and our families journey with mental illness.

Contact: Carol McGough carolpeckldtc@yahoo.com

POETRY
Fourth Sundays, 7pm
Our group explores our favorite poetry as we build connections.

Contact: Ginny Crooks ginny.loggins@gmail.com

SHORT FICTION
Fourth Tuesdays, 1:30pm
Our group reads short fiction as we build community.

Contact: Dorothy Sommers, (201) 602-1027

WOMEN’S MARCH
First Wednesdays, 7:30pm
Our group journeys as activists as we develop connections.

Contact: Sarah Scalet sarah@scalet.me
Religious Education Committee

Lead:  Shannon Gattens  
Email:  shannongattens1@gmail.com

MISSION

The purpose of the Religious Education Program is to guide our children and youth in:

- Nurturing the individual spirit within our loving community
- Understanding that we are part of Unitarian Universalist heritage, past, present and future
- Cultivating curiosity about, appreciation for, and engagement with, all faith traditions
- Developing a lifelong practice of service
- Encouraging mindfulness and a sense of wonder

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The major accomplishment is that we were able to run an RE program at all this year. With several departures, some expected and some not, we had to work our way through a lot of disruption. Since then we have developed a fairly organized online document repository, we have a solid RE committee, committed ministers and a new developmental director of family ministries.

Mortenson Scholarship

Lead:  Nicole Rinklin  
Email:  nrinklin@gmail.com

MISSION

Every year we support at least one excellent student among our young congregants moving on to college.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Mortenson Scholarship Fund was established many years ago by Dorothy Mortenson, a long-time and now deceased member of the congregation. Dorothy funded the initial endowment and the interest is given out in the form of a yearly scholarship to one or more of our young people for continuing their education past high school. Applicants historically have submitted a letter about themselves and their intended studies from which the committee makes a selection. The scholarship is awarded in May at our annual meeting.
Social Justice Coalition

 Leads: Teresa DeSousa, Johanna Foster, Jerry Fried
 Email: tdesousa@gmx.com, johanna.e.foster@gmail.com, jerryfriedhome@gmail.com

MISSION

The charge of the Social Justice Coalition (SJC), formed this past year, is to strategically build and use our UU congregational power to confront systemic inequalities. We are fundamentally guided by our reverence for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part, and our commitment to promote and protect the inherent worth and dignity of all people and our planet Earth.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The SJC’s charter was approved by the Board of Trustees at their September 2017 meeting. We spent the rest of 2017 structuring a listening campaign, and from January through March 2018 the Coordinating Team spoke to nearly 130 members and friends of the congregation to identify the social justice issue of greatest concern to them. We found that (1) racial inequality (2) economic inequality and (3) threats to democracy were the problems most frequently raised.

Given these findings, the SJC Coordinating Team proposed at the Annual Meeting that the UUCM devote our social justice energies during the 2018-2019 congregational year as an institutional partner in the newly launched New Jersey Prophetic Agenda. That organization is the multiracial and cross-class coalition of multi-faith and secular organizations that is helping to coordinate the national Poor People’s Campaign in our state. By way of background, the original Poor People’s Campaign was launched by Dr. King just before his assassination to confront the fundamental intersections of racism, classism and militarism.
Earth Justice Team

Lead: Silke Springorum
Email: silkespr7@gmail.com

MISSION

The Earth Justice Team serves as a catalyst in translating our vision and UU principles into our congregation and all its operations including: worship and celebration, religious education, social justice activities, sustainable living, communication within our congregation and with the outside world and the cultivation of community connections to these ends.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Earth Justice Team has been an active participant in the formation of the Social Justice Coalition. In addition we offered two Green Vespers and co-facilitated a Justice Sunday with Rev. Anya. A retreat rounded the year out with planning for the coming congregational year.
Undoing Racism Committee

Lead: Jane Gaertner
Email: gaertnerjane@comcast.net, uucmurc@gmail.com

MISSION

The Undoing Racism Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Montclair comes together to sensitize the community to the ongoing systemic oppression of people of color. We organize to promote equal justice, opportunity and dignity for all people. We undo racism by changing hearts and minds.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

With the Anti-Racist Alliance of North Jersey and the Africana Institute of Essex County College, we co-sponsored a Town Hall on Racial Justice with Gubernatorial Candidates on September 16, 2018. Approximately 125 persons attended along with multiple cosponsors: POP, NAACP, West Orange HRC, and a few others.

