

FIRST UNITARIAN CONGREGATION OF TORONTO

**ANNUAL REPORTS
2014 -2015**

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VISION / MISSION STATEMENT

Our Vision & Mission:

**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.**

Our Purpose: Seek — Connect — Serve

**Seek Freely
Connect Authentically
Serve Passionately
For a more just and loving world.**

OUR TEAM

Board of Trustees

Art Brewer, *President*
Susan Phillips, *Vice President*
Matt Virro, *Secretary*
Terry Lee
Sheila Riddell
Eleanor Johnston
Sarah Thurston
Kieran Williams
Stan Yack

Ministerial Team

The Rev. Shawn Newton, *Minister*
Curtis Murphy, *Intern Minister*
Margo Holland, *Chaplain*
Margaret Kohr, *Chaplain*
Christopher Wulff, *Chaplain*

Staff

Jane Tuomi, *Office Administrator*
Angela Klassen, *Director of Lifespan Religious Education*
Marsha Michael, *Bookkeeper*
Dallas Bergen, *Director of Congregational Music*
Lisa Iwasaki, *Director of Sunday Music*

Convenors

Jane Larimer, *Chief Convenor*
Sue Berlove, *Administration*
Lis Kean, *Communications*
Ellen Campbell, *Denominational*
Kathy Thompson, *Finance*
Jean Geary, *Fundraising*
Member Services, vacant
Margo Holland, *Programs*
Gina Page, *Property*
Social Events, vacant
Beth Guthrie, *Social Justice*
Sunday Support, vacant
Worship, vacant

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT – Art Brewer

As I complete my second year serving as President of the Board of Trustees, I marvel at what a dynamic, forward thinking congregation we have. While it's true that we sometimes talk about things "moving at the speed of church," I have only to look back over a year's worth of Board meeting minutes, Executive Committee meeting notes and countless emails and documents to see that a lot of territory has been covered since last June.

The top three priorities of the Board of Trustees are to ensure:

- The safety of our members
- Responsible financial stewardship, and
- Compliance with the many laws and regulations that govern charitable and not-for-profit organizations.

These priorities can also be described as the most important responsibilities of the Board, and they drive a number of strategic goals which are, in turn, supported by tactical and operational goals. Wherever appropriate, the Board also develops specific, measureable objectives to help us know if, when, and to what degree we have met our goals.

In addition to these priorities, the Board works to hold forth a vision for the congregation and to ensure responsible governance. To accomplish these goals, the Trustees have focused this year on:

- Updating by-laws and Board policies
- The possibility of merging with the Don Heights Unitarian Congregation
- The Future Focus program (the next iteration of the Building For The Future program)
- Receiving committee reports from the Diversity Working Group and the Safe Steps program (an audit having been completed for the latter).

In September, the staff, Convenors and Trustees gathered for a day-long leadership retreat to discuss the future of UUism in Toronto, the Future Focus program, the 2014 canvass, and the congregation's short form vision statement (Seek-Connect-Serve). In addition, we participated in an exercise to develop a clearer understanding of how the work of the congregation is distributed among staff members, Convenors, Trustees and the Executive Committee.

As is the case every year, a great deal of the Board's time was spent on financial matters. Specifically, the Trustees:

- Approved the transfer of revenue from our Foundation Fund and the Rouff /Mackie-Jenkins Teaching Congregation Fund to the CUC (as required by our bylaws)
- Approved the use of money from our Opportunities Fund to purchase and install a new dishwasher, refrigerator and freezer for the kitchen
- Approved the cost of installing a fire panel to replace the one we have had since the building was renovated in 1992 and which had become defective
- Approved legal and engineering costs associated with repairs required for our roof (we expect the repairs will be completed in the next month or two)
- Approved the termination of our partnership relationship with the Bella Bartok Unitarian congregation in Budapest, Hungary (the partnership had been inactive for some time) and its replacement with a new relationship to support developing Unitarian congregations in Kenya, and
- Applied for, and received a grant from the West Bequest Trust Fund to support the Dinner Table initiative.

The Board accomplished some significant work in the area of Board policies, approving revisions to our rental policy and developing a policy for persons under police order. Margaret Kohr, Past President, completed the work she started last year to rationalise our Board policies, which are now posted on the congregation's web site. The Board also approved recommended changes to the Investment Policy governing restrictions on the type of investments which may be made by our Investment Manager.

In addition to policy work, the Board initiated or approved proposals to change the following by-laws, which will be presented and voted on by members at the Annual General Meeting on May 31, 2015:

- 1.1 Leading Principles
- 1.2 Denominational Affiliations
- 3.1 (i) d. Minister's membership on the Board

- 3.1 (ii) c. Minister's Freedom of the Pulpit
- 4.2 Funds Management Committee
- 4.4 Endowment Fund
- 4.5 Foundation Fund.

The Board approved, with enthusiasm, the twenty-six new members who joined in January and April, and the appointment of Kathy Thompson as Finance Convenor and Calvin Drake as Interim Chair of the Funds Management Committee.

In September, the Board regretfully accepted the resignation of Cheryl Gordon in the dual role of Trustee and Treasurer, as she and her family were preparing for a move to South Africa, which occurred in November. In February, we were delighted to welcome Sarah Thurston to the Board, replacing Cheryl in the role of Trustee. Susan Phillips assumed the role of Vice President and Matt Virro assumed the role of Secretary. Sheila Riddell continued in her role as Trustee and Chair of the Safe Steps Committee. Stan Yack continued as Trustee and assumed the role of Board rep on the Funds Management Committee. Kieran Williams continued as Trustee and agreed to serve as Board rep on the HR Committee. In addition to their many other activities, Terry Lee and Eleanor Johnston continued as Trustees. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all these people who have served the congregation with dedication and hard work. I especially thank Terry Lee and Stan Yack who will be completing their three-year term on the Board at the end of this month.

Art Brewer

President, Board of Trustees

MINISTER'S REPORT – The Rev. Shawn Newton

As Marge Piercy puts it in her poem “Connections”:

Connections are made slowly, sometimes they grow underground.
You cannot always tell by looking at what is happening
More than half a tree is spread out in the soil under your feet.

This has been a year in the life of our congregation when there's been a lot happening beneath the surface of the soil!

It's difficult to speak of this year without comparing it to last year, when we, as a congregation, devoted a tremendous amount of our energy to questions about our real estate needs and options. At last year's Annual General Meeting, the Building for the Future Task Force put forward their report conveying that many of our hopes and assumptions about our future building options are more complicated than previously imagined or understood.

