



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Fellowship
OF HUNTINGTON

ANNUAL REPORT

CONGREGATION YEAR 2025 - 2026

June 4, 2026

President of the Board of Trustees

The role of the Board of Trustees (BOT) in the life of the UUFH is to determine matters of policy and management, serving as co-spiritual directors with the minister. In fact, our bylaws list 15 duties, plus the requirement to meet at least monthly. Presidents must also convene a monthly executive committee meeting and also meet monthly with the minister. But in reality, being a BOT member—and president—is so much more than that. It's a spiritual practice that involves working in covenant with nine dedicated volunteers and the minister, all of whom come together for the love of the Fellowship and what it means to each of us individually and as a group. That can mean long-ish Zoom meetings and numerous emails and texts to discuss and vote on agenda items. It also means laughter, camaraderie, compassion, commitment, and the certainty that whatever we do is with the congregation in mind. Our work is made easier because of the contributions of so many other volunteers and staff on whom we depend to help make the Fellowship run. So while this annual report is just a slice of what was accomplished this fiscal year, it also highlights the many ways we've come together to care for our congregation.

The Board welcomed Rev. Israel Buffardi in August for a two-year ministry. We are grateful for the thoughtful way he has approached numerous issues, like reimagining how we might organize our Religious Education program and participating in social justice issues with the local clergy community. He's also led compelling services that encourage us to both value what we hold dear about the Fellowship and Unitarian Universalism and also to explore new ways to worship together. As year two unfolds, the Board will be in conversation with him about what comes next. The Unitarian Universalist Association will offer us guidelines in early winter about expanding our relationship beyond the two-year agreement. Meanwhile, we appreciate the partnership with Israel that we have built so far.

In October, we had a productive in-person retreat led for the second year by Erin Hilgart. It was good to share how far we had come with goals set the year before. And she observed that we're a strong congregation that has proven despite a somewhat unpredictable several years in terms of having a settled minister, that we have a strong infrastructure. We talked about the "now what" and how we would work together with Rev. Israel. Among our goals was to continue to

improve communication with the congregation and to make our governance model work for us, despite its imperfection.

We've involved the congregation in both goals. For instance, we held a second annual volunteer fair on September 28 to publicize and promote participation in the Fellowship's various committees and subcommittees. That same month we made the results of an evaluation survey of committee and subcommittee chairs about the Hotchkiss Model of governance available to the congregation. Overall, the survey data showed that the governance model has begun to achieve its core structural objectives while still showing clear challenges, like organizational clarity, committee empowerment, communication gaps, technical barriers, and member education on the overall structure.

And so the Board held two chair meetings, one on November 16 and another on February 8. At these meetings volunteers shared their need for additional communication with each other and the Board, as well as exchanged ideas. We all agreed that more meetings are needed, but typically in the life of busy volunteers, the calendar filled quickly, so this will be an ongoing goal for the new fiscal year. As a Board, we have learned that the model has its limitations since there are times when the governance and ministry sides cannot work separately regardless of what the chart indicates. So while we continue to focus on how the Hotchkiss model of governance should work for us—not the other way around—we're not yet ready to formalize our governance model into the bylaws. What will help is for committees to prioritize updating their charters each year and the new fiscal year is a good time to do so if your committee hasn't already. If you have any questions, according to our model, the governance committees can reach out to the past president and the ministry committees can talk to the minister.

We also held an Religious Education forum with Israel during which you were able to tell us what you value about our program and the ideas you're open to trying. Since we were told by the Religious Education Committee that childcare on Sundays is a priority, the BOT made sure it was a line item for the upcoming fiscal year. The conversation about our program will be ongoing, but having a chance to share what matters to all of us is a key step.

During a May budget forum treasurer Allyson Barish skillfully broke down the line items so that they were easy to understand and clearly showed how we're living our values.

And those were just the group conversations we had after services on select Sundays.

Then there's the other work we do. While the BOT is tasked with looking at the big picture of our congregation in conjunction with Israel, we've learned that another unspoken undertaking is organization—and that both goals work hand-in-hand. The institutional memory of individual BOT members is valuable, but it only goes so far as we can rely on that memory. Therefore, a main ambition this year, which will continue, has been to tackle tasks that have carried over from previous years, as well as to ensure that documents like leases are up-to-date and accessible.

Organization means an ongoing commitment to working on updating our bylaws to make them align with our governance structure, which began last fiscal year. Past president Laura Otton held a bylaws forum in April to provide members with the information they need to vote on Article IV changes at the annual meeting on June 7. The bylaws team will continue to address the remaining bylaws, chipping away at sections each year. They welcome additional participation.

Likewise, we've been updating our "Policies & Procedures" manual. It's a work in progress because the existing manual contained numerous items that were outdated or were actually bylaws. Some were meant for the Personnel manual, which has also been updated to define that committee's role and additional provisions. Significant time also went into revising our "Buildings Use Policy Procedures" to make it more clear cut for committees to respond to the needs of the larger community while living our UU values and also considering our revenue.

If you sense a BOT theme, 2025-'26 has been about clarity for existing documents and accessibility to ensure that future leaders have the tools they need to remain on top of key business decisions.

The Board also advised the Stewardship Committee for their Annual Giving campaign by providing key highlights from UUFH in 2025. Israel also sent a letter for the pledge packets. We are grateful to the committee who worked all year for their successful campaign—and to all of you for your pledges.