On Oct 19 about 20 people attended the rally and march co-sponsored with UU FaithAction New Jersey, to close Jamesburg and Hayes “prisons.” We were proud to join Youth Justice New Jersey in efforts to change the system and create effective juvenile justice reform. Area ministers, Solidarity Singers, NAACP & NOW leaders attended. Following the march, 55 persons attended a presentation by NJ Institute for Social Justice field organizer James Williams IV. He delivered recently-released news: NJ became #1 in the U.S. for racial disparity in our prison population (adult and juvenile). One example: “Even though Black and white kids commit most offenses at similar rates, a Black child is 30 times more likely to be incarcerated than a white child.”

January 14 saw the UUCM “Second Sunday social justice action.” It was a letter writing campaign to N.J. legislators urging them to restore voting rights to people with criminal convictions.

We also sponsored coffee hour Jan 14th.

On March 18 we honored Women’s History Month with Dr. Janice Johnson Dias. UUCM members Ami Brabson, Rae Dumont, and Kim McLennon performed, and 100 persons attended.

On May 22 31 UUCM members, community members and teachers heard from Dr. Stephanie James Harris, Executive Director of the New Jersey Amistad Commission about its mandate and ways which we can promote its work. Follow-up meetings are planned for the fall.

On June 2 approximately 25 URC and UUCM members marched in the Montclair Heritage Foundation’s African-American Heritage Parade. Our presence supports the African-American community in Montclair and promotes UUCM and URC’s work in the community.
**SOCIAL JUSTICE**

**Interfaith Hospitality Network**

**Lead:** Susan Krcmar  
**Email:** zuzana11@optonline.net

**MISSION**

We provide services to homeless families in Essex County, supplying homemade meals, supervising children’s activities and providing overnight supervision and breakfast coordination at First Congregational Church in Montclair.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Last year was very good. New volunteers who signed up in the fall prepared entrees and the rest was easy. The number of guests varied; the most we had was 16. Occasionally we helped out other congregations if there was an urgent need. Our guests were very nice. It was a good experience for all.

**Rainbow UU**

**Lead:** Maria Towe and Becca Seibert  
**Email:** maria.towe@gmail.com, beccaseibert@gmail.com

**MISSION**

The Rainbow UU at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Montclair is an open and affirming group committed to the promotion of a positive image for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersexed and Questioning (LGBTIQ) community and a supportive environment for LGBTIQ individuals, friends and family.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

We focused on rebuilding and growing the membership of the Rainbow UU after several years of inactivity. Our survey of the congregation sought how we could best meet the needs of the congregation. We hosted two events—a game night for LGBTIQ members and families and an event about raising a transgender child that was open to members and the community as well. The Rainbow UU also hosted the service on June 25th.

Our biggest challenge is membership. The number of active members is growing but small, so much of the work falls on the shoulders of a few members. We would like to see more members of the congregation support and become active in the Rainbow UU. Heterosexual people and men and women whose identity is closely aligned with their birth gender would be especially welcome.
MISSION
Our mission of the MESH Cafe at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Montclair is to provide a full-service, sit-down meal in a warm, dignified and welcoming environment to all who enter. Hosting this is in keeping with the first UU principal to honor the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
We hosted an average of 55 guests every Wednesday night from September through June, providing live music and a delicious meal served with a big dollop of kindness; provided volunteer opportunities and another big dollop of kindness to UUers and community members; supported the development of an improved relationship with the MESH-Parent organization; regularly provided high quality clothing to our guests; regularly acknowledged the beauty and magic of the weekly meal service; slightly increased Connection hour presence: welcomed outside groups as volunteers, thereby increasing our diversity of thought and background; welcomed funding from some new individual donors, so we continue to be a valued destination for financial support. As part of a transition process, we provided leadership opportunities to volunteers and respected our three primary directives: that it never ever costs money to volunteer, that all money collected is used to buy food for guests, and that among “many voices, all are equal.” We have challenges, too, including bringing in UU groups and increasing the number of outside groups, improving connection hour presence—and getting more cooks!
SOCIAL JUSTICE