This year, the leadership of the congregation has invested our energies in absorbing the information gathered by the task force and shifted our attention to the broader context in which our future will unfold. This is an essential task in a radically changing religious landscape, as any decision about our building must be grounded in clarity about how we intend to live out our vision as First Unitarian. I'm grateful to Karen Dunk-Green, in particular, for guiding the efforts of our Future Focus Program, which has taken the lead in this work.

Looking to the future invites questions of sustainability. While First Unitarian is blessed with scores of deeply dedicated volunteers, our leaders are becoming increasingly aware of how unmanageable some of our volunteer roles are, as well as the ways our systems and structures sometimes contribute frustration to our shared best efforts. This recognition has led us to consider what a “simpler” and more sustainable way of Seeking, Connecting, and Serving would mean for us. This conversation will continue and be expanded in the coming months.

As we approach the end of the year, I am grateful to the ministry Curtis Murphy has brought to us as our Intern Minister. It's been a delight to see him stretch and grow and challenge us in his unique way. I'm especially thankful for his commitment to the creation of The Dinner Table, our Wednesday night service. Curtis couldn't imagine when he started his work with us that in addition to honing his preaching and pastoral care skills, he would also become a master soup chef!

As always, I give profound thanks for the board, convenors, worship leaders, lay chaplains, lay pastors, Journey Group facilitators, and so many others with whom I work on a regular basis. They form the strong backbone of our congregation. Likewise, I offer my enduring appreciation to the members of our staff who support the work of First Unitarian in countless ways.

In closing, know that I am blessed in the deepest parts of my being by the privilege of serving as your minister. As I complete my eighth year in service to First Unitarian, my love and admiration for you only grows.

In faith and love,

Shawn

INTERN MINISTER'S REPORT – Curtis Murphy, Intern Minister

I arrived at Toronto First in August of 2014, expecting to learn, grow, and have an immersive experience of congregational ministry. I am glad to say that I have had this opportunity.

Perhaps the largest and most consistent piece of my internship has been working with staff and volunteers on our Wednesday meal and worship service, the Dinner Table. I am grateful to the board for supporting this initiative, and to the congregation for giving us the space to experiment. It generated moments of connection, humour, and shared reverence. There is much for me to take forward, and hopefully also lessons for the congregation about the challenges and opportunities of expanding worship styles and formats.

I also had the experience of officiating at rites of passage: the joy of performing my first wedding, and the honour of conducting a memorial service. I am grateful for regular meetings with our team of Lay Chaplains and their sharing of stories, insights, and support.

I was also privileged to share in the journeys of new and prospective members of the congregation, by co-facilitating two sessions of our "UU & You" newcomers course, with Ariel Hunt-Brondwin and Diane Strong. This gave me experience with small group ministry, and helped me develop teaching skills in a congregational context. It was particularly moving to hear and learn about the diversity and commonalities in the stories which bring people to First, and to see some participants become members of the congregation.

With the support and encouragement of DLRE Angela Klassen, I took part in lifespan learning across the age spectrum. I led children's chapel in March on the theme of freedom, and shared in the conversations of our "Neighbouring Faiths" class of older children. I will be taking very fond memories from my time with the Wise Elders group, particularly our uproarious "carnival" themed afternoon, organized by Angela. I also shared contemplative silence in leading small group meditation on Wednesday evenings on several occasions. Finally, while it cost me some sleep, I was delighted to witness the vibrancy of our youth by serving as an overnight supervisor for the mystery-themed "clUUE" conference, which they organized.

I was able to bring my passion for earth care and environmental justice into congregational life, and interface with theme-based ministry, by creating our April packet on the theme of sustainability, and co-creating a service with the Green Sanctuary Group.

Wanting to get a sense of the scope of congregational life, I attended board, executive, and convenor meetings on a regular basis, and also joined in meetings of the pastoral care team, eco-social justice, and funds management committee. There is truly a lot going on at First!

I am grateful to my internship committee (Wayne Lepine, Kate Kudelka, John Cummings, Mo MacMahon and Djuna Day), for their support, feedback, and acting as a sounding board. And of course to my supervisor, the Rev. Shawn Newton, who spent many hours with me listening, reflecting, discerning, and demonstrating the many aspects which make up a life in ministry.

Finally, I am grateful for everyone who has welcomed me at First, and helped to make this a successful teaching congregation, year after year. Interning in this congregation has been invaluable to my formation, and will serve as a cornerstone as I move forward in my work.

Yours on the journey,

Curtis Murphy

DIRECTOR OF LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (DLRE) - Angela Klassen

The words of the poet, Marge Piercy, evoke for me what has been happening amongst the leaders of our programs for children, youth and adults at First this year:

*Connections are made slowly, sometimes they grow underground.
You cannot always tell by looking at what is happening
More than half a tree is spread out in the soil under your feet.*

Our Children's RE and Adult Program committees are working at the formative stages of assimilating into their work the concepts promoted in literature for shared study among congregational leaders which calls us to both focus our efforts for maximum effect and to extend welcome to others in a way that is hospitable and compelling enough that they will better be able to "stick" with First and with our faith. Not unlike the sense in our personal lives, so too at First, we know that we can be healthier and more whole when we forge meaningful connections and that if we say "yes" to all that calls for attention, we may neglect the key areas where we could truly have made a difference. Already, I see the impact of how we will move forward with these guiding ideas in the responses I hear at our meetings and retreats. I'm excited about how these concepts can help us to be more truly effective and to seeing concrete results begin to emerge in the 2015-16 congregational year.

In particular, for our Adult Programs, the area of focus for the coming year is on more clearly presenting offerings which guide newcomers and members into understanding their faith, growing connections and taking up spiritually grounded leadership roles. Staff will devote energy to the specific offerings which will serve members at the "101, 201 or 301" level while the adult program committee continues to support member offerings such as our popular life stages sessions and affinity groups.

In children's programs, we're seeking out ways to partner with others, or use existing resources, to better equip and encourage small teams of people to present engaging workshop activities for our children. And, of course, we continue our commitment to Spirit Play for our youngest, OWL for Grades K-1, 4-6 and 7-9, Social Justice, Neighbouring Faiths and Coming of Age.

