



The Fellowship

a Unitarian Universalist congregation



Annual Report

2022-2023

July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023



Governing Board

The Fellowship's Governing Board operates under a model called policy governance. Under this model, the Board is accountable to the Congregation. The Board historically defines the Ends, statements which explain the human needs that are to be met, for whom, and at what cost. The Board also sets Executive Limitations, statements which limit the means by which Ends shall be achieved by the Executive Team and staff. The role of the Board is primarily to set policy and provide fiduciary, strategic, and generative oversight. Operational authority is delegated to the Fellowship's ministers and staff. The following Ends statements were adopted by the Board in 2018:

Rooted in our Unitarian Universalist identity, the people of the Fellowship embrace our collective responsibility to live our values within and beyond our walls. Across the lifespan, we:

- **Love each other in times of joy, sorrow, and transition;**
- **Live a life of purpose, rooted in spiritual practice, service, and wonder;**
- **Create a culture of radical hospitality and compassion;**
- **Form deep and authentic relationships across differences;**
- **Are a visible presence and resource, courageously challenging injustice and inequity;**
- **Work to end discrimination and systemic racism within ourselves, our congregation, and the world around us; and**
- **Generously share our time, talent, and treasure, in a spirit of joy and abundance.**

In the 2022-2023 program year, we have continued to monitor progress toward these Ends by reviewing both quantitative and qualitative measures. However, we have discovered through our mission and visioning work over the past several years, that the Ends and the means by which to measure the Executive Team's ability to meet the Ends, is too large and complex to assess and to be successful. For example, bullet 6: 'Work to end discrimination...' is wonderful intention, but the End does not identify clear, specific, measurable, or time relevant language by which to measure success.

Therefore, the Governing Board is seeking to close the chapter on an Ends model of measuring the Executive Team success and move to a strategic planning process and the creation of a Strategic Plan. In early 2023, the Board met with Rev. David Pyle, from the UUA Mid-America Regional Staff, to assist in developing a template by which other churches have been successful in implementing a similar process. A Strategic Planning Committee of the Board, in collaboration with the Executive Team, is in process of drafting a 3-year strategic plan which will incorporate steps towards goal achievement in their evaluation. The new strategic plan will not be a 'check the box and we are finished' static document, but a 'living' plan that will consistently be evaluated and modified. The Board believes this approach will allow for tangible benchmarks to be understood, tasks undertaken, and accountability that will lead to success of the goals.

We were also able to combine our efforts and connect to the proposed new mission and vision statements. The committee of the Board examined 66 pages of feedback, including attending groups across the Fellowship programming, forming listening sessions, hosted a feedback table at Sunday service, and sought online feedback. The culmination of the heart-forward work has presented a new mission and vision statement for all members to consider, and vote to approve at the June 2023 Annual Meeting.

Lastly, the Board created a Human Resources Committee to examine the Fellowship human resource needs and policies, to explore and discover a more equitable process by which Fellowship staff can bring forth concerns and policy updates, and to assist in informing the Board in areas related to human resources and the related needs of the Fellowship. We look forward to bringing more information forward to the congregation regarding this work throughout 2023-2024. It has been humbling and inspiring to serve as your Board President this past year. I encourage any member of the congregation to get involved, spiritual leadership if you will, by sharing your talent, and treasure towards making the Fellowship a beloved community.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Johnson, Governing Board President

Executive Team

The Fellowship Executive Team (or X-Team or XT) is comprised of the Rev. Christina Leone-Tracy, the Rev. Hannah Roberts Villnave, and director of finance and operations Phyllis L. Schmitt. This is the leadership group that makes decisions about how things happen by creating, interpreting, and implementing operational policies, and delegating to the staff team. The XT is monitored by and reports to the Governing Board, which is elected by vote of the congregation's membership and articulates the Fellowship's vision.

There has been an uplift in energy at the Fellowship and it feels so nice to see the return of people who hadn't been around during the pandemic, and the arrival of new people!