Because we also rely on rental income from our cottage and main building apartments and classrooms, we're happy that efforts made last year mean we have a full house. We also ensured that all our leases contain up-to-date language and match our fiscal year in part so make it easier for future Board volunteers. And we took the opportunity to guarantee our rates are at or close to market value, thereby adding to our annual revenue.

Our work this year has also been about the future. That includes the May release of the UUFH Strategic Plan 2026-2030, "Gather the Spirit, Harvest the Power: Working Together to Grow Our Future," report, which we hope is the start of a congregation-wide conversation. The 20-page report is available on our website, but that's just a placeholder. The next steps will come from conversations with you. We thank the Strategic Planning Committee—Kristina Heinemann, Valerie Scopaz and Steve Burby—for their two-year leadership of this project.

Among the business-related tasks and conversations we'll continue into the new fiscal year are issues of accessibility in our main hall, how we maintain our beautiful grounds, and ongoing safety and security considerations.

We also had two major updates this year. We upgraded our old database program, ICON, to a state-of-the-art Fellowship Management System, Realm—a process that began last summer and is now fully implemented. Realm is used to manage our member database, streamline member and team communications, keep track of contributions and pledges, facilitate electronic contributions and manage our event calendar. And in December the audio-visual needs in our sound room were renovated to include technology that keeps pace with what Rev. Israel and the Worship Committee want to achieve at services and events. The Board had set aside funds and over five days our new system was finally installed, improving sound and video capabilities with advanced technology. If you're interested in learning how to volunteer, contact chair Debbie Hocevar.

Nothing we accomplished as a congregation this year was without the help of many members. Though we've tried to thank everyone, we've surely missed many. The Board implemented a "Board thank you of the month" in every Flash starting in July 2025. These were special recognitions for work that was done without fanfare but had major impact. These included: the Safety Team for their General Assembly webinar in July; Jason D'Orazio for

helping to align our building with insurance needs in August; the Worship Committee in September for the 10 summer Sunday services they led; the Hospitality crew in October for always making sure we have coffee and more on Sundays; the Pumpkin Queens in November for their month-long successful leadership of the Pumpkin Patch fundraiser; the Audio/Visual Team in December for their leadership in getting our new system; the volunteers who created a new meeting space in the former minister's office in January; the counters in February for their weekly work; in March, Brigitte Zimmer for preparing the candles we use each Sunday; the Realm Team for their monthslong implementation in April; and in May, the Annual Giving Team for their successful campaign. We have one more for June.

For more information about all that the Board has worked on this year, you can access the monthly minutes under Members' Corner on our website—or talk to me or one of my fellow Board members: Laura Otton, Jim Ammerman, Allyson Barish, Susan Peters, Connie Rinaldi, Jenna Kern-Rugile, Jon Nielsen and Melissa Dinsman. The Board also appreciates that Debbie Hocevar was our scribe all year.

The efforts of the Board are ongoing, no matter how many items we check off the agenda since there will always be more added. That's the life of a vibrant community in an ever-changing world. But I'm proud of how much we accomplished together this fiscal year. Working with my fellow Board members and Rev. Israel has been a pleasure.

As I come to the end of my term as Board president, I want to thank this congregation, which has always given me so much that it is my honor to be able to give back. It never feels like work to do the business of this Fellowship because of the support you have always given me.

With love and appreciation,

Liza Burby, President UUFH Board of Trustees

Rev. Israel Buffardi Minister Report

Annual Report Letter June 2026

Friends,

What I have found here is a fellowship with care, humor, wisdom, and moral courage. People here want community that means something. You want a place where questions are welcome, where children are known, where grief and joy can both be spoken, where justice matters, and where no one has to check their full humanity at the door. In a time when public life is so often shaped by fear, cruelty, misinformation, and the strain on democratic life, a progressive and compassionate community like this is not ornamental. It is critical.

Worship naturally has been one of the most visible parts of this first year. Across the months, we worked to build a clear arc so Sunday services felt less like separate events and more like an ongoing conversation about how to live. The themes moved through belonging, compassion, gratitude, truth-telling, moral vision, love, vulnerability, courage, and perspective. Some services were familiar in shape; some asked the congregation to participate in new ways. The aim has been worship that feels spiritually grounded, emotionally honest, and connected to actual life: family, fear, memory, values, embodiment, beauty, grief, and courage.

Religious exploration and faith formation have also started to come into clearer focus. We began asking more direct questions about what we are offering children, youth, adults, and families and what makes participation possible. Those conversations have pointed us beyond curriculum alone. The work ahead also involves rhythm, accessibility, childcare, communication, volunteer support, and shared ownership. I am grateful for the honesty of the conversations so far, and for the willingness to experiment carefully rather than pretend one perfect answer is waiting on a shelf somewhere.

Belonging has been another important thread. UUFH has a great deal to offer, and part of the work ahead is helping people see it and find their way into it. That includes newcomer pathways, membership rhythms, clearer communication, and materials now in development that will help people understand congregational life without already knowing the inside map. People here care deeply about welcome, and we are learning how to make that welcome easier to experience and easier to enter.

Justice and public presence remain central to who UUFH is. This congregation is known in the wider community for showing up, and I have seen that commitment again and again: through interfaith relationships, anti-bias work, reproductive justice, LGBTQ+ visibility, environmental stewardship, racial and immigrant justice, and members serving in many public and community-

facing roles. The work is strongest when it grows from relationship, when it is visible without becoming performative, and when it is grounded enough to last.