Our youth, with the support of their dedicated and skillful Youth Advisors, have made wonderful contributions to UU youth community by hosting a conference at First in February themed on the board game "Clue" and attended by approximately 60 youth and advisors from as far away as Boston. Three of our youth also played significant leadership and staff roles at the national youth conference, CanUUdle in Ottawa in May. Much gratitude is extended to families, youth, their advisors, staff and volunteers who worked collaboratively to plan and support the youth con at First, not least of whom, those who volunteered for overnight supervision and those who assisted with travel to youth conferences this year.

Our Youth Advisors, Melissa Legge and Portia Dodds, created a unique opportunity for 11 youth advisors from congregations as far away as Saskatchewan to gather this fall at First for a leadership retreat which featured worship, workshops and collegial conversation. We are fortunate to have Melissa, Portia and Sean McCaughey supporting our youth and the wider community of advisors as each brings vitally important skills and generous gifts of time and commitment to nurturing and guiding our youth and broader youth ministry.

Our safe steps program is moving forward with support from insightful and committed volunteers Sheila Riddell, Meghan Edmonds, Pam MacIsaac, and Patricia Newman.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Nancy Marini who has brought her professional expertise to this area of congregational life in helpful and significant ways this year. Our board of directors has identified the safety of our members as one of the top three priorities and the congregational budget reflects this commitment with additional resources committed this year to adding paid administrative assistance which is vital to the integrity of our program.

As always, I'm grateful for the practical assistance and guiding wisdom and experience of the over 100 individuals who support our program ministries in one way or another. Everyone leads busy lives and therefore the care and guidance which our child care givers, teachers, group leaders, workshop presenters, and committee members bring is all the more inspiring to me. I especially thank those who offered their leadership in guiding our program offerings this year: Kelly Ferguson who has stepped into the role of Acting Chair of the Children's RE committee along with committee members Sasha Akhavi, Alezandria Coldevin, Dawn Crandell and Meridith Morrissey; Mary Doucette who led the Adult Program Committee and whose wisdom will be missed; Adult Program Committee members Jennifer Drinkwater, Lynn Hughes and Gilbert Salgado.

It's a true pleasure for me to work with our Program Convenor, Margo Holland, whose support, sense of humour and perspective have been invaluable to me. I have great respect for and gratitude toward my staff colleagues, Rev. Shawn Newton, Dallas Bergen, Jane Tuomi, Marsha Michael and our custodians, each of whom inspire me with their dedication, skill and daily actions which contribute to our functioning as a true team.

Finally, as my seventh year of serving the congregation comes to a close, I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve as your DLRE. Our faith has been transforming for me since I arrived into it as the young mother of two children over two decades ago, but most transformational of all has been the ways that I've grown personally and professionally while striving to serve you all with faith and love.

Faithfully,

Angela

DIRECTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL MUSIC (DCM) - Dallas Bergen

My how the time flies! This week will mark seven years since I interviewed for the position as your Director of Congregational Music. Certainly the honeymoon is long over, but the marriage seems to be built on a stable foundation! I can say that I still feel blessed to be a part of such an amazing congregation and staff team. I am grateful for the ongoing commitment of Lisa Iwasaki and our resident musicians.

Congregational Pianist

We continue to be blessed with Lisa Iwasaki as our congregational pianist. Lisa brings a degree of musical expertise as both soloist and accompanist and provides valuable musical insight and leadership at our choir rehearsals. She tastefully chooses music for prelude and other service elements and elegantly weaves together the many musical pieces contained in our services.

Lisa makes a remarkable commitment to her work at First, but on the occasions where she needs to be away--often examining for the Royal Conservatory--we have been able to seamlessly fill her role. Mira Jung has been acting as our substitute pianist for a few years and has become familiar with the feel and flow of our services. Braden Young, past pianist at First Unitarian Church of Victoria, BC--currently studying at UofT--has also subbed for services and made a valuable contribution to the 2015 StoryFire fundraiser event. It is a great boon to have substitutes who can come in on short notice and handle the role admirably and competently.

Resident Musicians

We have been able to maintain continuity with our team of resident musicians--for the third consecutive year. This is remarkable in a profession that is prone to incredible volatility. We are thankful for the work of Stephanie Hotchkiss (soprano), Tahirih Vejdani (soprano), Aria Umezawa (alto), Ben MacDonald (tenor), Lucas Marchand (baritone) and Tom Lillington (bass). The differing and diverse skills of our resident musicians allow us to use them in a variety of ways. Though their primary role is to provide leadership within the choir, they are also called upon to perform solo work (both vocal and instrumental), play percussion for hymns, lead choir in vocal and rhythmic exercises and instruction, cover the musical director's absences (hymn leading and conducting the choir), and even compose/arrange new music. Over the past few years we have witnessed their remarkable growth as musicians and performing artists and a deepening of their personal relationships with our congregation.

Our Choir

This year marked the first year that we have had to turn people away from the choir--or at least make them wait for an opportunity to join. The choir continues to be non-auditioned and accessible to singers of all levels of vocal/musical ability, however, we have run out of space on the chancel. With nearly 50 members on our roster and consistently more than 30 at every service, we have built a critical mass that vastly expands the repertoire we are able to sing. The singers are growing musically and improving their singing--I think we sound better than ever! The choir contributed to this year's *Celebrate with Song* concert. Though the concert format was different than our inaugural year--one that showcased the performing arts talents from across our congregational membership--the choir bookended the concert with sensitively and passionately sung repertoire; two favourites -- "In Remembrance" by Eleanor Daley, and "Hymn to Freedom" by Oscar Peterson. The choir continues to rehearse weekly on Thursday evenings, September to mid-June, and usually sings all but one service per month.

Thank you to our choir committee, librarians and retreat organizers, who have helped to improve communication and organization of our membership. The hard work of these volunteers have contributed to the growth and continued success of the choir.

Celebrate with Song

For the second consecutive year, we can celebrate the success of our *Celebrate with Song* concert. The concept, developed by Lillian Salmon, was modified this year as we opted to showcase the many and diverse talents of our congregational members. The concert was a financial success, raising over \$6000 for our congregation. In addition to this, I believe the strengthening of community through the shared artistry of our members, was an incredible 'win'.

