



first **UNITARIAN**
CONGREGATION | *Est.* **1845**
OF TORONTO

ANNUAL REPORT

2016-17



*Committed to love and justice, we
Seek to understand the meaning of our lives,
Connect with others in common purpose, and
Serve life to build a better world.*

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Ministers' Messages

Annual Report to the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto

I am amazed, humbled, and grateful to write my tenth annual report to you. This decade of ministry with you has been filled with such rich meaning on so many levels. I give thanks to have spent these years with you, and I look forward to the years ahead, knowing there is still much we will do together to seek, connect, and serve as we endeavour to bring more love and justice into the world.

The obvious and most significant focus for the congregation and our leadership this year has been our serious discernment about real estate. After years of exploring various real estate options, there has been a shift in external conditions that create the possibility for us to leverage our present property to bolster the congregation's well-being for generations to come.

The Real Estate Task Force, with whom I've been privileged to work this year, is providing us with wonderful guidance as we prepare for the very real possibility of selling our property at 175 St. Clair West and moving to a new site. I am deeply grateful to the RETF for their superb work, and I have every confidence they will bring us to a solution that strengthens the congregation for the long-term.

In the sermon I preached on our tenth anniversary of shared ministry, I explained I had significant reservations ten years ago at the thought of the congregation relocating. The congregation was not ready, and I wondered if First would survive. I do not feel that way today. Now, it is more a question of, "if not now, when?" The congregation is strong and mission-focussed. We have a dedicated staff and leadership team, who with their all-important combination of skill, creativity, and courage, are committed to carrying the congregation through this transition and beyond. We are in such good hands.

All of that said, in many ways, the question about where we will live out our mission is the least of the work that is before us. While relocating is a bold step to take, moving will provide us with greater possibilities for living into new ways of being a religious movement in a rapidly changing city, and in a wider social context full of challenges. The congregation I have come to know and deeply love over these past ten years is ready. We are resilient. We are capable of embracing change and seeking to live lives that are responsive and relevant to the times in which we live.

In this, I am grateful to have the wonderful partners with whom I work most closely—the Convenors and Board of Trustees, our Lay Chaplains and Lay Pastors, our worship leaders, Journey Group facilitators, the Committee on Shared Ministry, and, of course, our fabulous staff team. My deepest gratitude goes, as always, to the many members and friends who make First all that it is. Thank you for the privilege of serving you as minister. I am intensely aware that everything we accomplish as a congregation is a collaborative effort—the cumulative offering of our hands and hearts—towards the values that ennoble our days on this good green earth. May it be ever so.

Rev. Shawn Newton
Minister



Rev. Lynn Harrison, Rev. Shawn Newton and Intern Minister Danielle Webber at Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, November 2016

Minister of Community Engagement

It's been an exciting year, serving as your new Minister of Community Engagement. My half-time ministry has encompassed activities in three important areas: membership engagement, pastoral care and outreach.

It's been a joy to work with volunteers and staff, meeting newcomers in friendly first-Sunday gatherings and the new "At First" workshops. By June of this year, we will have welcomed more than fifteen new members and more than forty new "friends!"

Also, throughout the year I've worked closely with the Pastoral Care Team and Lay Pastors, providing personal pastoral care and supportive reflection circles. As well, there have been outreach opportunities, including an after-show

talk at Nightwood Theatre's "UnHoly," the keynote address at the UU Midwinter Retreat, the "Spirit Talk" radio program in Regent Park, interfaith liaison work—and (as an adjunct to my ministry at First Unitarian) "The Bridge" monthly community ministry.

This year I also served as Candidate Liaison for the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA in March, and traveled with Shawn and Danielle to Standing Rock, North Dakota, to join in prayerful resistance against the Dakota Access Pipeline.

It's been an honour to serve you, in my initial year in ministry at First. Thank you!

Rev. Lynn Harrison
Minister of Community Engagement

Intern Minister

Over the last year it has been a great joy for me to work with Shawn, Lynn, Angela, and Dallas; as well as Serena and Afsoon and all of the many volunteers at Toronto First. My time here has been rewarding, and exciting. I have learned things about myself, and about ministry in a large congregation, that I never really thought about while studying in the smaller congregation where I was a member. There are so many things that I will take away from my experience here and events that I will look back at very fondly. Thank you all. This congregation could not have been more prepared, or willing in taking up the post of my internship site.

My contract with First Toronto started on August 23, 2016, and will be completed on June 23, 2017. This internship has been in conjunction with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee's requirements for a full-time internship to attain preliminary fellowship as a UU Minister. This internship has also been in conjunction with my school work, in completing a Master's of Arts in Leadership Studies. While being in covenant with First Toronto I have participated in leadership meetings (including the board, the executive and convenor meetings), staff meetings, religious exploration /

programming meetings, several different committee's meetings (including the Aboriginal Awareness Group, Lay Chaplain's Support Group, IDEA Group, and others), the creation of worship services and congregational meetings, and held one-on-one meetings with different congregants

My denominational work includes co-authoring and facilitating a six-session workshop series on the *Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Reflection Guide for Young Adults*, as well as putting my name forward for nomination for the Central District member of Canadian Unitarian Council's Board of Trustees. I have also participated in the Young Adult Project, being run by Rev. Carly Gaylor and CUC staff member Asha Philar. As well, I offered pulpit supply to the Durham Congregation.

I have been invited to take on the summer minister position. This means I will be taking two weeks off in June, and will be back offering Sunday worship from June 25 to August 27. I am really looking forward to spending the summer with the congregation.

Daniele Webber
Intern Minister

President's Message

On July 9, 1845, the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto was formally organized. Our first home was George Street Chapel (113 -117 George St). One of our founders, James Crapper, agreed to rent his chapel to us for £32 for the first year and then to sell to the Congregation for £395.

In November 1854, the Congregation moved into a Gothic sanctuary at 216 Jarvis Street. By the 1940s, the building was in poor shape and the Congregation decided to relocate. That same year, the Congregation purchased the land on St. Clair Avenue for \$25,000, even though some members didn't want to move so far away from the city centre.

As you can see, the story of location and relocation has been part of our history. A new beginning for our Congregation is around the corner. New opportunities for partnerships and community await us.

To ensure we can embrace these new opportunities, our Board of Trustees must fulfill many duties. I extend my enormous gratitude to the members of the Board of Trustees who have been part of this amazing team. Our departing Trustee members – Art Brewer, Sarah Thurston and Eleanor Johnston – have dedicated a number of years to leadership at First and we have greatly benefitted from their wisdom, friendship and sound judgement. The contributions of these members to our Congregation are so much appreciated.

This past year, the Trustees have had to grapple many issues. Much of the work the Board of Trustees has undertaken in collaboration with a number of dedicated Committees and members,

including the Executive Committee, Chief Convenor, Ministerial Staff, Funds Management Committee, Finance Team, Communications Team, Administration team, Live Streaming and A/V team, Property Committee, Human Resources Committee, Social Events Team, Governance Revision Team, Religious Education Team, Director of Congregational Music, Worship Team and Safe Steps Advisory Group.

The Board has fiduciary responsibilities too, which must be fulfilled. Our Denominational Affairs Committee is helping us through changes related to a request from Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) to make a change in the fee structure. Working with Real Estate Task Force has also been an important part of this year's Board work.

All of this work is performed by our dedicated members of the Board of Trustees. The continuing members that will work with me over the next year are Margaret Bryant, Joe Clarke, Heino Nielsen, Sasha Akhavi, and Heather Mackintosh. We add three new Trustees to our ranks at the Annual General Meeting.

We are a community of resilience and hopes and dreams. Our quest to be a beacon of progressive faith has been our story for 172 years. As we enter this new phase of our story together, we do it with an open heart and renewed purpose to ensure First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto remains as the beacon of progressive faith we want it to be.

Susan Phillips
President, Board of Trustees

Chief Convenor's Message

I welcome this yearly opportunity to greet to our newcomers, friends and members to the annual general meeting of the congregation and to report on our many activities over the last year.