We welcomed Rev. Hannah in the late summer with meals, cake, and gifts. She jumped right into the role, leading worship, meeting as many of you as she could, and supporting our caring ministries. She also worked this year with our Justice Action Ministries to increase our visibility in the community and cooperate with partners in the Fox Valley and beyond. Most notably, we welcomed 37 people including about 1/3 from outside the Fellowship to the April 29th "Rising Together" event. Rev. Hannah also spoke at multiple public events, including a reproductive rights rally at Houdini Plaza and WISDOM's Madison Action Day plenary.



Our JAMs (Justice Action Ministries) have done great ministry this year to ensure our values are represented in the public square! From serving meals at Pillars to helping asylum-seekers file paperwork to helping lead Earth Day rallies to meeting with legislators in Madison, our JAMs are living their faith (and ours!) out loud.



We also had the opportunity to utilize funds that had been directed to the Ministers' Discretionary Fund. Given our large balance in that special fund, we gave \$10,948 to RIP Medical Debt who were able to eliminate \$995,603 in debt for our neighbors in need throughout the Midwest.

In November, we were able to celebrate the ordination of Ali Peters (our 2020-21 Intern Minister and 2021-22 Assistant Minister). What a joy to be able to send forth amazing leaders into the wider community of Unitarian Universalism!



Executive Team—Continued...

Small groups and journey groups continued this year, providing opportunities for deepening, connection, spiritual depth, care and support. Our Sunday service themes and Religious Education program themes tied in to the Journey Group monthly themes to help create a connected and cohesive whole. Wellspring offered monthly offerings on how to deepen spiritual practices.

Our Generosity Ministries Team worked tirelessly to offer events, programs, and education about our first year with no formal pledge campaign. They held several “Reflect & Renew” meetings, including a successful Stone Soup lunch to encourage as many people as possible to consider their giving to the Fellowship.

They also oversaw the new Share the Plate initiative which allowed us to share \$7,882 with the wider community as well as bringing in that same amount to our operating budget, as of April 2023, which exceeds the full fiscal year 2021-2022 offering plate donations by \$4,399.

Generosity:
A winning strategy



Annual Support
Legacy Giving
Focused Fundraising

Share the Plate

October — Pillars

**November — Sustainable Development Institute
of the College of the Menominee**

December — ESTHER Interfaith Organizing

January — UU Emergency Fund

February — Diverse & Resilient

March — Even Start Family Literacy

April — UU the Vote

May — Nataban Food Forest

Summer — Fellowship Justice Programs



Religious Education returned to finally being able to have classes on Sundays for different age groups, with lots of activities for connection, spiritual growth, and fun.

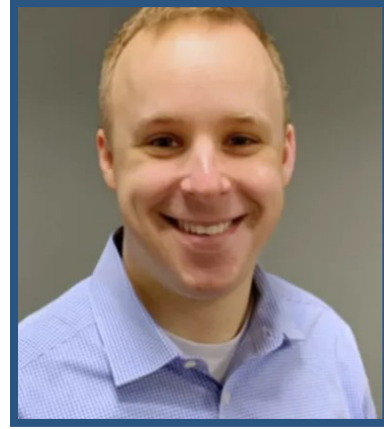
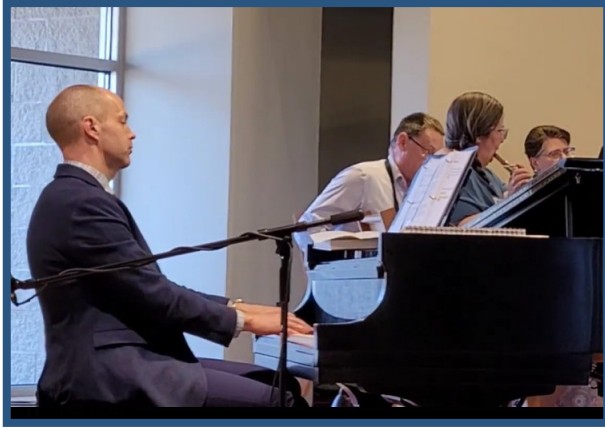
The high school BATs (Being a Teen) finally were able to take their heritage trip to Chicago, which had been postponed several times due to the pandemic.