After-School Program

Lead: Pete Williams  
Email: 973-744-2065

MISSION

Provide additional instruction to children referred by their teachers for improvement in reading and math in a caring and supportive environment.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The After School Program provides tutoring services for children in grades three through five, referred by their teachers for assistance in reading and mathematics. In operation since 2004, the program has already served well over 100 students from our neighbor, the Hillside School in Montclair, with one-to-one assistance. UUCM provides the space, heat, light, custodial costs, and materials for reading and math instruction. We have several thousand books available for reading instruction and materials and manipulatives for math instruction. The program also has two computers that students can access. Results from standardized tests administered by the Montclair School District continue to show that the children we serve are making meaningful progress.

The program operates on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Welcomed by program coordinator Pete Williams, children arrive at 3:45. Volunteer tutors arrive at 4 PM and work with children until 6 PM when they are picked up by parents or guardians. The UUCM incurs no administrative costs, and all teaching is provided by adult volunteers.

Adult volunteers do not need any special background in education or teaching. Pete and current volunteers will train those who have an interest in the education of the children and can make a time commitment of at least one school year, coming either Monday or Wednesday, or both. While we have the space and the materials, we need more tutors. The After School Program currently has about six tutors, but we also have a waiting list of students every year. In order to serve them, we need more volunteers. To get your questions answered and consider volunteering, please call Pete Williams at 973-744-2065. This is a direct service opportunity in which we get to see, first hand, the results of our work.

Partner Church

Lead: Bruce Anderson  
Email: anderson49@verizon.net

MISSION

To be part of a network of more than 150 other UU congregations that coordinates programs in the United States and Canada. Montclair has a partner church program with the Unitarian Church of Szentabraham (Avramesti) in Transylvania.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Sue Raufer, our board president, this year visited our partner church in Transylvania.
Sharing Our Riches

Lead: Patrick Preblick
Email: ppreblick@yahoo.com

MISSION

Called to sustain the community beyond our walls, Sharing our Riches promotes financial contributions to other nonprofit organizations, helping them to achieve goals that are consistent with our UU values. SOR receives recommendations for worthy causes, reviews the potential recipients and then selects several throughout the year.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During the last twelve months, a portion of our weekly collection was given to the following groups:

- UUA Hurricane Relief Fund, September, October, and November 2017 contributions
- Montclair Sanctuary Alliance, December 2017 and January 2018 contributions
- Interfaith Hospitality Network of Essex County, February and March 2018 contributions
- Good Success Academies, April and May 2018 contributions
- WE Schools, June, July, and August 2018 contributions
- Honduran School of Nursing, will receive September and October 2018 contributions

During the last year, the committee has focused our giving to smaller groups for whom our contributions would have greater impact and, when possible, groups that are local to our area. Most of our recommendations come from members of the congregation. Our children in the fourth/fifth grade RE class recommended the WE Schools. The SOR committee has developed a form, now posted to the UUCM website—scroll down to "Serving"—that you can use to suggest a recipient.

The budget for the 2018-2019 congregational year provides for 25% of our unrestricted plate collections to be given away. Information about selected recipients is provided in written communications and Sunday announcements. Committee members Patrick Preblick, Myrna Brome and Ellen Fenster-Kuehl are also available for questions or help in making recommendations. Checks may also be written to UUCM directing the full amount to the SOR charity on the memo line.