Concert Program:

In Remembrance

In Remembrance (Eleanor Daley) – Dallas Bergen, First Unitarian Choir
Ain't Life a Brook (Ferron) – Stephanie Hodnett
Ihr Bild (Franz Schubert) – Dallas Bergen, Lisa Iwasaki
Concert Etude No. 3, "Un sospiro" (Franz Liszt) – Lisa Iwasaki
In Memory of a Cat (Helen Iacovino) – Helen Iacovino

In Celebration

The Doo Bop Song (Ken Wulff) – Ken Wulff, Lisa Iwasaki
Scottish Medley (traditional) – Sue Meggs-Becker & The Fiddle Pals
Silent Noon (Ralph Vaughan Williams) – John Cummings, Lisa Iwasaki
Insect Poems (from Joyful Noise by Paul Fleischman) – Ilene & John Cummings
Return of the Songbirds (Christine Cover) – Christine Cover
We Are One (Kim Saltarski) – The Bliss Monkeys: Kim Saltarski ,guitar/vocals; Ian French, bass, Kelly Ferguson, background vocals; Naomi Norquay, cello.
Let Your Love Shine (Kim Saltarski) - The Bliss Monkeys

In Hope

Under Pressure (Queen) – Maya Ferguson-Klinowski, Kelly Ferguson, Michael Klinowski
Romeo and Juliet (Dire Straits) – Kate Kudelka & Matt Swift
Old Man River (Jerome Kern, music; Oscar Hammerstein II, lyrics) – David Priebe
I Shall Be Released (Bob Dylan) – The First Five: Nacia Miller; Margarete Wiebe; Karen Dunk-Green; Ian French; Kim Saltarski
Your Story (Ian French) – Ian French
Hymn to Freedom (Oscar Peterson) – Dallas Bergen, First Unitarian Choir, Lisa Iwasaki, Art Brewer

Professional Development - Dallas

During my seven years as your Music Director, I have had the opportunity to attend the annual UUMN (Unitarian-Universalist Musicians' Network) Conference. Having first attended in Boston in 2008--my first day of work at my new position at First--I have grown within the organization. My first conference was a great introduction to the work of UU Music leaders and Unitarian-Universalism in general. I came away excited, inspired and with a handful of tools to help me find success in my new role. It is through the UUMN that I have been able to find new material for use in our services and been able to nurture my leadership and musical skills. It is also through the UUMN that I was given the tremendous honour of leading the conference choir at General Assembly in 2013. In recent years I have contributed to the conference as a leader of music reading sessions and workshops for musical leaders. This year I am serving on the conference planning committee for the 2015 conference in Boston. I have worked to confirm Brainerd Blyden-Taylor as the conference choir clinician and am responsible for overseeing the UU composers jury and finalizing the repertoire packets for our choral reading sessions. This is a tremendous honour for me to be in this role; though a voluntary position, it is one that is respected and coveted by our membership. I am thankful to the UUMN for having the confidence in my abilities and grateful to First Unitarian for presenting me with the opportunity for professional development with the UUMN.

I also had the opportunity to attend two worship services in New York city by congregations on the front edge of the future of religious community. I participated in an inspiring service at Middle Collegiate Church which featured a fantastic rhythm section and gospel choir, and some skillfully presented congregational singing. In the same day I attended a very different service by St Lydia's Brooklyn, a grassroots congregation that has centered their entire weekly service around a community supper. Their worship space doubles as a live/work space during the week. They were masterful in the way they led congregational singing, free of sheet music or hymnals, stripping away intimidation and going straight to the heart of the music.

Thank You

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the congregation for their support of the musical life at First and to the work and guidance of our Executive, Board, and Convenors. It is a pleasure to be part of this religious community committed to building a world that is more loving, more kind, and more just.

CHIEF CONVENOR'S REPORT – Jane Larimer

Hello! I'd like to begin by welcoming those that may be new to our congregation, or are at a new point in their lives, and now want to connect with First and to become involved in – or more involved in - what we do here. Please jump in! We would be delighted to have you participate in any one of the many activities we have going on. Read more about what we do in the next many pages, then Stop by the Engage and Connect table and let them know what you'd like to do. We look forward to getting to know you better.

This past year has been a year of activity and change, and I've got time and space for only a few highlights. I encourage everyone to spend time reading the following convenor reports to get a better understanding of how our convenor team and volunteers work to serve our community here at First and across the GTA.

Much of my own time during the last year has been spent in the areas of Social Events and Human Resources. This year we've been without a Social Events Convenor, and so I've had the pleasure of working more closely with this great team of volunteers as we hosted a number of community meals in celebration of important holidays. We hope you've enjoyed these times together as much as we have! I'd like to thank all who have given of their time and energy to make these events so memorable and so much fun.

Last year the Board of Directors adopted a Human Resources Policy. This year, an HR Committee was formed to begin implementing the policy. Thanks to Sue Berlove and Judy Clarke, our current and former Administrative Convenors, and Nancy Semkin for working with me on this committee.

We were all saddened by the death of our Membership Convenor, Bruce Schwartzentruber. We continue to miss his warmth and enthusiasm and all his many contributions to our community. Bruce connected us with newcomers and others in Toronto and across the globe. I want to thank all the volunteers who have continued to serve on committees in this area during this past year in his absence. Your welcoming presence reaches everyone who comes through our doors.

Gina Page, as Property Convenor for the past three years, has restructured both areas of our building and the property committee, which is now a network of several committees. This group of volunteers looks after everything from the roof(s) to the floor(s) and all that is in between. Thank you all for making First a place we enjoy coming to, week after week. Gina is completing her term as property convenor, and has agreed to continue working on some of our tougher issues. Ken Fair who, earlier this year took on a number of responsibilities to free-up some of Gina's time to address some important challenges, has agreed to take on the role of Property Convenor. I'd like to thank Gina for her tremendous efforts over the past three years and to welcome Ken to his new role.

Our members continue to be active in a wide range of denominational activities. These have included working with other Toronto UU congregations on activities to reach the larger community and each other, at Unicamp. Our chaplains' work falls in this domain, as does that of our partner church committee. Thanks to Ellen Campbell for her dedication to this work over the last three years, and to Margaret Kohr who has agreed to assume this role going forward.

We had another significant transition in our Communications team this year, when Keith Gawronski-McNinch moved to the Kingston area and Lis Kean took on the convenor position. Lis has managed a lot of "behind the scenes" work with our web team while continuing to develop the "front of house" e-communications. E-communication strategies have provide to be an effective means of reaching First's members and helping us manage costs. Thanks to our communications volunteers for all your hard work. As well, thanks to both Lis and Beth Guthrie, in her role of Eco-Social Justice Convenor. Through their coordinated effort, editions of First Light now include links to various eco- and social justice items.