If you are new to First Unitarian, I hope this report will also inspire you to join a committee, a Sunday morning team, or to give of your talents in other ways. Our volunteers join in to give back to our community. They would also likely say they keep on volunteering because this is a great way for them to meet new friends and have some fun. The report that follows is evidence of our very busy community, which is so vital and active thanks to our staff and our volunteers.

This past year had many highlights. Despite some vacancies on our convenor team, we started new projects, kept things running, and continued to support our growing congregation. Our worship services continued to reach more people in our broader community through our livestreaming of Sunday services. We've had some wonderfully fun (and musical) fundraising events. The fundraising teams and the social events team have helped these events bring us closer together, as well as raise money to support our other activities.

The activities that take place through our denominational convenorship – Canadian Unitarian Council, youth activity, Unitarian Congregations of Greater Toronto and Unicamp – help us connect with Unitarians across Canada. Our eco-social justice groups and our many programs and journey groups have also helped us to connect with each other, and reach out to the wider community. The ongoing work of the Save a Family from Syria project has brought the wider community to our door and helped us connect with others on this important work.

Just as vital is the behind-the-scenes work of the administration team (including our very own IT

Crowd), the property committee, and the finance convenor. Because of their work, First has a new telephone system (that takes reliable messages) and a safe, stable environment that supports our programs and activities.

This past year we also repaired the roof, thanks to the tenacity of Susan Phillips and Art Brewer, our present and former Board presidents, and Ken Fair and Gina Page, our former property convenors. Our property team, supported by our custodial staff, has also kept the building in good working order, able to meet the immediate needs of our lessees and our busy congregation.

This year, changes in our bookkeeping, administrative and custodial staff kept our HR committee busy. Our finance convenor and funds management team have supported all this activity through their sound financial management practices.

Thank you all for your service!

As this Annual General Meeting brings a close to my three-year tenure as your chief convenor, I want to thank all those who have been or became a convenor during the last three years. Your help and your opinions have been invaluable. I also extend my deepest thanks and gratitude to all our staff, past and present, presidents of the Board of Trustees, and all our many volunteers. With your support and friendship, this time has sometimes been challenging and always rewarding. And yes, fun.

My thanks also, and especially, to both Beth Ann McFadden, our former chief convenor, for sharing her experience with me, and to Karen Dunk-Green, who has agreed to take on this job (along with her many others) for the next term. I know Karen will be terrific in helping us all as we move forward together.

Jane Larimer
Chief Convenor

First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto – Our Leadership Team

2016-2017 Board of Trustees

- Susan Phillips, President
- Art Brewer, Vice President
- Heino Nielsen, Secretary
- Joe Clarke, Treasurer
- Sasha Akhavi
- Margaret Bryant
- Eleanor Johnston
- Heather Mackintosh
- Sara Thurston



2016-2017 Trustees

2016-2017 Convenor Team

- Jane Larimer, Chief Convenor
- Kathy Thompson, Finance Convenor and Treasurer Emerita
- Margaret Kohr, Denominational Convenor
- Cheryl Gordon, Administration Convenor (from January 2017)
- Sue Berlove, Administration Convenor (to December 2016)
- Dominic Stones, Property Convenor (from April 2017)
- Ken Fair, Property Convenor (to March 2017)

Staff and Others We Rely On

Staff Members

- Shawn Newton, Minister
- Lynn Harrison, Minister of Community Engagement
- Daniele Webber, Intern Minister
- Angela Klassen, Director of Lifespan Religious Education
- Dallas Bergan, Director of Congregational Music
- Afsoon Saaba, Congregational Administrator
- Daniel Grzymisch, Senior Bookkeeper
- Neelam Chhabara, Junior Bookkeeper
- Veronica McFarlane, Custodian
- Andrew Foley, Cleaner

Lay Pastors

- Allan Brand
- Holly Dennison
- Jeanne Van Bronkhorst

Lay Chaplains:

- Jan Crowley
- Karen Dunk-Green
- Sue Meggs



Staff Reports

Congregational Music

I am thankful to have marked another year of great music at First. Lisa Iwasaki anchors the weekly service with her wonderful ability to choose music that meets the moment of the service. The choir started the year with a great September retreat and has met new musical challenges in the past months. Spring has brought an influx of new members. We are thrilled to have Stephanie Hotchkiss back after she took a couple months off following the birth of her newborn son Benjamin. We look forward to Tahirih Vejdani's return following a contract with the Stratford festival.

Highlights this past year have included "Improv Sunday" where our team of Resident Musicians randomly drew cards containing a musical style and one of our seven principles and created an improvised piece for each pair. In December we performed three movements from Adolphus Hailstork's "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes", which

contained a breadth of style from symphonic to blues and gospel, and featured Lucas Marchand as tenor soloist and Lisa Iwasaki as accompanist. In April, Ben Macdonald took on the music direction for a service and brought new musical flavours and instrumentation in what was a stunning service that was punctuated by a joyous singing of the congregational hymn, Woyaya.

With several other fundraising endeavors and contribution requests of our members happening in the past year, it was collectively decided that we would take a year off from a musical fundraiser for the congregation after seeing diminishing returns from our still worthy and successful Celebrate with Song event.

Preparations are underway for a new fundraiser concert soon. Stay tuned for more details!

Dallas Bergin
Director of Congregational Music

Lifespan Religious Education

This year, our programs for children, youth and adults have thrived thanks to the deep commitment and skill offered by teachers, facilitators and organizers too numerous to mention individually.

Highlights that have helped build our UU identity as well as our sense of belonging in faith community include:

- 130 people attending 16 Journey Groups, including a new group to welcome "Youngish UUs" hosted by the DLRE
- 75 children and youth attending classes and field trips

2016-2017 Journey Group Themes

What does it mean to be a person of...

Invitation	<i>September</i>
Blessing	<i>October</i>
Letting Go	<i>November</i>
Expectation	<i>December</i>
Creation	<i>January</i>
Love & Justice	<i>February</i>
Simplicity	<i>March</i>
Resistance	<i>April</i>
Compassion	<i>May</i>

- Our OWL ministry continues to serve the lifespan and to attract friends and visitors from beyond the congregation as we held classes for 15 Kindergarten to Grade 1 students and our Youth Group hosted 25 youth from across southern Ontario at the Grade 10-12 weekend intensive.
- 14 "Wise" Elders meeting monthly
- 66 children and parents attending the Winter Family Retreat
- Strong participation at Unicamp among First families and teens serving as Counsellors in Training/Leaders in Training

I would especially like to thank the Board of Directors for providing resources for a skilled and consistent paid care-giver to support neuro-diverse children in classroom activities and OWL so that we can truly be as welcoming to all as we would wish.

Finally, thank you to my staff colleagues, Rev. Shawn Newton, Rev. Lynn Harrison, Afsoon Saaba, Dallas Bergen, Andrew Foley, Veronica MacFarlane and Danielle Webber, with whom it is a joy to collaborate and to serve at First.

Angela Klassen
Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Committees and Projects of the Congregation

Nominating Committee Report

Nominating Committee Members:

Carol Damioli (chair), David Priebe, Brigit Swenson, Beth Ann McFadden, and Alan Brand

The Nominating Committee presents the following nominees:

For the Board: Terri Marks, Terri Palmer, Mary Anne Roche and Susan Philips (Note: Susan Philips, current President of the Board of Trustees, is running for re-election to a second one-year term)

For the Funds Management Committee: David Priebe

For the Nominating Committee: Art Brewer, Emily Larimer, Gilbert Salgado

Terms of Office:

Regular board trustee terms are for three years. Nominating Committee terms are for two years. The Funds Management Committee term is for three years.

Nominee Biographies

Terri Marks – Board trustee

Terri Marks has been a member of First Unitarian for the past 13 years. She has been a member of both the Healthy Congregations and the Nominating Committees at First. In addition to her almost 20 years of teaching experience, Terri offers her coaching, facilitation, and conflict management skills to the board. Terri is a graduate of the University of Toronto and has a Masters in Organizational Leadership from the University of Denver.

Terri is currently finishing a PhD in Organization Development at Benedictine University in Chicago. Terri loves learning and is very excited to begin a new chapter of leadership at First. She loves this community and hopes that she can make a positive impact.