A great deal of ministry this year has also happened in less public ways: pastoral conversations, memorial services, follow-up, support for staff and lay leaders, planning, coordination, and the practical work of reducing friction so people can participate more fully. Easy to summarize.

Complicated to do. Congregational life becomes more humane when the systems underneath it begin to reflect the values spoken aloud on Sunday morning.

What I carry from this first year is a clearer sense of the work ahead. Worship has strong throughlines to keep weaving. RE and faith formation are being imagined with honesty. Belonging is becoming more visible and intentional. Justice work continues to ask for courage, coordination, and care. And underneath all of it is the same question: how do we build a congregation that helps people live with more depth, courage, connection, and love?

I am grateful for the welcome you have extended in this first year and for the many ways you continue to show up with care, commitment, humor, wisdom, and heart. I am glad to be here, and glad to keep building with you.

With gratitude, Rev. Israel Buffardi



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
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Ministry

Worship Committee

Chairperson: Karen Mazzotta/Jim Monnier

Members/Volunteers:

Sound Room: Debbie Hocevar; Dave Yens

Worship Associates: Lee Kurfist; Maria Nielsen; Jennifer Thieke; Karen Finkenberg; Liza Burby; Martha Kitteridge; Trudy Delaney; Graham Otton, Karen Mazzotta, Kristina Heinemann, Allyson Barish

Hospitality/Kitchen: Kim Kayal, Judy Cartwright, Bill Hawkins, Kris Weissleder, Nina Altarac, Carla Carlyon,

Potlucks: Sharon Garfunkel (lead)

Ushers: Nancy Wilcow, Jennifer Hildreth, Bridgette Zimmer (candle maintenance)

Chancel Decorations: Marisa Comple (lead), Beth Ezrin, Judy Gardner

Accomplishments this year:

- In December, 2025, we installed a new sound system and a new computer/camera system. The sound has improved and our Zoom livestreams are more engaging.
- During non-minister Sundays, we have made a concerted effort to bring diversity to the pulpit by inviting a range of diverse speakers. This year, we will have hosted:
 - Juana Cortez de Torres (Immigrant Legal Rights Project)
 - Tecumseh Cesar (Native American Artist)
 - Mor Keshet (Cottage Tenant and Therapist)
 - Tiarra Inez Brown (Huntington African American Museum)
 - Joshua Greene (Bhagavad Gita)

- Joe Rodriguez (Pagan High Priest)
- Pilar Moya Mancera (Housing Help)
- Marie St. Cyr (Haiti)
- We supported all guest speakers with service scripts, coordinated worship associates for all Sunday services, and worked with Dylan DeFeo to plan all music for non-minister Sundays and Sandra Yens to provide materials for slides.
- We planned 10 summer services, which included Fellowship and guest participation. Four services featured outside guests as speakers. Six services featured member as leader and/or speaker.
- Marisa Comple created lovely seasonal arrangements (spring, summer, late fall/Thanksgiving, holiday) for the chancel area this year, adjusting and refreshing between services, mixing real and artificial greenery. For Easter, we added daffodils, and tulips. We have supported Earth Day and June/Pride month with special decorations.
- We led 10 congregational pot luck events serving food, coffee/tea, beverages and desserts, and 42 weekly social hours following service, with coffee/tea/beverages and treats, including set up and breakdown of tables and chairs, washing of all cups, utensils, dishes—all with a smile and good cheer! We also purchased new tablecloths.
- We ensured that all outside speakers were paid, expenses were reimbursed, and maintained the budget.

Membership Committee

Co-Chairs: Michele Lauer-Bader and Terry Donaldson

Members/Volunteers: Michele Lauer- Bader, Terry Donaldson, Susan Peters, Judie Gardner, Carol Holmes, Carolyn D’Orazio, Beth Ezrin, Jackie Agdern (Greeters), Martha Ketteridge (Pastoral Care), Judy Cartwright (Care/Share), Anne Monnier & Mary Bly (Memorials)

Accomplishments this year: (September 2025 - present)

- Newcomer orientations – 3 (October 26, February 1 & March 29)
- Coffee with the Minister – 3 (October 5, November 23, April 19). (Setting aside a table at potluck has been successful.)
- New Member Recognition – coming up (May 31).
- New members – 12 since August 31,2025.
- Book Discussion series – using the book Authentic Selves by Jazz Jennings (4 sessions on Zoom)
- Seder - (April 3); the first seder since 2019. Fifty-nine (59) people attended and reviews were excellent. Most foods were made by UUFH volunteers & our minister. Seder program led by Larry Wilkow with assistance from Rev Israel & Milt Masur.
- Welcome Table during Social Hour – staffed every Sunday.
- Greeters – 2 greeters each Sunday & RE Coordinator
- Upcoming program – UUFH History & Tour on May 31 presented by Liza Burby.
- Coordination with subcommittees & teams described in the governance model (Pastoral Care, Memorials, Greeters, Care/Share, LIAC/Long Island Area Council) regarding budget planning, problems, reports, etc.
- Living Questions (AKA Touchstones) – small group ministry monthly meetings with materials created by Rev Israel.

Looking Ahead

- In process - annual calendar of Membership and lifelong learning opportunities for 2026-27.