Beth Guthrie, as Eco-Social Justice Convenor, has helped raise awareness and promote action in a number of areas, including support for a discussion series at First that has explored the enduring conflict in the middle-East. Please take time to learn about the past and planned activities of our various Social Justice initiatives, provided in this annual report.

Both Lis and Beth will be taking time off from their convenor responsibilities over the summer, and I want to thank them for all the work they've done to build our community and help us connect with each other and with the wider world during this last year. During this time please contact me with issues, and I will redirect you to (hopefully!) the person who can help answer your concerns.

The program committee will be building on the success of our Journey Groups with more intensive programming becoming available for those that want to deepen their understanding of and commitment to Unitarian Universalism. This will bring changes to the adult programming offered next year and to the work of the committee. Please spend time reading Margo Holland's report and consider how these changes may connect with your own learning path. Margo will be continuing as programs convenor to help guide this exciting work.

Our fundraisers continue to bring joy to our lives while supporting the ongoing operations of First. We've celebrated with music, time and the many talents of our members and are enjoying the return of the Dinner Series. If you haven't arranged a dinner "out", I encourage you to do so. It's a wonderful way to get to know others in the congregation better (and, of course, continue to support activities here at First). Jean Geary and the fundraising and canvass teams will be continuing to delight and surprise us, and to provide us with opportunities to be generous. Thank you all for this gift.

Through all this, our Finance Convenor Kathy Thompson continues to give us the information and advice we need to put practice into action. Thanks, Kathy, we greatly appreciate your guidance and insight.

Finally, I'd like to recognize and thank our many volunteers who continue to enrich our lives each and every week and when we need them most. These include our greeters, ushers, musicians and choir members, storytellers, sound system operators, and worship leaders. It also includes those that make coffee, provide flowers and other displays for services and important moments in our lives, sell and share books through the bookstore and the library, help coordinate, organize, hang and sometimes even create the art that is on our walls. We have members that help newcomers learn about Unitarian Universalism, and help to us all engage and connect with each other, office admin volunteers to help us navigate the details of our lives, and our new Sunday support team to make sure everything else is looked after. It includes those that lead child and adult programming, take on the many tasks associated with memorial services, provide pastoral care, and let us know we are part of a caring community.

Thank you for all you do. Your gifts are many and your contributions enrich our lives at every moment.

ADMINISTRATION

CONVENOR REPORT – Sue Berlove

During my first year as Admin Convener I spent a lot of time in the office with Jane Tuomi, our Office Administrator, learning about our office administration. Here are our accomplishments for the year.

1. Rental Contracts

In 2014 we received feedback from our auditors that we are expected to have signed, up-to-date contracts on file for all groups that rent space at the church. Margaret Kohr created two contract templates for us to use when negotiating with different types of renters. They have been easy to adapt to various situations and fulfill the auditors' requirements.

To more efficiently track rental contracts, we purchased BatchBook, cloud based software.

2. Custodial Staffing Requirements

In 2013-2014 there had been significant turnover in custodians, especially weekend staff. Last summer we assessed the amount of custodial time we require and decided to budget for 40 hours of cleaning time per week: 24 weekday hours and 16 weekend hours (8-hour days both Saturday and Sunday).

The Sunday shift was changed so that it runs from noon to 8 p.m. This timing allows the custodian to focus on cleaning up after worship and preparing for Monday activity.

Lucia did our weekday cleaning all year, working 4-10 p.m. We hired Manny in the winter; in April we let him go because he lacked the English proficiency to follow written instructions.

In April, Veronica replaced Manny on weekends. She will also work weekdays beginning May 18th, when Lucia leaves us to return to Portugal. We will experiment with Veronica as our only custodian and evaluate the situation in the fall.

3. Sunday Support

Initially there was some concern that changing the Sunday custodial shift would create a problem in the mornings; historically our custodians opened the building on Sunday morning and helped with set up. I proposed the creation of Sunday Support, a team of volunteers who would arrive early on Sundays and provide support to the individuals leading worship and RE.

Positive feedback has confirmed the success of this arrangement. Knowledgeable volunteers have provided excellent support this year, helping with logistics and making the church a safe place for worship. Thanks to Mo MacMahon, Alyson Schafer, Helen Iacovino and Diane Strong for helping to make this a success!

4. Information and Communication Technology

Last fall conveners expressed concern about their inability to easily access documents they need to do their work. Although some files were shared on FirstBook, most conveners found this arrangement cumbersome. After listening to convener concerns about accessing files, I took on the job of researching our administrative infrastructure to see if I could find a solution.

I began this work by calling a special meeting of all the volunteers who were actively involved in developing and/or using technology. Lis Kean and I invited Helen Iacovino, Jane Tuomi, Bill Dunk Green, Mo McMahon, Stan Yak, Chris Wulf and Jean Geary to discuss the ways in which the congregation currently uses technology and suggest ways our use of technology could be improved.

At this meeting and in follow up discussions, the recommended improvements went forward to the board, identifying three areas of change:

1. Improve communication between people in leadership positions

2. Make information accessible to staff and volunteers using a centralized filing system that could be accessed from home as well as the church
3. Consider how we could put technology to use in coordinating other church activities

At their April 2015 meeting, the Board agreed that increasing our reliance on technology should become an organizational priority. I confirmed my commitment to play a leadership role in moving the congregation forward in this area.

We already have begun to consider improvements to our membership data base; this will include upgrading our software with the help of ASC technologies. This will give us access to new features that support ministry work and our pledge campaigns. As well we will register for an account with Google Apps for Non Profits so that we can use this platform to improve communication between people in leadership positions.

COMMUNICATIONS

CONVENOR REPORT – Lis Kean

2014-2015 saw a lot of transition on the Communications team. The departure of (the greatly missed) Keith Gawronski-McNinch made it necessary to refocus our energies, but that was only the first of our changes.

Our weekly e-newsletter, First Light, continues to prove its value as a growing and organic publication. We send our gratitude and best wishes with Bridgette Grant, former captain of the First Light boat, and our thanks to Tanya Cothran for stepping into those shoes.

The Be the Change newsletter saw changes as well, this year. We thank Siobhan Geary for her efforts to keep the publication going until it was decided that it would be more effective as a feature in First Light. Many thanks to Beth Guthrie, our Eco-Social Justice Convenor for the labour-intensive job of curating the feature on a weekly basis until its recent summer hiatus.