Terri Palmer – Board trustee

Terri Palmer was born in Columbus, Ohio, and moved to Toronto in 2003. She has bachelor's degrees in English and math and a PhD in rhetoric. She has worked in jobs ranging from secretary in the medical department of a county jail to assistant professor of English. She now works as a technical writer on contract to a bank.

She came to First because she wanted to do more good in the world. She has volunteered for many organizations, such as the Toronto Humane Society and the Canadian Diabetes Association, and wanted to go somewhere to meet like-minded people who wanted to work together for the greater good. She says that groups like First work for the human world and for the environment, and that the world as a whole is something to love, heal, and make better. To her, that's what a church should be about.

Susan Phillips – Board trustee

Susan Phillips grew up on the West Coast of BC in the greater Vancouver area. She studied at the University of Waterloo and was the first graduate of the Women's Studies program there.

In 1998 Susan moved to Toronto with partner Anne Gloger to start a whole new adventure. They have travelled often and love discovering new places and meeting new people. Susan found her spiritual home when Anne introduced her to First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto.

Susan enjoys her work at First: on Engage & Connect Team and the Board of Trustees and as part of the Real Estate Task Force. She has made many deep friendships while volunteering at First. She says that the gifts she has received from being part of this Congregation far outweigh the hours she volunteers here.

Mary Anne Roche – Board trustee

Mary Anne Roche grew up in Alberta, spent time in Ottawa and Vancouver, and lived in Toronto for many years. She first discovered Unitarianism in Vancouver, where the commitment to intellectual freedom intrigued her. Mary Anne is a participant in First's Spiritual Leadership Development Program and coordinates the Engage and Connect Team. Last year, she participated in First's production of *The Vagina Monologues*.

Professionally, she is the Senior Vice President for Global Initiatives and Governance at YMCA Canada, a national charity. In this role, she supports the Canadian YMCA federation in the delivery of its international programs and represents YMCA Canada in global forums. She

also supports the YMCA Canada National Board, particularly the work of the governance committee.

She earned a master's degree in adult education from the University of Toronto, with a focus on workplace learning and change, and holds certificates in not-for-profit governance.

David Priebe – Funds Management Committee
David Priebe is a member of the First Unitarian choir, and has served as a Greeter.

His career started with the Social Planning Council and ended up with the Ontario public service, where he served as Special Advisor to the Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing. He has also offered research, policy, and communications services to various community agencies.

David says that as a father and grandfather, family life plays a large role in keeping him grounded. He also says that the fellowship he has enjoyed at First has become his larger community.

Art Brewer – Nominating Committee

Art Brewer joined the congregation in 1993 and since then has served in many leadership capacities, including President of the board, Chief Convenor, Member Services Convenor, and Canvass Chair. He is currently finishing his fifth year on the board, and several years ago served on the nominating committee.

Over the years, Art has also been active in the denomination at the national level, particularly in work to support LGBTQ+ persons through the Welcoming Congregation program. All UU congregations in Canada have now completed the program and have been certified by the Canadian Unitarian Council as Welcoming Congregations.

After a 32-year management career in the telecom industry and a 15-year "post retirement" career as an adult educator, Art entered into full retirement in January 2016. Art loves travel and will be going on an Arctic cruise this summer. He also loves music, and plays trumpet in two dance bands.

Emily Larimer -- Nominating Committee
Emily Larimer joined First Unitarian Toronto in 1996. She was also raised as a Unitarian and was dedicated by a Unitarian minister at the First Unitarian Church in Sioux City, Iowa.

Since becoming a member, Emily has done many things. She was the bookkeeper for about a year in 1999 and then again for about 6 months in 2010. She was a Sunday school teacher in 1998 and studied to teach “Our Whole Lives” with the Reverend Greg Ward in 1999. She served on the nominating committee in 2006. Currently she serves as a greeter and usher one Sunday a month.

Emily is a certified general accountant (CGA). One of the biggest joys in her life was returning to Canada in 2000, after spending a year in Atlanta, Georgia.

Gilbert Salgado – Nominating Committee
Gilbert Salgado was born and raised in the South

Bronx, New York. At middle school, he learned his father’s art of negotiations involving street gang leaders to find peace and respect to carry on with life around them. In high school, he and other student leaders organized student strikes, negotiating the policy to have lunch outside of school. In the early 1970s they emptied the school to march through Manhattan against the Vietnam War, disappointing President Nixon.

Gilbert has been a shop steward to New York City’s paramedics, organized to change corruption, won union leadership, and made accountability a reality with open books accounting of members’ dues. That road and schooling groomed him to negotiate against pencil pushers, politicians, commissioners, and arbitrators to settle contracts. He taught occupational safety and health, and was a hiring panelist for the union until immigrating to Canada. He calls semi-retirement his UU time.

Real Estate Task Force

The Real Estate Task Force (RETF) was authorized to begin its work in September 2016 after a Congregational Meeting. In that meeting, we outlined reasons why renovating our current premises is not an effective strategy for both financial and practical reasons. The congregation then voted in favour of pursuing an alternate strategy, i.e. entering the real estate market formally to find a new premises solution.

Since the September 2016 meeting, the RETF has completed the following steps:

- Established Terms of Reference with the Board and confirmed with the Board that the RETF has authority to spend within defined limits on professional services to assist us (e.g. lawyers, engineers, architects)
- Issued a formal Request for Proposal and reviewed submissions by 5 commercial real estate firms to represent First in the real estate market and selected Colliers International

- Reviewed the work of the previous “Building for the Future” task force, and updated our Needs Analysis via surveys and discussions, to determine mandatory needs for any new premises solution;
- Hosted two Congregational Conversations (March 12 and 29, 2017) to discuss Needs Analysis and a range of ideal/ compromise / unacceptable choices to gather congregational feedback;
- Toured potential sites that meet our general search criteria and reviewed the pros and cons of each site
- Prepared required Due Diligence documentation to be provided to any parties interested in purchasing our property (e.g. site survey, building condition report, engineer’s report).

Throughout this work we are maintaining contact with the congregation through pulpit announcements, articles in First Light, Congregational Conversations, presentation documents, and Congregational Meetings.

Save a Family from Syria

We have completed our one-year commitment to our five beautiful Syrian newcomer families – all of them arriving here about one year ago, looking to start new lives in their new homes. Five teams of 10 to 15 volunteers supported each family with the many housing, medical, education, financial, social, and employment needs. There have been struggles and hardships along the way, but so many successes, happy moments, and big achievements. The families have become independent, empowered members of their communities, and it has been an absolute privilege helping them navigate life in Canada. Life-long friendships have been struck and all our lives have been changed forever.

An application to sponsor Family 6 was submitted in October 2016, but there has not yet been an update from the Central Processing Office. SAFFS hopes to sponsor more families in partnership with the Muslim Association of Canada, but with the backlog of thousands of applications, more stringent requirements, and slower processing times, it may be some time before we are preparing for their arrival.

The amount of funds raised and not spent is approximately \$105,000 (*to be verified by auditor report*). This surplus will be put in a separate investment fund. The principal will be for the explicit purpose for which it was raised, which is to sponsor Syrian refugees. The interest of this investment fund will go into the congregation operational funds.

Please plan to attend the June meeting, planned to keep the congregation informed of our progress.

Karen Dunk-Green
Chair, Real Estate Task Force

For those of you wishing a more detailed update on the families, please refer to First's social justice activities on the website, or click on this link: [SAFFS update](#).

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone once again for their support.

Beth van der Weerd
Annette Wilde
Co-Chairs, Save a Family from Syria



Convenor and Committee Reports

Administration

Sue Berlove served as Administration Convenor from June 2014 until December 2016 and Cheryl Gordon came on board soon afterwards.

This year we said thank you and goodbye to Congregation Administrator Serena Shovlin, and welcomed Afsoon Sabaa. Afsoon came to support us during the holiday season in December 2016 and became a permanent staff member in March 2017.