- In Process - assembling a coordinating committee for a 2027 seder.
- Summer 2026 project – update both new member packet & newcomers orientation materials.
- In Process - a workshop & Sunday service based on the film *Traces of the Trade* (a documentary about the largest slave-trading family in U.S. history whose descendants retraced the steps of their ancestors.)

Membership Committee - Pastoral Care SubCommittee

Chairperson: Martha Ketteridge

Members/Volunteers: Sue McGovern, Mary Bly, Lynda Morella, Nancy Wilkow, Carol Granelli, Doreatha Hirsh, Prue Emory, Cindy Vulcan-Neber.

Accomplishments this year:

The past year we worked to continue to provide support and care to an ongoing number of 20-26 members of our congregation with calls, cards or visits. Continue to work with care/share through our liaison to care/share, Nancy Wilkow.

Membership Committee – Book Group Team

Chair: Allyson Barish, Carolyn D’Orazio

Members/Volunteers:

Allyson Barish, Alana Kurfist, Jan Brenner, Ann Scolnick, Carolyn D’Orazio, Joanne Polichetti, Gerri Farrell, Lisa LoPiano, Leslie Flynn, Susan Peters, Kara Gallagher, Sue McGovern, Mari Hahn, Gwen Ingrid

Accomplishments this year:

The group met in a hybrid fashion again this year, meeting in person for the more temperate months, and remotely via Zoom during the winter months. As is our tradition, members served as discussion leaders and hosts for our in-person meetings. We chose our books by a nomination/voting process over the summer.

We continue to be an open group, and welcome new members.

We read a wide array of books by varying authors, and addressing various themes, including women’s issues (from both a domestic and international perspective), poverty, racism, aging, and addiction. We included a “banned” book, a graphic novel, and a classic novel in our rotation this year.

Membership Committee – Greeters SubCommittee

Membership Committee – Memorials SubCommittee

Membership Committee – Care/Share Team

Membership Committee – Small Group Ministries Teams

Membership Committee – Seder Team

Membership Committee - LIAC Team

Religious Education Committee

Chair: Connie Rinaldi, Chair (Anne and Laura, incoming co-chairs)

Members/Volunteers:

Connie Rinaldi, Laura Curiale, Anne Klatsky, Andrea Gonnella, Rima Muth, Lila Jean, Sandra Yens (RE Coordinator), Rae Neebar, Melissa Dinsman, Christie Loew

Accomplishments this year:

Implemented the Inclusion subcommittee and began to create initiatives for inclusive learning in RE classes.

Discussed making all REs social justice themed in 2026-27 This year, RE programming for all REs included: environment/leaf pollinator art program, care package event: making cards, pictures and packing boxes, Chinese New Year programming with author, improv RE program.

Co-sponsored family night bingo with membership committee.

Organized aquarium field trip that was ultimately will be rescheduled due to low availability.

Fall festival, prepared Care packages to young adults formerly part of the UUFH RE program, coordinated the Easter Egg hunt, Easter puzzle event etc.

Participated and met with Reverend Israel to discuss the Reimagine RE forum and brainstormed ideas.

Supported the minister and Sandra with the Christmas pageant, purchased new costumes and props, organized parts with Sandra, and offered assistance on the day of.

Provided ideas and support for the Children's service led by our Minister.

Organized meal prep for the homeless by the RE children after service in March and dropped off at HHHI in Huntington.

Art Gallery Exhibit by the RE Program - organized in conjunction with Bill Hawkins the art activity of creating cardboard box styled art.

Supporting Sandra in doing Mystery Pals, the cross generational pen pal program to help the children build relationships with adult congregants.

Prepare a program for summer RE and recruit volunteers to lead the program. This year we did a Nature/Garden themed program that included 4 Sunday programs, as well as Smile in a Bag and a Zentangle mindfulness activity.

Organized end of year celebration for the RE children at the end of June.

Explored and researched adding family choir or children's chorus however with transition year and new minister coming in, this is on hold for now.

Organized a table at the Services Auction for the youth to make custom name tags and sell mindful meditation packets. Raised \$110 for the fellowship.

One of our members, Rae graciously volunteered to help obtain from NYS seedlings to implement a government funded conservation and trees from seedlings program.

Created and donated two baskets for the Auction.

Religious Education – Classes

Chair: Sandra Yens

Volunteers: Rima Muth, Carol Granelli, Kristina Heinemann, Rae Neebar, Amy Olander, Debbie Cohen, Alana Kurfist, Bob Bader, Judy Greene, Graham Otton, Ellen Keller, Joanne Polichetti, Tim Theike, Lynda Morella, Prue Emery, Jerilyn Fortsch

Metrics:

- 16 - RE Teachers (including 3 substitutes)
- 29 - Families registered for RE
- 6 - Number of new families to UUFH this year
- 43 - Children and Youth registered for RE
- 15 - Children and Youth average attendance for all RE classes (up from 14.1 last year)
- 35% - average attendance rate of all children and youth registered

Overview of RE classes for 2025-2026

Thank you to all the RE teacher volunteers. Only with the UUFH volunteers do we have Religious Education classes!