The Executive Team also hosted three Open Meetings which invited everyone who was able to attend, to learn more about what’s going on at the Fellowship. We welcomed our emeritus minister Rev. Roger Bertschausen to the first of these, and had good attendance and engagement at all three. Our goal was to increase transparency and communication, and we discussed topics including justice making, the future of our international partnerships, staffing updates, program and budget updates, and information about Rev. Christina’s upcoming sabbatical.



Executive Team—Continued...

Steve Sieck, our music director, let us know in August that he would be pursuing a calling to the Unitarian Universalist ministry. Another wonderful leader becoming a UU minister! But sadly, this meant this was Steve's last year with us. He has led our music program with grace, humor, and incredible skill. We wish him well and look forward to welcoming John Popke as our new music director on July 31.



Sunday services received a makeover when we incorporated additional music, new visual art, and created some differences between the 9 am and 10:45 am services. We are so grateful to our lay worship leaders and worship artists who helped support our services with thoughtfulness, depth and beauty.



Through all of this, we need YOU – to find ways to plug in, volunteer, and support one of the many ministries of this place so we can emerge from this time with more healing and possibility. We are always inspired by all of the ways our Fellowship community continues to demonstrate generosity and care.

Respectfully submitted,
**The Executive Team: Rev. Christina Leone-Tracy,
Rev. Hannah Roberts Villnave, and Phyllis L. Schmitt**

If you want to know how to give
financially to the Fellowship,
visit fvuuf.org/give.

To find out how to give your time
and talent,
visit fvuuf.org/ways-to-help.

Treasurer

In the 2022-2023 fiscal year we continue to have financial peaks and valleys.

From a Treasurer's point of view, I want to cover a few topics:

First, this year the Fellowship switched to a new giving model transitioning away from a yearly pledge drive. Instead, giving is ongoing and we engage with you, our members, to ensure we have a fiscal foundation to continue to keep the Fellowship vibrant.

Second, we initiated the Share the Plate program where your donations in Sunday's collection plate are split between an outside organization and the Fellowship. This has been very successful for both the organizations you supported with your donations and the Fellowship. And by giving to these outside organizations we increase our exposure to the wider community.

Third, where are we financially? This fiscal year is projected to be better than budgeted. We assumed we would have approximately a \$40,000 deficit but instead we are projecting a surplus of \$40,000. This is due to some unforeseen generous giving and frugal spending.

But with this slightly positive budget news, please realize that:

- We had a full-time position person resign last year. We chose to consolidate that position because of budget constraints, with the ministers and the staff assuming those duties into their already full work-loads.
- We are not currently providing subsidized health or dental benefits for our employee's families. The full cost of this coverage is paid by the employee. The UUA fair compensation guidelines recommend a 50% cost share between the Fellowship and the employees for dependent coverage.
- Our staff has not received cost-of-living increase for the past 3 years and some staff members are significantly below the UUA fair compensation guidelines.
- Our building is aging. The furnaces and air conditioning (HVAC) in the original building are approaching over 25 years of use. We have some money set aside to replace the HVAC but not enough to replace these units. A rough estimate for replacement will be upwards of \$70,000 to \$80,000, perhaps more.
- Our support to the UUA was reduced several years ago and we are only at 25% of the amount we should be for the size of our Fellowship. Why is this important? The UUA helps support the health and growth of our Fellowship. They provide guidance on governance, teaching curriculum and organizational design, as well as offering insurance and retirement plans, fair compensation resources, and more.

Looking to the fiscal future of the Fellowship:

- Approximately 75-80% of our annual budget is allocated to the staff's salary and benefits.
- Another 6-7% is allocated for the building's mortgage (approximately \$4,250 a month).
- Another 9% is for heating, cooling, insurance, water, taxes, and maintenance etc. for the building.
- So --- as you can see – there's not much left.