We want to thank Veronica McFarlane and Andrew Foley (who joined us last summer) for their continued service as our Custodian and Cleaner, for keeping our building clean and organized, as well as for their work in setting up for the many events in the building – ours and those of our lessees.

Part of the Administrator Convenor portfolio is supporting an IT team that now plays a leadership role in all things technical at First. Current members of the IT Team include Dave Cox, Dave Doyle, Jamie McKay, Andrew McAlister, Mo MacMahon, Jim Mason and Sue Berlove (Chair).

This group has helped with internet cabling, on line video streaming of Sunday service and the installation of our new VOIP (Voice Over

Internet Protocol) phone system. With this team in place, we are now able to approach technical issues in a coordinated manner. The IT team includes volunteers working on various projects, including: the website, live-streaming the Sunday services, ensuring internet access, choosing and adapting software and installing the hardware we need to support all this technical work. We also work with an IT supplier that assists when necessary.

Realm, our membership database, is running efficiently. We are now benefitting from last year's cleanup project. In February of this year, the 2016 tax receipts were successfully emailed to all members. The database now produces the many reports required to handle donations and manage member services. There are additional features in Realm that will be adapted to support staff in the future.

In recent months the IT team has been working with our webmasters to improve the ways staff, volunteers and groups conduct email communication. It is also exploring tools for online collaboration, and both the sharing and storage of church documents.

**Sue Berlove, Admin Convenor, 2014-2016
Cheryl Gordon, Admin Convenor**

Property

The property team has again been busy this last year. Thank you to Jean Galt, MJ Blackman, Hope Paul, Anne Murdock, John Lewis, Veronica McFarlane, Wendy Dines, and Dominic Stones.

Health and Safety:

Zoe King resigned from her role in congregational health and safety due to personal time constraints. Veronica McFarlane took over this role until Wendy Dines assumed the role in early 2017. The health and safety team has conducted a CPR course, maintained the strips

on the stairs to the narthex, and placed a ramp at the exit of Sutherland, among other things.

New Tenants on Third Floor:

The property committee did considerable work in preparation for the new tenants on the third floor, including moving all the items and furniture from the rooms, removing the shelving from 304, moving furniture into 304, installing blinds in 304, removing blinds in the new offices, stripping everything off the walls, getting a door installed on the closet of 304, and

getting new dusk to dawn lighting in the west walkway.

Fire Department Inspection:

The fire department was called in to inspect the new fire panel. At the time they inspected the entire building and cited First Unitarian with a number of violations, such as doors not closing, items blocking exits, items in the bottom of the stairwell, fire doors propped open, combustible items stored in the roof access room (which has an open flame in the water heater). All of the violations were addressed (the door closures and new doors were an unexpected and rather large expense) and the fire inspector closed the file.

Patch and Paint:

The patch and paint team of MJ Blackman has continued to patch and paint, and has continued to maintain and beautify the premises.

Roof:

The scope of the roof repair was reduced due to the anticipated departure of the congregation (due to selling the premises). The work was completed late March by Triumph Roofing. The repairs should be good for five years.

De-cluttering:

A major trash removal was conducted on June 11, 2016. Dave's Rubbish Removal was hired to take away 3 truckloads of rubbish. Thanks to the many volunteers who helped out that day: John Lewis, Michael Stroh, MJ Blackman, Hope Paul,

Stephanie, Ken, Bob, Jane, Veronica, and Jack Dodds.

Lighting:

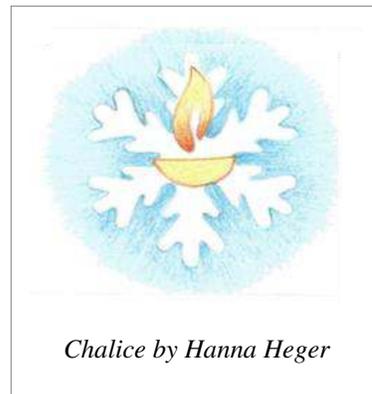
The tower lights were replaced with energy efficient LED lighting, thanks to a generous donation by Sue McLeod. The energy savings will be considerable: almost 85% less energy is required with the LED lamps than with the previous quartz halogen lighting.

The motion sensor lighting in the west walkway was replaced with dusk to dawn LED lighting.

New Property Convenor:

Ken Fair has resigned as property convenor because he is going to Mexico for 7 months, and likely longer. Dominic Stones has graciously agreed to be the property convenor.

**Ken Fair
Property Convenor, 2016-2017**



Denominational Affairs

The major area of responsibility for Denominational Affairs is to maintain relationships between First Toronto and the other denominational organisations with which we are affiliated or connected. First Congregation of Toronto has a long history of active involvement in denominational organisations and in regional, national, and international UU matters.

Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC):

Because so many of our congregations are geographically isolated, the opportunity to come

together at the CUC's annual Meeting and Conference is, for many people, a highlight of the congregational year. It is a chance to bring together Canadian UUs from across the country for discussion and dialogue on significant issues, especially in the context of UUism in Canada. Significantly, over the past few years the CUC has developed resources for congregations wanting to become more involved in Truth, Healing and Reconciliation and has implemented a series of webinars for congregations to participate more fully in those discussions over the course of the year.

At the ACM in 2016 the CUC determined that, to minimise costs and the environmental impact, the Conference would happen only every two years (while continuing to hold its annual general meeting). The AGM for 2017 was hosted at First Toronto, and many delegates attended online via Zoom platform. Our delegates, Susan Phillips, Sasha Akhavi, Wendy Peebles, Bill Dunk-Green, Heino Neilsen, Ted Wood and Margaret Kohr took advantage of the great location, and attended in person. This year the main resolution under discussion concerned an increase to the Annual Program Contribution from the current \$93 to \$100, which passed.

Next year the Conference and AGM will be held in Hamilton, an easy trip from Toronto!

Denominational Youth Activity:

On the last weekend in March our youth group hosted a Senior High OWL conference, attended by about 25 youth and 10 advisors/facilitators from around southern Ontario. Toronto, Mississauga, Durham, Peterborough, Hamilton, and Ottawa were represented. Congratulations on this successful conference!

Unitarian Congregations of Greater Toronto

The UCGT continues to be a conduit to promote congregational events to other congregations, and provides a web portal (www.ucgt.ca/portal)

that allows visitors to easily access the websites of the various GTA congregations and see what's happening across the city.

Over the last few years there has been declining interest from the GTA congregations to act in unison under the formal organizational umbrella of UCGT. Joint participation in social justice initiatives, Pride, etc., has diminished. However, one-to-one interactions between congregations remain strong, especially at the leadership levels, as congregations are dealing with similar issues (such as space and financial constraints).

The opportunity remains for those passionate about issues that could benefit from a co-ordinated Toronto-wide presence (e.g., social justice, interfaith activities). If you are such an individual, please contact Calvin Drake (drake@inforamp.net).

Unicamp:

The programs offered by Unicamp between May and October are enjoyed by many, including children, youth and adults. Thanks to Iris Murray and Ben Robbins, who represent First on the Unicamp board.

<http://www.unicampofontario.ca/Home-Page.php>

Margaret Kohr
Denominational Convenor



Lay Chaplaincy

The Lay Chaplaincy Committee members are Peter Brydon, Jennifer Drinkwater, Bill Parsons and Margaret Kohr (LC liaison).

Meetings of the committee were held at the church on 17th January, 13th March, 11th September, and 13th November 2016, in addition to a joint meeting with the Lay Chaplains

Support Group, held on 16th February. It was agreed to continue these joint meetings twice yearly, with the next one in June 2017.

Meetings of the Lay Chaplains Support Group were held at the church on 21st January, 18th February, 23rd April, 3rd June, 15th September,

27th October, 17th November and 15th December 2017.

Jennifer Drinkwater joined the committee during 2015. After many years in the role as LC Coordinator, Carol Dodds resigned in the spring of 2016 and was replaced by Elizabeth Guthrie. The LC coordinator serves as the administrator for the lay chaplains, taking phone calls and e-mails related to requests for LC services, passing them on to the lay chaplains. The coordinator is also responsible for keeping track of the LC schedules and ensuring, as best as possible, an even distribution of services. The coordinator and the LCs are using google calendar to make scheduling more transparent for all concerned.