Most of the work of the SOR committee is completed through telephone calls, emails, and time spent in researching some of the suggested recipients. We are eager to welcome new members. SOR is a way to participate in the work of UUCM without an extensive time commitment.
Aesthetics Committee

**Leads:** Karen Nielsen-Fried and David Lewis  
**Email:** karen.n.fried@gmail.com

**MISSION**
We address aesthetic needs of the physical plant of UUCM. In collaboration with the Board of Trustees and pertinent parties, we create aesthetic plans for the improvement and beautification and new usage of spaces within our facility.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**
We have assessed the look and use of the bulletin boards on the walls leading into Fletcher Hall. These had been designed and installed at the same time the major renovation and redesign of the sanctuary happened several years ago. We will be making some color changes to the bulletin boards (as they have a sort of tired look to them all these years later) as well as redesigning the way information will be displayed on them.

We have chosen new sustainable wood flooring for the Peierls Room to replace the stained and worn carpeting. We also have chosen colors for the walls and made plans for new bulletin boards and white boards to be installed. Hopefully these changes will all be implemented by September when we start the new church year. We have also considered a more attractive storage system for the chairs in the Peierls room as well as new shades/blinds.

We have suggested wall colors for the main office walls, and will be considering new shades/blinds as well.

In collaboration with the Art&Soul covenant group, a project addressing the exterior rear walls of our building (in the area facing the Dunkin’ Donuts parking lot) and the graffiti problems that we encounter back there has been discussed. It may involve painted murals and tile mosaics, both to beautify the area as well as to deter vandalism.
Buildings and Grounds

Leads:  Ed Martoglio and John Carlton
Email:  emartoglio@rpmdev.com, carltondn@verizon.net

MISSION
To oversee the buildings and grounds of the UUCM

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
This past year we did some kitchen improvements (new sink, painting and countertop), repaired and painted the side fascia, repaired the rear roof, repaired the front retaining wall, repaired the front walkway, repaired the side parapet and made several repairs to the boiler.

The major challenge is a very limited budget, which prevents us from implementing needed capital improvements. The most significant of these is the replacement of the slate roof. Approximately half of this has been completed and the remaining roof is past its useful life. Additionally the heating and cooling system are aging and in need of significant upgrades.

Memorial Garden

Leads:  Stephen Schoenwiesner
Email:  stevekeeper@ymail.com

MISSION
Provide a living memorial to those who have passed on and a source of quiet comfort to those who remain.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS
On the south side of the UUCM grounds, the Memorial Garden is a beautifully landscaped pocket of greenery dedicated to the interment of ashes of past and present members and associates of our congregation. It is more than a resting place for the remains of individuals or families. The individual's name, along with the year of birth and death, is engraved on a plate that is displayed in the Narthex. An application fee that covers maintenance of the grounds and garden is $150 for an individual and $250 for a couple.
Annual Pledge Team

Lead: Jerry Fried  
(new Chairs for 2018-19: Lauren Carlton and Myrna Brome)

Email: laurenfcarlton@gmail.com

MISSION

Under the guidance of the Stewardship Committee, the Annual Pledge Team plans, coordinates and executes each year’s pledge drive, working to engage each member and friend of the congregation in joyfully making an annual pledge to fund staff salaries, utility costs and other operating expenses, while reserving funds for emergencies and growing the budget to expand the congregation’s mission and member growth.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This year’s drive was successful. A few outstanding pledges are expected to bring our total to about $525,000, our largest ever. We accomplished this through a well-received video revealing members’ personal feelings for the UUCM and by talking to people at a variety of committee and group meetings. Challenges include organizing a strong “one-on-one” campaign, which we expect to do this year, individually approaching members we would otherwise miss.

Planned Giving Committee

Lead: Judy Lutzy

Email: jflutzy@gmail.com

MISSION STATEMENT

Insuring the Financial Strength of our congregation today and tomorrow.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We created a mission statement and brochure, announced the campaign, held an estate-planning seminar and collected and submitted paperwork for the Legacy Challenge Campaign of the UUA. Our challenge going forward is to find out who in the congregation has already left a bequest and to encourage future planned giving through testimonials and seminars.