- Curriculum - Middle School and younger children
 - All groups worked with the Soul Matters curriculum for readings, activities, and discussions.
 - Feedback from Pre-k to 5th grade classes highlights that the Soul Matters curriculum works for those age groups.
 - Middle school has low attendance and some of the Soul Matters curriculum activities require more youth participation. Review of other curriculums for next year for middle school class.
- Youth Group
 - Focused on social justice projects throughout the year with some small group discussion classes utilizing the Soul Matters curriculum.
 - Baked brownies for the Family Service League Cafe de Amigos

- Cooked soup for the Family Service League Cafe de Amigos
 - Wrote letters for the UU congregations in Minnesota
 - Volunteered and planted 40 small dogwood bush saplings throughout the UUFH grounds
 - Participated in an improv activity from Deeper Joy curriculum and Soul Matters crafts and activities
- Reflection on RE classes and programs from 2025-2026
- Started RE teacher breakfasts once a month on the 1st Sunday of the month.
 - Attendance is about 3 to 8 RE teachers attending each breakfast
 - Terry Donaldson attended a RE teacher breakfast to talk about safety at UUFH
- Reviewed combining middle school and high school youth groups.
 - Would help with sharing of resources and fewer RE teachers needed.
 - Youth decided to not combine middle and high school youth groups
- Parents Night Out
 - Started in winter 2025 and one in January, 2026
 - About 5 kids attended each night
 - Feedback is positive from the parents
- Looking ahead to next year - 2026-2027
 - Youth group revitalization
 - Sending out survey to youth group families
 - Rebranding of RE high school class to RE youth group
 - Tailoring the curriculum and activities to what the youth group wants
 - Curriculum review for all classes
 - Preparing to start an OWL class in the Fall, 2026
 - Lining up OWL trained facilitators
 - Contacting middle school families about participation
 - Working with UU Stony Brook to include their middle school youth
 - Recruiting and retaining RE teachers for next year
 - Planning Parent Nights Out for the new UUFH year
 - Recruiting childcare providers
 - Planning to start providing childcare for under 3 year olds at Sunday service

- Created job description to recruit childcare providers
- Provided job description to local colleges for applicants
- Reached out to applicants at local colleges

Social Justice Committee

Social Justice– Immigration Justice Team

Mission and Context: We are living in an unprecedented epoch in the lifetimes of the members of our congregation. Our nation has been taken over by a dictator who is abusing the powers of the Federal government to racially profile and disappear people into a for-profit prison system run as a concentration camp. The result of this illegal and immoral action is to traumatize and separate mixed-immigration status families while depriving their victims of due process, waging a terror campaign against our neighbors.

Our Unitarian Universalist values and history call out to us to protect our neighbors; to seek justice; and to work to abolish unjust systems and practices of government—which means finding ways for our undocumented immigrant beloveds to seek and obtain legal residential status with a path to full citizenship. This is particularly true of those who seek asylum here, fleeing violence and repression at home. They should not arrive in the United States to find only injustice and further violence.

Team Responsibilities: Some of our efforts have involved being a recognizable presence in the greater Huntington faith community through participating as individuals, Unitarian Universalists, and as members of the UUFH in efforts to protect and feed our neighbors, to educate them of their rights on American soil, and to make our demands for justice known to our elected officials. By doing this, we strive to grow UUFH membership and to proudly represent Unitarian Universalism and the UUFH to the greater Huntington and Long Island community. Following the model of the UUFH Racial Justice Team, the Immigrant Justice Team strives to do the following in the area of immigrant justice:

Guiding Principle: Keeping the 8th Principle always in the forefront of our efforts to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community, we seek to develop accountable relationships with communities of oppressed and marginalized people, particularly local immigrants, and, with their guidance and counsel, stand with them in solidarity.

- Researching, educating, and providing guidance to the UUFH on immigrant justice issues in order to move UUFH toward becoming a diverse, welcoming beloved community.
- Collaborating with internal UUFH committees, Board, Minister, and the greater Fellowship, as well as external organizations/stakeholders who are fighting oppression in our community and in our world.
- Identifying and/or developing immigrant justice initiatives and promoting involvement of the greater UUFH.

Accomplishments: In partnership with interfaith and other community organizations, the IJT attended planning meetings and represented UUFH and Unitarian Universalist values in the greater Huntington community, responding to the needs of the most vulnerable members of the local immigrant population. Notably, we

- Secured no-cost meeting space for the newly formed Huntington Empathetic Response Action Team (HEART-LI, formerly Huntington Rapid Response Network) through the new Building Use rental protocols.
- Hosted a volunteer event to assemble whistle kits, helping establish a local warning system to alert neighbors to the presence of ICE in the area.
- Copied and helped distribute “Private Area” signs to local businesses to create zones that are off-limits to ICE stormtroopers.
- Attended multiple community protests and interfaith vigils in Huntington, providing a UU presence, especially in support of our new minister.

Future Goals: For the coming year, we anticipate an escalation of hostile actions against our immigrant neighbors, based on the priorities of the current illegitimate regime. We plan to support community groups in opposing the expansion of corporate-owned for-profit concentration camps, increase our support of mutual aid and protection for our neighbors, continuing to be a Unitarian Universalist presence at vigils, demonstrations, and other protests. We also plan to increase awareness of the struggles facing immigrant neighbors within the Fellowship and the broader Huntington community through worship, gallery programming, and other opportunities as they arise.