In 2015 a New Lay Chaplain Selection Committee was struck, consisting of Ellen Campbell, Ilene Cummings, Jennifer Drinkwater and Heino Nielsen. The committee recommended the appointment of Karen Dunk-Green as new LC to the Board in January 2016.

During 2016 Margo Holland completed her extended 3-year term, which began in the fall of 2013. Jan Crowley and Sue Meggs continued their 6-year terms, which began in the fall of

Human Resources Committee

The Human Resources Committee was active during the past year in the recruitment and hiring of several permanent and contract staff members, including:

- Afsoon Sabaa, congregation administrator
- Daniel Grzymisch, senior bookkeeper
- Andrew Foley, cleaner

The committee has also been active in ensuring that performance reviews take place for our existing staff members, and in maintaining and

IDEA Group

The Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Group met several times this year and is looking at ways to move forward with the implementation of the Diversity Scan Report recommendations and considering means of addressing accessibility issues at First Unitarian.

2015. Karen Dunk-Green began her 6-year term in the fall of 2016.

In 2016 the lay chaplains performed 19 weddings, 12 memorial services, and no child dedications. The complete statistics are attached as a separate document. The total of 31 ceremonies is up from the low of 24 in 2015, but still down from the range of 50-60 ceremonies of the 2006-11 period. We hope 2016 was the sign of a new upward trend.

The lay chaplains are working on an improved web site for lay chaplaincy. It will be separate from, but linked to, the main church web site. Bill Dunk-Green is providing technical input.

John Cummings and Karen Dunk-Green worked on the lay chaplaincy statistics for 2016. Karen produced a much-improved spreadsheet to record the ceremonies, which is now in use. The Lay Chaplaincy Statistics are attached as an appendix to this report.

John Cummings
Chair, Lay Chaplaincy Committee

updating the [Human Resources Policy](#) document on our website.

Committee members include Margaret Bryant, Diane Strong, Nancy Semkin and Cheryl Gordon. Jane Larimer has chaired the committee. As Jane's position as Chief Convenor ends, Margaret Bryant will now take on that leadership role. If you want to learn more about the committee, please contact Margaret at MargaretBryant@FirstUnitarianToronto.org.

We are providing support to educational workshops organized by the Board and are planning to host some workshops for the congregation in the upcoming year.

Wendy Peebles Chair

Newcomer Services

This year, our regular Newcomer Information sessions continued on the first Sunday of each month, with Rev. Lynn Harrison joining Diane Wagner in a friendly, informative and welcoming hour for newcomers to First.

An average of five people attended these sessions each month, and 25 people took part in the new “At First” workshops (“Seek,” “Connect” and “Serve”) that were successfully piloted this year.

The members of the Greeting and Engage & Connect teams all were instrumental in the

welcoming and engagement of approximately forty newcomers to First this year—many of whom have taken part in volunteer opportunities, social events and other gatherings.

Thanks to the assistance of engaged volunteers, new initiatives are currently underway for a new Welcome Package for newcomers and attractive new indoor signage.

Thank you to everyone who is working to make First Unitarian ever more friendly and welcoming!

Lynn Harrison, Minister of Community Engagement

Fundraising

Our fundraising this last 12 months included **Celebrate with Song, Red Hot Ramble, the Dinner Series**, and a **Euchre Night**. The Time and Talent Auction will return this fall, as will other events. These events raised more than

seven thousand dollars that supported our other activities. But these wonderful events do more than raise funds – they also bring us closer together and help build our community. We hope you’ll join us at an event in 2017-2018.

Sunday Coffee

We are very grateful to the large team of dedicated volunteers who prepare and serve refreshments following the worship service on Sunday mornings. In the past year we had 40 people helping out with coffee service on a regular basis,



plus a few additional volunteers who stepped up to help out when we were short staffed. Coffee hour is a really important time for us to connect so our wonderful volunteers make a significant contribution to the vitality of our congregation.

Wendy Peebles, Coordinator

Social Events

The Social Events team hosted three gatherings during the year – a Thanksgiving potluck, a winter potluck, and Waffles on Easter Sunday.

Members of the team also supported lunches during congregational meetings, and helped bring food and fun to fundraising events.

Thanks to them, and to everyone in the congregation, for joining us throughout the year. If you are a host at heart, we’d love to have you join a team.

Jane Larmer, Coordinator



Greeters

We are always looking for new greeters. Our weekly teams are not fully staffed some Sundays, as we lost some volunteers this year.

We will carry on trying to find new individuals and families that would be willing to welcome people on Sunday morning.

Linda Brown, Coordinator

Live Stream

In June 2016, we started to livestream our Sunday morning services on the internet as a service to members and friends who are unable to attend in person due to illness, travel or other reasons.

Cecil Bannister, a member of the First Unitarian Church of Victoria has been a wonderful resource in helping us set up the required technology, and one of the benefits arising from this relationship is that we share the operating costs (\$50/month) with that congregation, which can use the same internet service provider since their services occur three hours later than ours due to the difference in time zones.

Ushers

Our team of dedicated, loyal ushers has had a successful year without major problems. We have recruited enough new ushers to keep our weekly teams mostly at four ushers each. As of April 2, 2017, we have beautiful new collection baskets from Uganda courtesy of a generous donation by Bill Belfontaine.

Jim Mason, Coordinator

There have been many technical challenges to overcome, but a huge vote of thanks is due to Kim Saltarski, who installed the necessary hardware and software and continues to work tirelessly to troubleshoot new problems as they arise. We are also indebted to our wonderful team of sound booth volunteers who make it all work every Sunday - Michael Battenburg, MJ Blackman, Derek Manning and Joe Muller.

The service has proven to be very popular, with an average of 10-20 viewers each week. Work is now underway to record and edit some of our services and to post them at our website for anyone to view as a podcast.

Art Brewer

Engage & Connect

“Are you as connected as you would like to be at First?” That’s the question the Engage and Connect Team asks when you stop by the E and C table, located just outside Workman Hall.

With a simple email to the right person, the Team facilitates the pathway to deeper engagement at First. In 2016, more than 100 connections were made for newcomers and First

regulars alike – to volunteer roles, to our social justice committees, to Journey groups, to First Light - helping to enable our Congregation’s shared vision of connecting with others to build a better world.

Thanks and appreciation to the dedicated Engage and Connect Team: Linda Brown, Kate Cottingham, Susan Phillips, Francesca Schiavone, and Kimberly Watson.

Mary Anne Roche, Coordinator

Bookstore

The bookstore is open on Sunday mornings during coffee hour. At present we have only one volunteer most weeks. New volunteers would be welcome.

The congregation supports the bookstore with donations of used books, CDs, and DVDs. Members of the congregation can offer items via the “Local Authors” table, where members of the congregation can sell their own books, CDs, and cards. These items are either on consignment (40% of the proceeds going to the church) or donations.

Our most popular items continue to be used paperback books, and used CDs and DVDs, and copies of sermons. There is a small but steady demand for Unitarian books and jewellery from the UUA Bookstore in Boston.

The Bookstore finished the year with a profit of \$1189.40, a little less than the budgeted \$1200. Approximately half of this came from the sale of used books, CDs, and DVDs. The remainder was split between sermons and directories (18%), new Unitarian-theme books and jewellery (18%), and items produced by members of the congregation (14%).

**Lynn Hughes,
Bookstore Coordinator**



Joan Toogood and Hope Paul prepare for Flower Communion Sunday

Library and Issues & Ideas

The library committee purchases, or acquires through donation, a number of new books every year in order to keep our church library up to date. We also prune our collection of out-of-date materials. We have a strong collection of Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist books as well as books relating to every aspect of religion. This year we have paid special attention to our collection of volumes on Buddhism and Hinduism, which include books on religious practices, mysticism, and resources for storytelling. Our plan for the upcoming year includes

processing our special collection of historical materials and making a plan to make these books more available.