So these are our challenges. And, it's up to you, me and all of us to keep the Fellowship fiscally viable. We cannot do it without you.

Continued on next page

Treasurer—Continued

As seen by our Generosity Ministries Team's graph below we have a small percentage of members providing the top tier of the Fellowship's operating budget.



I'm not trying "guilt" anyone here about giving money but I am trying to point out to you that the Fellowship needs on-going financial support and it requires all of us to give and for many to increase their giving. Otherwise, the Fellowship will continue to struggle financially.

Finally, I want to give a shout out to the Fellowship's staff for all that they do to keep the Fellowship the warm and welcoming place that it is. And as Treasurer I want to recognize Phyllis Schmitt, your Director of Finance and Operations, who does such a great job with the Fellowship's money; she quietly gets the job done.

In conclusion, I want to recognize the Audit Committee and thank them for all their work...

The committee is comprised of Chairperson Eric Riggers, team members Jenny Heal, Dale Lewellyn, Pete Mutschler, David Powling and me.

This year, we implemented new procedures that make it easier to train new team members as well as strengthen our audit processes. We meet on a quarterly basis to review the Fellowship's books and ensure they are in order. We have completed 3 quarterly audits of the current 2022-2023 fiscal year and it continues to be the Audit committee's opinion that the Fellowship's financial reports are accurate and fairly present the financial condition of the Fellowship, and that existing controls are adhered to by all responsible parties.

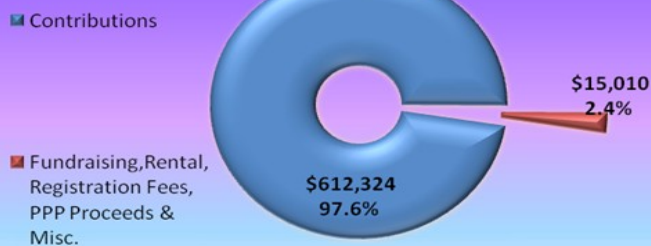
Respectfully Submitted,
Patrick Mitchell, Treasurer

By the Numbers

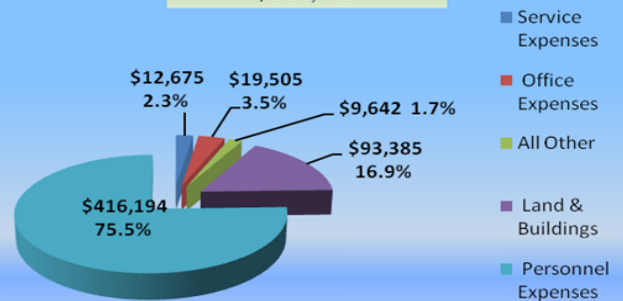
Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Concise Balance Sheet As of April 30, 2023

Assets		Liabilities	
Current Assets		Short Term Liabilities	
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 22,713	Taxes Payable & Other S-T Liabilities	\$ 25,871
Savings	239,713	Committee, Operational & Other Funds	173,654
Subtotal Current Assets	262,427	Subtotal Short Term Liabilities	199,525
Long Term Assets		Long Term Liabilities	
Endowment Fund	357,395	Mortgage Liability	471,905
Endowment Mission Account	40,691	Endowment Fund	357,395
	398,086.71	Endowment Mission Account	40,691
		Subtotal Long Term Liabilities	869,992
Fixed Assets-Land, Buildings, Furnishings, & Equipment	1,460,914	Total Liabilities	1,069,516
		Fund Balance	\$ 1,051,910
Total Assets	\$ 2,121,427	Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 2,121,427

Where our Money Comes From... Income by Category as of April 30, 2023 \$627,333



Where our Money Goes... Expenses by Category as of April 30, 2023 \$551,401



Summary of Endowment Activity Since the Last Annual Meeting

Beginning Balance May 1, 2022	\$283,074
Additions	69,883
Unrealized gain/(loss)	4,438
Endowment Mission Account	0
Ending Balance April 30, 2023	<u>\$357,395</u>

Number of Contributions by Giving Category as of April 30, 2023