Part of our refocus included a decision to suspend publication of Kindling our Flame and to incorporate some of the features of that publication into First Light. We are grateful for Editor Emerita Doreen Jacob's blessing to proceed this way. This also allowed editor Ainsley Kendrick to step over into the role of producing the monthly theme-based ministry newsletter, New Horizons, which in turn allowed the new convenor, Lis Kean, to focus on the bigger picture of communications here at First.

One of the most valuable legacies of preceding convenor Keith Gawronski-McNinch was the establishment of our Media Support Teams. Decentralizing the work has helped to make the commitment for all of our hardworking volunteers more manageable, while connecting each event team with someone who is able to be their communications point person. This informal, task-focused approach has proven its value and we will continue this for the coming year. Many thanks go to those who assisted this year with advertising, graphic design, slideshows, pamphlets, photography, videography and other elements of key events last fall and this spring including the wildly successful Time and Talent Auction, Storyfire, Celebrate with Song, and other events.

Ongoing gratitude is due to our Webmasters, Bill Dunk-Green, Mo MacMahon, and Stan Yack, for all their work maintaining and updating our website, Helen Iacovino, and Jane Tuomi, the office administrator, who is our valued partner, helping in so many ways to keeping Communications at First working.

This year we spent a significant amount of time behind the scenes laying groundwork for upcoming projects, including supporting Administration Convenor Sue Berlove's IT initiative, and the eventual update/redesign of the Toronto First website (still to come). We're looking forward to bringing these projects to life in 2015-2016.

DENOMINATIONAL ACTIVITIES

CONVENOR'S REPORT – Ellen Campbell

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.

Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC): More than twenty members of First traveled to Ottawa on the May long week-end for the CUC Annual Meeting. An additional small group met there as participants in the training for Lay Chaplains. Our delegates to the Annual General Meeting were Art Brewer, Calvin Drake, Lis Kean, Margaret Kohr, Susan Phillips, and Ellen Campbell.

Unicamp: Thanks to Winnie Larssen, who represents us at Unicamp and is on their board, and to Cathy Brown, also on the board.

Unitarian Congregations of Greater Toronto (UCGT): Calvin Drake has been a stalwart and faithful leader and organiser of UCGT, which brings together the local congregations to share information and develop collaborative projects.

This year the most significant changes took place in our relationship with our international connections. For many years, Toronto First has had a partnership with Bartok Bela Congregation in Budapest, Hungary. Over the past two or three years, changes at Bartok Bela and here in Toronto, and decreasing contact between us, made it clear that our relationship had run its course. With regret, the congregation voted to end our partnership at the budget meeting this February.

Over the past three years under Bruce Schwartzentruber's encouragement, Toronto First has begun to build a relationship with the six developing Unitarian groups in Kenya. Under the aegis of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) we, along with the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Albuquerque, New Mexico, are the initial members of a coalition of mentoring congregations. The six groups, rather like "house churches," found Unitarianism, for the most part, through the Internet. They are eager to learn more about our faith, and to be part of a larger religious community. We have much to learn from them about how our approach to religion is enriched when practiced in different cultures.

First Congregation members were very generous in contributing to a memorial fund after Bruce's death which provided smart phone/tablet combinations to each Kenyan group to enable easier communication among themselves and between them and ICUU and the mentoring congregations. At the CUC meeting in Ottawa, a group of Toronto people met with Rev. Steve Dick, the Executive Director of ICUU, to discuss how our mentoring relationship might take shape. Dr. Donald Cole of our congregation has visited two of the groups, and Rev. Shawn Newton will be visiting the Unitarians in Kenya in August.

As I retire from this portfolio, it has been a pleasure to serve as Denominational Affairs Convenor for the past four years.

LAY CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE (LCC) – John Cummings

LCC members: Peter Brydon, Ellen Campbell, Margaret Kohr, Bill Parsons. Meetings during 2014-15 were held at the church on January 12, March 30, September 14, December 7, and March 1, 2015.

During the year Margaret Kohr completed her 6-year term, which began in November 2008 and extended it by a year; Christopher Wulff continued his 6-year term, which began in the fall of 2012; Margo Holland completed her 2-year term, which began in the fall of 2013 and also extended it by a year.

Margaret Kohr's extended term will officially come to an end this fall. The committee wishes to extend its heartfelt thanks to her for her 7 years of dedicated service as a lay chaplain and also for her active participation in the LCC.

In 2014, a New Lay Chaplain Selection Committee was struck, consisting of John Cummings (chair), Terry Lee representing the Board, Ellen Campbell, Margaret Rao and Bill Parsons. The committee interviewed two candidates and selected one. However, the chosen candidate elected not to take up the position.

In 2015, another New Lay Chaplain Selection Committee was struck, consisting of Gillian Burton (chair), Ellen Campbell, Bill Parsons and Susan Phillips. Four candidates were interviewed. The committee selected Jan Crowley and Sue Meggs-Becker to be our new lay chaplains for a 6-year term beginning in the fall of 2015.

Malcolm Reed resigned from the committee during 2014. Carol Dodds continues to serve as the administrator for the lay chaplains, taking phone calls and e-mails and passing them on to the lay chaplains.

In 2014 the chaplains performed 29 weddings, of which 11 were same-sex (9 of these were pro bono at the Grand Pride event), 12 memorial services, and 0 child dedications. The total of 41 ceremonies is up slightly from the low of 37 in 2013, but down from the range of 50-60 ceremonies of the 2006-11 period. The LCC's lay chaplaincy statistics follow.