The committee is also responsible for the monthly book report and discussion event, Issues and Ideas. Thanks to Gerta Moray, who recruits for and plans these sessions, Issues and Ideas continues to be a success, eliciting much participation and a lively sharing of thoughts.

Peter Hughes
Chair, Library Committee

Arts Committee

Committee members are Kate Cottington, Jean Galt, Judy Clarke, Judy Skelton, Barbara de Beaupré, Wendy Dines, and Brigitte Nowak

Sunderland Hall monthly art exhibitions and opening receptions bring new visitors into our midst, and artists' talks stimulate discussion. Artists wishing to exhibit their work should contact Kate Cottington at Arts@FirstUnitarianToronto.org

In the Library, members' exhibits rotate every 2 months. Interested artists should contact Judy Clarke.

Exhibition fees and commission fees (20% of sales) provide ongoing fundraising for First. The 2016 total raised through fees was \$1,402.60.

Kate Cottington, Coordinator



Wendy Ounpuu and Linda Heron

2016 Exhibits in Sunderland Hall

<i>January</i>	Palette Expressions group	<i>July & August</i>	Members from Artists' Network
<i>February</i>	Indigenous artist Clayton King	<i>September</i>	Steve Rose
<i>March</i>	First members and friends	<i>October</i>	Shir Libeynu
<i>April</i>	York Artists Guild	<i>November</i>	Jean Galt, Wendy Ounpuu, Wendy Dines
<i>May</i>	John Visser		
<i>June</i>	Susan Faquhar	<i>December</i>	Indigenous artists' group

Eco/Social Justice Reports

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

The Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) Toronto First Chapter not is requesting recognition as a Social Justice project of the congregation. This report is included for information purposes only.

Supporters include:

- Margaret Rao
- Catherine Cottington
- Douglas Buck
- Fred Lautenschlaeger
- Kate Chung
- Gerta Moray
- Eryl Court
- Margaret Rao
- Jack Dodds
- Ted Wood
- Beth Guthrie

Project Description:

The Toronto Chapter of CUSJ (Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice) includes members involved in local, regional, national and international debate and action in matters of social, economic, environmental and political justice.



*First Unitarian Members and CUSJ Supporters
Margaret Rao and Beth Guthrie*

The Toronto Chapter’s activities include letter writing, petition signing, posting articles and events on the Social Justice bulletin board and on the Eco-Social Justice Group list serve as well as in ‘First Light’. CUSJ’s quarterly newsletter, “JUSTnews” is a springboard for discussion and action.

CUSJ’s banner was raised in a number of climate, anti-pipeline, anti-Islamophobia, anti-free trade, pro-fair trade, pro-democracy, including electoral reform, national housing and international women’s solidarity demonstrations.

Many thanks to Toronto First member Jack Dodds for his presentation and briefs to the federal government’s Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security on Bill C-22 (National Security and Intelligence Oversight Committee) and Bill C-23 (Pre-clearance Act for U.S. Customs and Border Protection). These briefs are posted on CUSJ’s website at <http://cusj.org/>.

CUSJ Toronto Chapter also co-hosts bi-monthly eco-social justice films. We began the year with a series of audience choice ‘short docs’ that set the tone for the challenging year ahead, including U.K. inspired ‘Transition Towns’. We end the year with ‘Revolution: Save the Humans’ by the late eco-activist and well-beloved Torontonians Rob Stewart.

**Margaret Rao, Chair
Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice**

Eco/Social Justice Groups Applying for Recognition as Congregational Projects

Description

This congregation supports selected official social justice projects or groups. The official social justice projects are voted on by the congregation at the AGM. Affiliated groups are groups that exist outside the congregation, but have congregational support or chapters. All projects are entitled to the support of the congregation through access to Sunday services and after-service activities, publicity through venues such as Horizons and the Order of Service, the use of facilities, and a special collection.

Criteria

In order for the social justice groups to demonstrate their viability and accountability, we require that they meet the following expectations:

- Each group has a chair and/or contact who is a member in good standing (i.e. a member who has made a donation in the last 12 months).
- The group has an updated list of 10 backers/supporters who are members in good standing. Groups are encouraged to seek out new members to join.
- Each group will meet at least twice a year.

- Each group will provide an annual report to the Social Justice Convenor in which they outline their list of backers, meetings held, actions taken, results achieved, the amount of money raised, and how it was allocated and/or spent by the group during the year. This report will go into the Annual Report.

Process (Annual timetable)

Reports from social justice groups will be due to the Social Justice Convenor by March 31. If a group fails to fulfill the above criteria, they will not be recommended to the Congregation for the coming year.

- At their April meeting, the Convenor Team will develop the list of approved projects and recommend the list to the congregation.
- At the May Annual General Meeting the Congregation will vote on the list of approved social justice groups/projects for the next year (September to June). Approval at the AGM makes it possible to schedule special Sundays in the worship calendar for the coming year.

Aboriginal Awareness Group (AAG)

The AAG is requesting recognition as a Social Justice project of the congregation in 2017.

Prime Contact: Gilbert Salgado
GilbertSalgado@firstunitariantoronto.org

Financial Information:

All funds raised through special offerings, approximately \$900, have supported our contribution to the Na Me Res annual Pow Wow.

Supporters: The AAG has 25 regular members, including:

- Gilbert Salgado
- Douglas Buck
- Kate Chung
- Judy Clark
- Bev Ellis
- Nancy Lee
- Terry Lee
- Andrea Hatala
- Genevieve Iacovino
- Mona el Baraoudi
- Olja Muller
- Margaret Newall
- Nancy Chisholm

Project Description:

The AAG held 10 monthly planning meetings in 2016-17. As of February 2017, we have a bi-monthly email list of about 30 First members who receive First Peoples civic and educational events and activities in the GTA and Ontario. The AAG is active in the Aboriginal and Indigenous Working Groups Coalition, here in the greater Toronto area, sharing experiences and events, while engaged in interdenominational cooperation on issues indigenous to Canada.

Our mission is to better understand and to be supportive of the social justice issues of importance to Canadian indigenous peoples and to deepen our knowledge of our history and indigenous spirituality.

Since 2012 our group planning has grown to incorporate our efforts more smoothly with the Ministers, the Art Committee, UU's at the UN, Amnesty International, Issues and Ideas of our Library. The AAG members individually and collectively have had a presence in the GTA, Ontario, and other provinces' indigenous events as UU's and as First'ers. Some specifics are:

- NaMeRes (Native men's residence) on Vaughan Road has had volunteers in their kitchen and at the annual Pow Wow in Fort York. In addition, we donated funds raised through the special collection, and an additional amount (about \$400), to the 2017

- Pow Wow – an increase to our commitment to supporting this vital relationship.
- We continue to serve as a resource to our Ministers in all things indigenous and celebrated their courage for attending at Standing Rock praying.
- We routinely announce our open meetings in the Events Calendar of First Light and contribute articles to it in attempt to grow connection of indigenous issues for our congregational life.
- AAG members have done book reviews for Issues and Ideas.
- Co-sponsored indigenous art work reception with the Arts Committee.
- The AAG has had food catered for the congregation by an indigenously owned restaurant.
- Danielle Webber's Pilot Guide Project on Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation for the CUC had its reception catered by our members and the registration for its workshops was successful.
- Margaret Newall was instrumental in working with the ministers to have an Elder speak at a Sunday service and in a workshop for the Toronto YWCA's Wanona's Place (a secure shelter for abused indigenous women).

Please attend our June 2017 Blanket Exercise that will be led by Danielle Webber. It is a powerful tool in understanding the loss of indigenous territory in Canada.

Amnesty International Group 142

Amnesty International Group 142 is requesting recognition as a Social Justice project of the congregation in 2017.

Prime Contact: Ted Wood
Tedwood@rogers.com



Supporters include:

- Peter Brydon
- Doug Campbell
- Ellen Campbell
- Kate Cottington
- Shirley Grant
- Hanna Heger
- Johanna Lanfranco
- Roderick McLeod
- Susan McLeod
- Jane Munro
- Kathleen O’Hara
- Wendy Peebles
- Judy Skelton
- Ted Wood

Financial Information:

Revenues: \$1,488 received through the special collection for Amnesty International

Expenses: Nil

All funds raised are donated to Amnesty Canada, which issues tax receipts for the donations. Amnesty Canada allows Group 142 to retain a small portion of the money to help pay for expenses

Project Description:

Amnesty Group 142 campaigns to stop and prevent human rights abuses with our main focus the rights of Indigenous Peoples. We also participated in Amnesty’s “I Welcome Refugees” campaign and we supported human rights defenders.