UU Marketplace

Lead: Shirley Matthews & Tanya Dixon

Email: drshirleymatthewd@icloud.com

MISSION STATEMENT

To earn money for the congregation through the sale of grocery gift cards and other small items, while also providing an opportunity for the congregation’s artists and artisans to sell their work.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We recruited additional committee members, and that makes participation a lot easier. We purchased a safe, which seems to prevent cards from being lost or stolen, and a scanner to make entering the card codes easier. We changed the way artists pay to participate. Instead of a percentage of sales, artists now pay a flat fee. We’re looking for new artists!
Finance Committee

Chair: David Bessey, Chris Corbett
Email: kittycb@aol.com

MISSION
To provide oversight of financial matters and investments for the UUCM

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

It was a busy year. We received regular budget updates from Treasurer Dennis Kurtti and consulted with him on budgetary recommendations for the board. We evaluated and prioritized spending initiatives for the 2018/19 budget; these initiatives included fair compensation for UUCM staff, additional spending on buildings and grounds, additional funding for UU Faith Action, and supplemental funding for RE, as well as others. We worked with Dennis to prepare the final budget, which was presented to the board and the congregation.

We recommended that the board create an investment committee to oversee activity in the various UUCM endowment funds, and this recommendation was accepted. The Investment Committee regularly evaluated the investment performance of the UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF), in which our funds are invested. The Investment Committee decided to keep the funds in the UUCEF for now, while monitoring other investment alternatives. We also opened a Vanguard Brokerage account for the congregation to accept gifts of securities. An anonymous gift of $100,000 of income producing securities was accepted into this account.

A Planned Giving initiative was started by Judy Lutzy to educate congregants about ways that they could make gifts or bequests to the endowment funds. A brochure was created and several information sessions held. The Shelter Rock UU congregation will match verified bequests, and Judy is collecting information on existing bequests in congregants' wills to be presented to Shelter Rock.

We provided counsel and feedback to John Carlton of the Buildings and Grounds Committee on various proposals to improve wheelchair access to Fletcher Hall. John drew up plans for a new ramp from the sanctuary for presentation to the board.

Additional efforts of the committee included working with the Pledge Committee on its drive, evaluating new energy suppliers (including green energy alternatives) for the upcoming renewal of our electric energy contract and many other finance- and budget-related matters.
Nominating and Leadership Development Committee

Lead: Judith Rew
Email: jrew7@comcast.net

MISSION

The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee (NLDC) identifies and recruits nominees for all elected positions at the UUCM, which currently includes the Board of Trustees including the Executive Committee and the NLDC itself. Both the Board and NLDC members fill three-year terms, so in a normal year (without resignations in the middle of a term) the NLDC nominates three new people for each.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The NLDC has always strived for diversity on the Board and NLDC (age, race, skills, time spent at the UUCM, gender diversity, etc.), but this past year we challenged ourselves to come up with an even more open, welcoming and inclusive process for identifying candidates. Up until now, the six members of the committee created a list of candidates based on knowledge of the congregation and/or recommendations from the board and ministers, and there was no real way for individuals who feel drawn to this level of leadership to suggest themselves as candidates (though nominations from the floor must be asked for at the annual meeting according to our bylaws). We recognize the limitations of this method and have begun steps toward a stronger process, including:

- a "gifts and talents survey," which will more strongly encourage all new members and eventually everyone to fill out
- more regular communication with the congregation via the Gazette, Announcements, and leadership newsletter
- closer communication with the Harvest the Power class and its graduate
- closer communication with the Membership Committee so we are aware recent members (although we all agree that new members should be given time to experience the UUCM as a spiritual community before diving into committee work)

We will also explore with the Ministers the possibility of helping to identify potential leaders for other important, but nonelected, committees.

Personnel Committee

Lead: Teresa DeSousa, David Hanley and Denise Rogers
Email: tdesousa@gmx.com, davidhanley@verizon.net, dvrod@hotmail.com

The role of the Personnel Committee is to help the board create policies regarding employees and handle grievances and other matters the board must act on. Members of the UUCM personnel committee are: Teresa DeSousa, David Hanley and Denise Rodgers. This year the committee has been revising the Employee Handbook, creating policies on issues like compensation and benefits, evaluations, supervision, nondiscrimination, harassment, grievances and whistleblower protections.