Statistics 2000-01 to 2006-07 (Sept to Aug), 2007-14 (Calendar)

	All Referrals	Cancel-lations	Info. Calls Only	Referred to Other Cong'ns	Same Sex Marriages Performed	Opposite Sex Marriages Performed	Total Weddings Performed	Total Memorials Performed	Total Child Dedications Performed	Total Ceremonies Performed
00-01	141	(21	12	11)	NR ⁽¹⁾	97	97	19	8	124
01-02	151	(26	15	32)	NR ⁽¹⁾	78	78	16	7	101
02-03	180	(44	14	22)	15	85	100	9	6	115
03-04	130	(24	10	11)	26	59	85	12	6	102
04-05	101	(17	11	6)	9	58	67	13	8	88
05-06	98	(13	13	11)	16	45	61	9	4	74
2006	64	(0	7	13)	6	38	44	7	5	56
2007	48 ⁽²⁾	(0	7	5)	5	31	36	12	6+2 ⁽³⁾	56
2008	63 ⁽⁴⁾	(4	9	4)	14	32	46	7	3	56
2009	66 ⁽⁴⁾	(0	6	3)	6	30	36	17	4	57
2010	55	(3	9 ⁽⁵⁾	6)	3	34	37	19	1+4 ⁽⁶⁾	61
2011	72	(14	3	2)	2	28	30	17 ⁽⁷⁾	4+2 ⁽⁸⁾	53
2012	80	(22	5	11)	1	23	24 ⁽⁹⁾	15	2+1 ⁽¹⁰⁾	42
2013	50	(1	5	7)	NR	NR	19	17	1	37
2014	69	(5	20	3)	11 ⁽¹¹⁾	18	29	12 ⁽¹²⁾	0	41

(1) Not recorded (2) Corrected from 68 to make numbers agree (3) Other (4) Sum of weddings performed plus cancellations, info calls and referred (5) All calls/emails, less cancellations, referrals and weddings performed (6) 3 re-affirmations, 1 grace (7) 3 pro bono (8) scattering of ashes, one pro bono (9) pro bono (10) renewal of vows (11) 9 pro bono (Grand Pride) (12) 1 pro bono

FUNDRAISING

CONVENOR'S REPORT – Jean Geary

The incredible momentum around fundraising continues. We upped our game with respect to the annual canvass, and established highly successful flagship fundraising and community-building events. There is an air of confidence: we embarked on a special project to raise \$40k to sponsor a refugee family from Syria. We must, however, guard against complacency – we still have a deficit from previous years to pay down. Our long-term success will depend on our continued increasing generosity when it comes to the annual pledge drive, our most crucial fundraising initiative.

Pledge Drive 2014/2015

We finished at \$410k, well above last year's total of \$380k. Thanks and congratulations to all our members for their generosity, and to "Team Generosity": Co-chairs Karen Dunk-Green and Brian Deming, and team members Bill Belfontaine, Jennifer Drinkwater, Ariel Hunt-Bronwin and Margaret Kohr.

Planning for Canvass 2015/2016 is already underway, and the team plans to build on some of the successful new elements introduced last year.

Planned Giving

Planned Giving is back on track after being somewhat stalled due to health challenges. A second reception to celebrate the vision and generosity of our planned giving donors is slated for the fall, and work continues on the web and print materials.

Thanks to the Planned Giving team: Joe Clarke and Margaret Kohr

Events and Other Fundraising Initiatives

At the start of 2014, we set an ambitious goal – to raise \$20,000 through events outside our pledge drive. Thanks to you -- exceptional volunteers, and members of our generous and creative community -- we exceeded our ambitious goal: together we raised over **\$31,000**. You built community, reached out to new communities and had a lot of fun!

Most highlights and thanks were reported in the June 2014 report. Additional updates include:

- A highly successful **Time, Talent and Cottage Auction** was held in November 2014, raising almost \$16k. New connections were forged, sometimes intergenerational connections, as members claimed their prizes -- learning from one another, and socializing together. Grateful thanks to Gina Page, Jennifer Drinkwater, Ainsley Kendrick, Lis Kean and Beth Ann McFadden for their leadership and to all who helped.

2015 Fundraising

Progress At a Glance

Event	Goal	Raised	Variance	Variance Adjusted for Timing
Storyfire	\$1000	\$555	-\$445	-\$445
Celebrate With Song	\$5000	\$5900	+900	+900
Dinner Series				
Spring	\$2000	\$3355	+\$1355	+\$1355
Fall	\$2000	\$0	-\$2000	expected fall
Auction	\$10600	\$0	-\$10,600	Expected November
TOTALS	\$20,600	\$9810	-\$10,790	+\$1810

2015 Highlights

- Thanks to Lynn Torrie, Diane Bosman, and all who helped for staging the second Storyfire in March, a powerful event that attracted members of the First and Toronto Storytelling community and raised \$555.
- **Celebrate With Song** was reprised on May 1. We were swept away by an extraordinary range of performances and we were moved by the thoughtful dedications and photos shared by the donors and supporters. We finished the evening tangibly richer - together we raised \$5,900 – and we came away immeasurably richer as a community. Many thanks to Lillian Salmon, Dallas Bergen, Terry Lee, Ainsley Kendrick and all who helped.
- A huge round of applause to Nancy Lee for reviving the **Dinner Series**. Although we are barely halfway through the year, we are closing in on our annual goal of \$4k – and again, building community and connection. If you would like to host or attend a dinner, there are lots of options. Visit the website or the table in Workman Hall most Sundays.

Save a Family From Syria

At the budget meeting in February, the congregation voted unanimously to adopt a special project: to sponsor a family from Syria to come to Canada in response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis. This involves raising \$40k in pledges by the end of May 2015. The project has inspired a tremendous outpouring of generosity, and at the time of printing, we are hopeful that we will meet and possibly exceed our goal. We plan to work with our partners at the mosque on fundraising activity over the summer and into the fall. Profound thanks and congratulations to Annette Wilde for her inspirational leadership, and to the many volunteers and generous supporters who answered the call.

Thanks to all who have supported our work to transform First's ability to raise funds. Please speak to the Fundraising Convenor if you have an idea you would like to discuss.

MEMBER SERVICES

Newcomer Services - Diane Wagner, Coordinator

There is a progression of interactions with newcomers to our congregation, from the friendly Sunday Greeters, to the monthly Newcomer Orientation meetings, to the helpful Engage & Connect table, to the one-day UU & You sessions, to the joining ceremonies on New Members Sundays.

This year there were 10 Newcomer Orientation meetings, each with with 4 to 6 participants. There were two UU & You sessions, facilitated by Lynn Harrison and Ariel Hunt-Brondwin in the spring and by Curtis Murphy and Ariel Hunt-Brondwin in the fall. Both sessions had over 12 participants.

At the joining ceremony on April 13 we welcomed 8 new members and on November 23 we welcomed 14 new members. Newcomers comment that they have found the congregation a welcoming place, and many stay and become involved.