Meetings Held, Actions Taken, Results Achieved:

We meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month and organize letter signing on the 4th Sunday of the month. We also organized Amnesty Sunday on December 4, 2016 to celebrate International Human Rights Day.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples calls on all states to honour treaties and agreements with Indigenous Peoples, to protect Indigenous languages and cultures, and to uphold Indigenous Peoples’ rights to lands, territories and resources. In the past year we have organized actions in Canada and in Central and South America on behalf of Indigenous Peoples and will continue to do so in 2017-2018.

Refugee actions taken were in relation to refugees from Syria and policies in Greece and Canada. Other campaigns included actions related to Iran, Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela.

We are thankful for the ongoing support of the congregation for the extremely important human rights work of Amnesty International.

Canadian Unitarian Universalist Women’s Association (CUUWA) Toronto First Chapter

The CUUWA, Toronto First Chapter, is requesting recognition as a Social Justice project of the congregation in 2017.

Prime Contact: Gerta Moray
Gmoray@uoguelph.ca

Finances:

In February 2017, a team led by Gerta Moray, with the support of Rev. Lynn Harrison, organized an IWD celebration, The Pussy Hat Monologues, where members of the congregation provided entertainment (poetry,

songs, skits, historical dialogues) that accompanied a potluck dinner celebration. We raised \$650 which went directly to Sistering.

List of Supporters includes:

- Gerta Moray
- Gillian Burton
- Wendy Dines
- Mo MacMahon
- Winnie Larson
- Kate Chung
- Terri Palmer
- Nancy Lee
- Terry Lee
- Moara Sara Barrett
- Kimberly Watson
- Yvonne Raaflaub

Project Description

The Canadian Unitarian Universalist Women's Association is a national group, founded in 2009 within the CUC, to keep Unitarians informed and potentially active around the current status of women's issues and needs. The CUUWA website states these specific goals: "to raise awareness about women's history, rituals, and perspectives, through training, communication, celebration and many resources.

<http://www.cuuwa.org/>

CUUWA can also organize fund-raising events, usually in connection with IWD. The Toronto chapter encourages participants to support the central CUUWA through the latter's annual meeting and membership fee.

Our Toronto chapter, placed under the Social Justice convener in 2014, is an informal group that assists the minister in March in providing input for the Women's Day services at First, and

in December for the laying of roses ceremony that commemorates the Montreal Massacre.

Since no report was submitted last year, we wish to record that in 2015 CUUWA held an International Women's Day Workshop on Aboriginal Culture that included a talk by the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto executive director Victoria Pezzo, and an 'Aboriginal Culture 101' session given by Darlene King. The service collection raised funds for CUUWA to present to the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto.

In 2016 CUUWA acted as the organizational umbrella for the Vagina Monologues, produced by Mona el Baroudi. The performance supported Sistering.

Gillian Burton has led CUUWA since the departure of Janice Tait. As of April 2017, Gerta Moray will act as chair.

Central America Community Development

The Central America Community Development project is requesting recognition as a Social Justice project of the congregation in 2017.

Prime Contact: Richard Kirsh
Richardkirsh@sympatico.ca

List of Supporters:

- Sue Berlove
- Art Brewer
- Peter Brydon
- Wendy Dines
- Margaret Kohr
- Catherine Lake
- Nancy Lee
- Terry Lee
- Mo MacMahon
- Wendy Peebles
- Ulla Stenman
- Dave Tiffin
- Ted Wood
- Harold Wright
- Judy Clarke
- Richard Kirsh

Finances:

The special collection on Central America Sunday in September raised \$2,872 to create bursaries to help youth and young adults from First to participate in the Construction Expeditions. Thank you for the generous support. Unfortunately, the young people who

were going to come had significant changes in personal circumstances and had to cancel their trips. The money collected will be added to that collected on September 24, 2017 and offered again for bursaries for our youth and young adults.

Project Description

Our goal is to build understanding between people and help improve the social, economic and living conditions in Central America. We do this primarily by helping with the construction of community facilities requested by indigenous NGO's in Honduras and Guatemala.

In 2016/17, 15 people, including 5 from First, helped build 3 kindergarten schools in Honduras.

To date 500 Canadians have participated in our Construction Expeditions, including over 100 Unitarians – 50+ from First – representing 22 congregations (Saint John to Vancouver), contributing 1,000 person weeks of volunteer labour and many hundreds of thousands of

dollars for construction materials. They each had rewarding firsthand experience working with local people in the mountains of Honduras and Guatemala building schools, training and community centers, and houses.

Partner Agencies:

- **World Accord** is a not-for-profit, non-governmental international development organization, located in Waterloo, Ontario.

- **Programa de Reconstrucción Rural (PRR)** is a Honduran development organization based in La Buena Fe and has been operating since 1983.
- **Mujeres en Acción (MeA - Women in Action)** provides training for indigenous women in rural communities in central Guatemala, many of who were widowed by the long civil war.

Friends of New Visions Toronto

Friends of New Visions Toronto is requesting recognition as a Social Justice project of the congregation in 2017.

Prime Contact: Barb Wentworth
barbw@ica.net

List of Supporters:

- Lynn Atkin
- Peter Bryant
- Nancy Krygsman
- Terry Lee
- Melissa Lobo
- Nacia Miller
- Anne Murdock
- Margaret Newall
- Kathleen O’Hara
- Norm Perrin
- Barb Wentworth

Financial Information:

Revenues: \$1,457.25
Expenses: none

Donations from Toronto First have been added to other fundraising dollars and used to rejuvenate homes, which have seen wear and tear over 20-30 years: fixing floors damaged by necessary wheelchair use; reinforcing walls; painting homes inside and out; improving laundry facilities and updating kitchens, bathrooms, and the replacement of two vehicles. *Many thanks.*

Project Description:

Friends of New Visions Toronto was started as an Eco/Social Action Project undertaken by Toronto First – with the goal of bringing new awareness about inclusion and a strong connection between Toronto First and New Visions Toronto.

Meetings Held, Actions Taken, Results Achieved:

In order to increase awareness – and because it is a fun way to learn more about supported living and inclusion – we have been hosting a project called “Tea with Mark”. We have hosted over 20 Teas” and have had 77 people come to visit. (Mark’s and my gratitude to each and everyone of you. You make a positive impact with your presence). Mark and his roommates and other guests enjoyed each visit.

Additionally, six members of the Toronto First choir led a very popular singalong at NVT. Fiddlers have volunteered over two years to play at the NVT Holiday Party bringing lots of joy with them. The goal of bringing new awareness about inclusion and a stronger connection between Toronto First and the people supported by New Visions Toronto has grown over this year and we hope that will continue.

Green Sanctuary Group

The Green Sanctuary Group (GSG) is requesting recognition as a Social Justice project of the congregation in 2017.

Supporters include:

- Sue Berlove
- Doug Buck
- Eryl Court
- Kathleen Chung
- Beth Guthrie
- Richard Kirsh
- Margaret Newall
- Margaret Rao
- Fred Lautenschlaeger
- Genevieve Iacovino
- Gregory Robinson
- Margaret Vanderbroucke
- Barbara Wentworth
- Ted Wood
- Lidia Yasova

Prime Contact: Margarete Wiebe
Margarete.Wiebe@sympatico.ca

Financial Information:

The balance in the Green Sanctuary Fund as of April 28, 2017, was \$4538.98. The offering of April 30, 2017, was in the amount of \$965.60. All funds will be spent to finance the monthly costs of Bullfrog Power.