As our religious forbears went into danger with the symbol of our faith, the flaming chalice, to represent themselves as helpers, we lift that symbol with Love at the center of all we do to support, help, protect, and love our most vulnerable neighbors. These are dangerous, turbulent times. May we use our gifts and privilege to offer aid and comfort to those who need it most.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Burby, chair

Social Justice – Reproductive Justice Team

Executive Summary: This report summarizes the activities and future objectives of the Reproductive Justice Team following our inaugural year as a part of the Social Justice Committee. As a new team, we have focused on establishing a presence within the Fellowship through high-impact community events and identifying legislative priorities for the upcoming year.

Highlights of the Inaugural Year: Our debut year was marked by a highly successful fundraiser that introduced our mission to the wider community.

- "Vagina Monologues" Fundraiser: On March 8, the team hosted a production of the "Vagina Monologues".
- Attendance: The event was well-attended, drawing 175 participants.
- Financial Impact: We successfully raised \$3,500 for Hope and Resilience Long Island (HARLI), an agency supporting survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Community Partnership: Pamela Greinke, Executive Director of HARLI, expressed gratitude for the committee's role in the event's success and smooth execution.

Continuing Projects and Future Goals: Building on the momentum of our first year, the Reproductive Justice Team has identified several key initiatives for the 2026-2027 church year.

- Legislative Advocacy: We will launch a letter-writing campaign focusing on recent judicial decisions regarding mifepristone.
- Health Policy: The team has adopted the New York Health Act as a core goal to ensure broader access to healthcare services.

- **Worship and Education:** We are planning a fall service to further integrate reproductive justice themes into the spiritual life of the Fellowship.
- **Platform Alignment:** While maintaining non-partisan boundaries, we will continue to support state-level executive platforms that align with our mission of reproductive freedom and wellness.

Conclusion: The Reproductive Justice Team is proud of the foundation built this year. We look forward to continuing our work in advocacy, education, and community support as we move into our second year of service at UUFH.

Social Justice Subcommittee - Split the Plate

Chairperson: Kara Gallagher

Members/Volunteers: (Please list all names)

Nikki Willard

Mary Bly

Kara Gallagher

James Ammerman

*Tanya Thurman (hasn't participated)

Accomplishments this year:

This year we have donated to mostly local charities to help their projects. We also had speakers come to the Fellowship to explain their immediate needs and how our participation would affect them, and then also to follow up and tell us how our donated funds were spent.

July - August	Engage Long Island	\$2,923.50
September	Pronto Long Island	\$1,733.50
October	Birthday Wishes	\$1,733.00
November	Family Diversity	\$1356.50 less \$246.12 = \$1110.38

December	Huntington Interfaith Homeless Initiative	\$1,944.50
January	Rural and Migrant Ministry (RMM)	\$1,593.00
February	Huntington NAACP	\$1,347.50
March	AAIRE	tbd
April	Book Fairies	tbd
May	Sophia Fahs	tbd
June	TBD	tbd

Social Justice - Free and Fair Elections Team

Chair: Debra Hocevar

Free and Fair elections sent over 1500 postcards to several states to encourage people to vote in their primaries!

Social Justice - LGBTQ+ Team

Mission: The role of the LGBTQ team is to educate and engage the community and congregation through raising awareness and by sponsoring activities. The UUFH is in the process of recertifying as a Welcoming Congregation. This is a designation established by the UUA that our congregation has met the criteria to be deemed a welcoming and safe congregation for the LGBTQ+ community. In doing so, we will make sure LGBTQ+ celebrations/commemorations are observed, such as LGBTQ+ history month, Transgender Day of Remembrance, etc.

Members/Volunteers: Eric Rubin-Perez, James Rubin-Perez, Catherine Hepburn, Trudy Delaney, Beth Ann Balaloas, Wren Halpern, Michele Reilly, Terry Donaldson, Mary Sussman, Juli Grey-Owens, Anne Klatsky, Lisa Lo Piano Moskowitz, Amanda Cooper, Diana Weaving, Sofia Gabetta, Nikki Willard, Rima Muth, Doreatha Hirsch, Evie Bergman, and Kara Gallagher.

Accomplishments This Year: This year the LGBTQ+ Social Justice Team was instrumental in bringing the Authentic Selves” exhibit to the UUFH. The exhibit was displayed in the art gallery

of the UUFH for 2 months. In addition, the LGBTQ+ Social Justice Team hosted an Adult RE book discussion group that ran for 4 weeks. The discussion group explored themes related to gender in “Authentic Selves”. We also applied and were accepted for the split plate for the month of November. All funds collected went to the Family Diversity Project. In addition, the LGBTQ+ Social Justice Team will march in LI pride and have a table on June 14th in Huntington. We also will participate in Northport Pridefest on June 20th in Northport. In addition, the LGBTQ+ team will be hosting “Huntington Family Pride Picnic” in conjunction with the town of Huntington and Family Equality on June 28, 2026. This will be a family friendly pride event at Elwood park.

Submitted by Eric Rubin-Perez, chair

Social Justice - Grow to Give Garden Team

Our Grow to Give Garden crosses over congregational years, so I will begin with our Summer 2025 summary.