Projects undertaken and results achieved:

As in previous years, the Green Sanctuary Group (GSG) has been committed to its mandate of encouraging, educating and leading the congregation to adopt and engage in environmentally responsible practices both on its own premises and in the surrounding community. To that end, with the assistance and approval of the Property Committee, we have done the necessary research on costs and environmental benefits of the following projects;

- Installation of LED lights in our tower. The initial plan was for funding to come from congregational donations to the GSG fund raised on Earth Day of 2015 and 2016, but due to a very generous personal donation from Sue McLeod covering the cost of this project, that congregational donation is still

in our fund waiting to be spent forward for our second major project, namely:

- Financing the monthly costs of purchasing green energy from Bullfrog Power as sourced from bio-methane capture from organic landfill waste, thus making First Unitarian carbon-neutral in its gas usage. This service is to come into effect on May 1st, 2017. We look forward to continued financial support for this project from congregational donations to the Green Fund.

Other efforts include:

- Purchasing books on environmental themes for our library. ("Braiding Sweetgrass" and "The Hidden World of Trees").
- Contributing weekly Green Moments to First Light.
- Facilitating religious education children's programming about the environment (Green Kids Program).
- In collaboration with Eco-Justice, organizing environmental awareness walks; letter-writing opportunities; potluck lunch and film viewing.
- Organizing environmentally-oriented workshops (Visit from Toronto Field Naturalists).
- Participating in planning Earth Day service.



Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office (UU UNO)

The UU-UNO is requesting recognition as a Social Justice project of the congregation in 2017.

Prime Contact: Eryl Court
ekort@sympatico.ca

Financial Information:

The UU-UNO did not actively fundraise in the congregations during 2016.

Supporters:

Amongst the many members endorsing this work are:

- Bill Bellfontaine
- Ellen Campbell
- Kate Chung
- Eryl Court
- Jack Dodds
- Shirley Grant
- Mo MacMahon
- Fred Lautenschlageer
- Gina Maenhaut
- Margaret Rao
- Margaret Vandenbroucke

Meetings Held, Actions Taken, Results Achieved:

We have held meetings several times during the past year. Particularly fruitful were those including members of other social justice groups, working and cooperating for common goals.

Due to the problem of “charitable status” for the CUC, we were not able to raise funds at our annual UN Sunday in the fall of 2016, although a small number of supporters contributed munificently individually to the UU-UNO central office in New York City. The problem is now resolved, and we plan to raise funds “charitably” this fall.

One who contributed greatly to our work the past year was Debby Poljanowski, who both attended the inspiring UN Seminar in April 2016, and subsequently (until her employment duties prevented it), became the Co-Envoy for “First” at the UU-UNO. Her commitment was inspiring and total.

We are all now “Global Villagers” (per Professor Marshall McLuhan), and if we and other species are to survive in our common home, we need to continue our determination to achieve a World in One Peace and “One Piece”. That is our commitment and legacy to those who follow us. It is the basis of our work for the UN. We invite the continued support and dedication of our congregation.

We seek endorsement as an official social justice project for the coming year.

Eryl Court
UU-UN Envoy, “First”, Toronto



Financial Reports

Funds Management Committee

Committee Activity

On a monthly, quarterly and annual basis, the committee reviews the fund reporting received from Scotia McLeod for compliance and performance monitoring.

The FMC meets annually with Alan Harman, our Investment Manager at Scotia McLeod. We have reviewed the current composition and annual performance of the investment account, and discussed the Investment Policy Statement. The FMC remains confident in Mr. Harman and recommends that we continue to have him manage the congregation's long-term capital funds.

In 2015 the FMC started a review of the benchmarks used to measure the overall performance of the portfolio. The FMC completed that review in 2016. This resulted in the FMC recommending an update to benchmark used to measure sector concentration so that the benchmark better aligns with the SRI mandate that governs the Funds. The Board accepted this change and the Investment Policy was updated accordingly.

Policy Compliance Issues

Industry Concentration

The portfolio is not compliant with the limit on the concentration of equities by industry sector as specified in the Investment Policy (6.3).

Given that the Canadian economy is heavily dependent on natural resources, and SRI policies significantly limit our access to that sector, our investment manager has slanted our portfolio towards Canadian financial institutions. Prior to March 2016, the benchmark used to measure sector concentration was a global equity benchmark that included companies from all sectors including sectors excluded by SRI like tobacco, weapons related contracting and nuclear power. This benchmark made it difficult for a SRI focussed, Canadian centred endowment fund to meet the sector

concentration requirement. With the benchmark updated, the Funds are still in violation of the sector concentration requirement, however the Investment Manager has been directed to bring the portfolio into compliance with the updated benchmark over the next 12 months.

Operational Risk Management

Once again, in 2016 we were extremely fortunate to have the continuing efforts of Kathy Thompson in maintaining her funds management spreadsheet and in compiling the figures presented in this report. As expressed to the Board in previous years, the FMC continues to be concerned that such a critical financial management process is not integrated into the congregation's mainstream bookkeeping systems and processes with appropriate backup resources. In 2016, a simplified approach to determining distributions at year end was incorporated into the Investment Policy. This reduced the complexity of determining distributions which reduced this operational risk. However, Kathy continues to provide a breakdown of the entire portfolio into the 8 constituent funds which is critical to the management process.

Performance

In 2016, there was a total of \$136,482 of income (net of fees) generated by the activity on the portfolio.

The Annual Net Return of the investment fund is the total of all interest, dividends, realized & unrealized gains & losses, less management fees for the calendar year. Each year we set a Target Annual Net Return of inflation plus 3.5%. For 2016, the Target was 5.0%. The Actual Annual Net Return was a gain of 13.4% which exceeded the target.

For comparison, the table below shows the target return and actual return beside the total return of 3 relevant indexes for the 1 year period ending December 2016:

1 Year Period ending December 2016	
Target Return	5.0%
Actual Net Return	13.4%

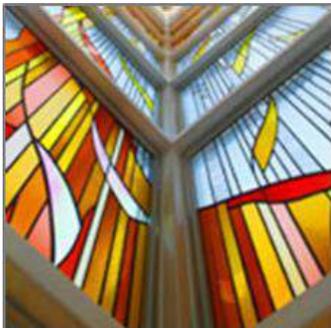
We also set a Target 5 Year Annualized Return of annualized inflation plus 3.5%. For the 5 year period ending in 2016, the Target was 5.6%. The Actual 5 Year Annualized Return was 6.6% which also exceeded the target.

For comparison, the table below shows annualized values for the target return and actual return beside the total return of 3 relevant indexes for the 5 year period ending December 2016:

5 Year Period ending December 2016	
Target Return	5.6%
Actual Net Return	6.6%

Please Note:

A full report on the activity of the Funds Management Committee is filed annually with the Board, and is available on request.



2016 Financial Summary

As of December 31	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
<u>Assets</u>		
Current Assets	254,009	357,775
Investments	1,195,916	1,055,786
Property & Equipment	<u>896,052</u>	<u>951,572</u>
	2,345,977	2,365,133

<u>Liabilities</u>		
Current Liabilities	109,585	105,301
Deferred Revenue	<u>11,700</u>	<u>10,200</u>
	121,285	115,501

<u>Fund Balances</u>	<u>2,224,692</u>	<u>2,249,632</u>
	2,345,977	2,365,133

How We Raised Funds:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Contributions	645,758	812,825
Building rental	67,540	66,756
Investment	43,500	53,021
Unrealized gains/(losses)	94,204	(76,699)
Other activities	14,769	15,099
Gift in kind donation	1,200	11,605
Fundraising	<u>7,135</u>	<u>26,075</u>
	<u>874,106</u>	<u>908,682</u>

How We Spent Funds:

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
People	403,798	382,140
Property	53,918	52,032
Grants & other	274,878	140,031
Office	42,624	45,277
Amortization of property & equipment	55,520	60,066
Denomination	29,451	29,062
Worship	28,064	30,414
Programs & other	8,191	7,878
Gift in kind expenses		6,500
Member services	<u>2,602</u>	<u>445</u>
	<u>899,046</u>	<u>753,845</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	<u>(24,940)</u>	<u>154,837</u>

The complete Audited Financial Statements are available on the First Unitarian Toronto website