- Thanks to our dedicated volunteer team, G2GG donated about 200 pounds of local, organically grown produce including peas, tomatoes, peppers, green beans, beets, zucchini, butternut squash, lettuces, Swiss chard, and kale.
- We enjoyed the surprise of gourds (from pumpkin patch) growing out of our compost pile and climbing around our deer fencing, producing over 50 pounds. The gourds were donated to the pumpkin patch for sale.
- We hosted the RE children in the garden twice over the summer. Children and youth planted seeds, harvested produce (weighing and recording), and learned about solar printing this year.
- We partnered with NY Harvest Cornell Cooperative Extension to have our garden beds’ soil tested for free. The information gained was very helpful and had guided us to make some amendments to improve our soil and production for the 2026 growing season.
- The garden experienced a greater than usual amount of crop loss due to critter invasion. We have been exploring the possible ways of identifying and eliminating this loss of crops so we may improve our production for the 2026 season.

Our 2026 garden season has begun, despite unusual weather patterns that have kept us from planting our warm weather crops yet.

- As co-chairs of the G2GG, Carol Holmes and Terry Donaldson have spent the off-season researching ways to improve our output for this year's growing season.
 - We are amending our soil to better meet the needs of plants we are growing.
 - We have made a planting plan which includes rotation of crops, companion planting and methods to reduce crop loss.
- Our G2GG team, including some newer members! has been out in the garden this spring preparing our beds, planting cool weather crops, and employing ways to thwart critters. Many thanks to Beth Feldman and David Cohen for the building of some ingenious structures protecting seedlings in the garden beds. Great appreciation to Valerie Scopaz and Peter Granelli for tending to the mending of fences around the garden. Peter added chicken wire around the shed in an effort to keep animals from make homes under the shed and "shopping" for their meals in our garden!
- We had a Seed Starting 101 with adults and children in March and have been growing plants under lights. Once the weather is sufficiently warm overnight, we will have a warm weather crop planting day to kick off the new season in earnest.
- Our cool weather crops, including peas, Swiss chard, beets, carrots and some herbs, have been planted by Lynda Morella, Amanda Haleiko and her children Bell and Michael, Donna Gavin, Sharon DeSimone, Carol Holmes and Terry Donaldson.
- Our expert weeders have included Sarah Murphy, Sheri Berman, and Rainy Donlon.
- Thanks to Judie Gardner for keeping our G2GG bulletin board interesting and up-to-date!
- We look forward to lots of help getting our warm weather crops planted.

Social Justice - Environmental Justice Team

Social Justice - HIHI Team

Office Administration - Office Volunteers

Chair: Ann Scolnick

Office volunteers, Ann Scolnick and Anne Monnier make ourselves available to help Sandra as needed. Since Sandra is involved with RE on Sundays, volunteers, Jan Brenner, Lisa LoPiano, Anne Monnier, Carol Towne and Ann Scolnick, rotate to sit in the office at that time. We help folks with Sunday morning requests, record those who attend the service on Zoom, and keep contact with the security force, in case 911 needs to be called.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Fellowship

OF HUNTINGTON

Governance

Finance Committee

Chair: Allyson Barish, Treasurer

Members/Volunteers:

Allyson Barish, Treasurer

Gerard Neber, Support and Advisory

Brian Cohen, Support and Advisory

Shel Lipsky, Support and Advisory

Josh Dinsman, Budget Support

Ann Scolnick, Counter

Anne Monnier, Counter

Jan Brenner, Counter

Carol Towne, Counter

Lisa Moskowitz, Counter

Accomplishments this year:

1. Prepared a balanced budget for the upcoming fiscal year 2026-27.
2. Current fiscal year performance is on track to meet the budget.
3. Migrated donor pledging and donation records from ICON to Realm, resulting in:
 - a. User-friendly interface for electronic donations, including a smartphone application, QR code, and Text-to-donate option.
 - b. Improved statement capability, both for pledge balance updates and end of tax year statements.

- c. Increased self-service options for members, including a graphic that shows percent pledge completion, and the ability to print one's own year-end tax statement.
- d. The change to Realm resulted in a completely new procedure for the Sunday morning counters. All are fully trained and the system is operating beautifully.
4. Migrated payroll system to MinistrySmart, a specialized payroll system for religious organizations, which came highly recommended by other UU congregations.

Finance – Pumkin Patch Fundraiser

Chairperson: Amy Olander, Debbie Cohen, Peggy Kulias

Members/Volunteers:

Carolyn D'Orazio, Carol Dewey (Flash announcements)

Plus over 30 volunteers

Accomplishments this year:

The patch ran smoothly with many volunteers, including new members. We increased UUFH signage that showed our values and who we were.

Profit was a record high at \$13,000

- We are looking to add new chairs, as this is our 10th year. Carolyn D'Orazio is stepping up to the plate and we are talking with her about suggestions for partners.

Finance – Legacy Circle Sub-Committee

Chairperson: Sue McGovern

Members/Volunteers: Brian Cohen, Jan Brenner, Kim Schultze, Liza Burby

Accomplishments this year:

Over the past year, we have created a team of UUFH members to propose a design for a UUFH Legacy Circle plaque. It will list the Founding Members and all future members who include the

Fellowship in their estate planning. The design has been approved by the Legacy committee and the Board. Currently, we are purchasing the materials needed and volunteers will create the plaque. We hope to have the unveiling in the Fall of 2026.

Finance - Investment Sub-Committee

Chair: Gerard Neber

Members/Volunteers: Allyson Barish, Brian Cohen, Gerard Neber

Accomplishments this year:

- The trailing one-year performance of the Endowment and Investment portfolio as of 05/15/2026 was 17.27%, in line with other 60/40 index funds and benchmarks. This was supplemented by positive interest earned on cash savings, as rates hovered around 3.65% for most of the past year. Most equity analysts are still constructive on the market's performance, with no recession anticipated. Market expectations of elevated inflation should keep rates nominally high for the coming year.
- The Investment Committee actively integrates environmental, social, and governance considerations into their decision-making process to align with sustainable and responsible practices. The weighted average Bloomberg environmental score across all our Ameriprise holdings is 82.27%. An environmental ESG score at this level generally reflects very strong environmental performance relative to peers. ESG scores are measured on a 0–100 scale, with higher scores indicating stronger performance, with 80–100% indicating Leader / Excellent.

Stewardship Committee

Stewardship – Auction Gala – Subcommittee

Chairperson: Jen Edwards

Members/Volunteers: Amy Olander, Kara Gallagher, Andrea Costa, Kata Karewja, Leslie Speed, Suzanne MacDevitt, Carol Holmes

Accomplishments this year: On April 18, 2026, we held the annual auction gala. We had 94 registered bidders and 110 registered attendees. The event raised over \$34,000. Most of our growth from last year was accomplished with higher value live auction items, and somewhat more online donations.

New members or people who appear to be moving towards membership received free bidding numbers.

We had more presence in the social hall after services to help people use Auctria.

Stewardship - Annual Giving - Subcommittee

Chairperson: Jennifer Sappell

Members/Volunteers:

Judy Cartwright

Milt Masur

Sue McGovern

Anne Monnier

Susan Peters

Jennifer Sappell

Ann Scolnick

Accomplishments this year:

UUFH has conducted an Annual Pledge Drive following a traditional and successful model for many years. This year, the Team chose several changes in direct response to critical Member feedback, a new minister, challenging economic times, an unspecified budgetary goal, and lack of a compelling programmatic motivation, among other factors. A post-campaign Worship Service and luncheon to convey gratitude was planned as an alternative to a kick-off event. In partnership with Rev. Buffardi, the campaign was crafted as friendly and low-pressure with Thank You notes and offers of pastoral care.

The Team conservatively forecasts an increase in pledge income of approximately 5 percent for the 2026-2027 Fellowship Year.

Buildings and Grounds

Building and Grounds - Safety and Security Subcommittee

Chairperson: Bryce Klatsky

Members/Volunteers

Beth Ann, Dali, Graham, Jim, Michael, Brian, David, Jason, Lee, Sam, Bryce, Ed, Jennifer, Matt, Steve, Terry

Accomplishments this year:

During the 2025–2026 congregation year, the Safety Committee made significant progress in strengthening both the organizational structure and operational effectiveness of safety efforts across the Fellowship. The committee underwent a comprehensive reorganization, clearly

defining leadership roles including Fire Marshal, Facilities Lead, Trainings Lead, and Policies and Protocols Lead. This restructuring improved coordination, accountability, and continuity across safety functions.

A major accomplishment was the successful submission of a Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) application, following completion of the New York State Grants Gateway prequalification process. The application proposes approximately \$170,000 in safety enhancements, including upgraded surveillance systems, reinforced doors with access control, improved communication systems (two-way radios), and expanded training opportunities. This work represents a substantial step toward long-term, sustainable safety infrastructure. We are still awaiting further information on this grant application.

The committee also strengthened external partnerships, particularly with the Suffolk County Police Department and its Hate Crimes Unit, maintaining active communication in response to prior incidents involving vandalism and theft of the Progress Pride flag. These relationships have enhanced situational awareness and ensured continued support and monitoring from local law enforcement.

Operationally, the team maintained and refined key safety systems, including Sunday safety team assignments, emergency communication protocols (including a transition to a dedicated radio channel), and tracking and maintenance of emergency supplies such as AEDs, Narcan, and Stop-the-Bleed kits. The committee also advanced policy development by maintaining a version-controlled library of safety protocols (e.g., lockdown, shelter-in-place, immigration-related guidance, and building use policies) and improving accessibility through distribution and posting.

In the area of training and preparedness, the committee worked to schedule CPR/First Aid certification sessions, develop plans for tabletop exercises focused on emergency scenarios, and explore approaches to lockdown drills that balance preparedness with congregational care and sensitivity. Additional safety enhancements under consideration include physical deterrents at the front entrance (e.g., reinforced barriers or planters) and expanded exterior monitoring.

Throughout the year, the committee remained focused on balancing safety with the Fellowship's identity as an open and welcoming community, ensuring that all safety measures are implemented with careful attention to accessibility and inclusivity.

Building and Grounds – Art Gallery Subcommittee

Chairperson: Bill Hawkins

Members/Volunteers:

Deb Hocevar

Ann Scolnick

Accomplishments this year:

The gallery has monthly show of different artists. Such shows as the members group show, Patricia Shih retrospective and musical fund raiser for LI cares, photographer Steve Burby, The Family Diversity Exhibition, Two excellent artist friends Joanne Ferrante and Craig, February Black Lives History 2026, Bill painting with the RE youth, Laura Cerrano painting and drum circle and Marie St. Cyr Haitian paintings.

Building and Grounds – Building Use and Rentals Subcommittee

Buildings and Grounds - Castle Care SubCommittee

Building and Grounds - Landscaping and Grounds Subcommittee