PROGRAMS

CONVENOR'S REPORT – Margo Holland

Adult Program Committee

Our dedicated Adult Program Committee, consisting of Jennifer Drinkwater, Gilbert Salgado, Lynn Hughes, and of course Angela Klassen, DLRE, who has graciously provided her voice of experience. We regret that Mary Doucette had to step down from Chair of the committee for personal reasons. The committee has continued to work diligently with great results, however we miss her leadership.

Adult Programs

The Adult Program Committee continues to offer a variety of ways for people to get to know each other and to integrate our Unitarian principles into daily life. We will be exploring programs which appeal to new members as well as to long time members who wish to deepen their spiritual commitment.

Unitarian Programs	1.01	UU & You, Membership/Commitment
	2.01	Journey Groups/Deeper Commitment Training
	3.01	Leadership Training/Church Leadership, Personal Ministry

There will be continued information provided in First Light.

Life stages – will be continuing with different programs that will provide information for some of those inevitable changes that happen for all of us.

Theme Based Ministry Groups, now renamed “Journey Groups”, continue to be an ongoing success, providing a time of personal insight and reflection into our Unitarian values and how we can incorporate them into our lives. Thank you to all of the facilitators who have led these groups.

Diane Wagner continues to offer a **“Welcome to Newcomers”** lunch on the first Sunday of the month. Thank you, Diane! And of course, **UU & You**, led by our Minister, Rev. Shawn Newton and our Intern Minister, offers education and insight into our history of UUism.

Many other Adult Programs offer an opportunity to explore and connect with others and have been enjoyed under the leadership of our adult program leaders.

Twerty-Somethings – This year they have had monthly Time for Sharing sessions which have been focused on the congregational themes.

OWL – (Our Whole Lives) provided a program for Kindergarten – Grade 1, led by Sasha Akhavi and Kelly Ferguson.

Children's RE Programs

Religious Education classes continue to be well attended, thanks to the innovative teaching of our volunteer teachers, who contribute greatly to the life our congregation and the lives of our children.

Special thanks to Merina Sultana, who takes such good care of our youngest and most special, along with her assistant Daria Sells, in the **nursery**.

Family Retreat

This ritual at First has continued to be strong and well attended. It is definitely one of the finest things we do here and may it continue for many years to come.

Many thanks to all of our volunteers. We would not be able to create these opportunities for growth of all ages in our community without you. Your gift of time and talents, so graciously and generously given is appreciated by all.

Thank you to Angela Klassen, our Director of Lifespan Learning, for the wonderful gifts she shares, as she brings calm and wisdom to all that she touches.

Many thanks to everyone for all they contribute.

PROPERTY

CONVENOR REPORT – Gina Page

The property team has been busy this last year. Thank you Anne Murdock, Jean Galt, John Lewis, Richard Kirsh, Ken Fair, Jane Tuomi, Hope Paul, and MJ Blackman for all your hard work.

Kitchen

Lynn Atkin Phillips spearheaded some great updates to the kitchen, which included the replacement of the old fridge with an energy star commercial fridge and freezer. As well, the ancient sanitizer was replaced with a fast and efficient dishwasher. Our thanks to Craig Mahood for helping make the alterations to the kitchen happen.

Youth Room

The youth along with their advisors completely transformed the youth room over the last year. The walls and ceiling got a fresh coat of paint, and the group even laid their own carpet tiles. Gone are the days of puffy painted clouds, a yellow ceiling and 1953 flooring.

Health + Safety

Zoe King's leadership in congregational health and safety over this last year has been incredible. She has been working to review our policies, get our needed documents up to date, completing monthly safety checks, creating an incident reporting mechanism and found a solution for the gas stoves in the kitchen. Special thanks to Ken Fair and Gilbert Selgado for being willing to lend a hand or give advise.

Defibrillators

We officially have a defibrillator in the building and another one soon to be installed. Plus, a team of congregational members and staff who have now been trained on how to use this exciting piece of technology. It took a lot of discussion and some insightful leadership by Susan Phillips, Zoe King, and Brigitte Swenson, along with the team work of Greg Robinson, Margo Holland, Art Brewer, Shawn Newton, Ken Fair and Lis Kean and many others over the last couple of years but we finally have a defibrillator at First.

Weed + Seed

Judy Clarke and her gardening team of Hope Paul, Herb Wright and a few extra hands, continue to tackle making the front garden look it's best! This team will continue to work on bringing more life back to the front over this next year.

Accessible Coat Area

The paint + patch team gave the back entrance to Sunderland Hall a fresh coat of paint. Several coat hooks were then installed in this space, to provide an accessible coat area for those who use the lift. Thank you to MJ Blackman, Janine Gliener, Jennifer Drinkwater, Derek Manning, Melissa Lobo and Ken Fair, for helping to make this happen.

Roof

Over the next year, we will continue to work with our lawyer and engineer to resolve the issues with our roof.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

ABORIGINAL AWARENESS GROUP (AAG)

Members: Genevieve Iacovino is the chair and contact person of the Aboriginal Awareness Group (AAG). She can be reached at 647.637.1866 or geniacovino@firstunitariantoronto.org. Current active members of the AAG include: Audrey Chin (from Don Heights), Lee Doran, Genevieve Iacovino, Terry Lee, Nancy Malone, Mike Muller, Olja Muller and Gilbert Salgado. Additional supporters from First include Helen Iacovino, Catherine Lake, Nancy Lee, Greg Robinson and Ted Wood.

Meetings: The AAG was active throughout 2014-2015. Meetings were held over the last year in June, September, October, December, January, February, March and April.

Activities: AAG members celebrated the beautiful aspects of Aboriginal culture, which founding member Bruce Schwartzentruber strongly advocated for. This can be seen through our attendance at Na-Me-Res' pow wow last year, our efforts to engage children at First with stories from Aboriginal cultures, and by holding a culture 101 workshop which was facilitated by Native Women's Resource Centre.

Last June, several members of the AAG visited two children's classrooms at First, reading stories by Aboriginal authors that describe Aboriginal stories, teachings and cultures, and leading them in a discussion. We also promoted Na-Me-Res' annual pow wow to these children, as well as the members of the congregation.

Last October, the AAG organized a tour of AGO's exhibit on "Before and After the Horizon: Anishinaabe Artists of the Great Lakes" for anyone from the GTA congregations who wanted to attend. Gerta Moray, a member at First and respected art critic, agreed to lead our group on a tour as she has specialized knowledge about Indigenous artists.

In March, the AAG partnered with the CUC women's group and First's diversity working group to focus on Indigenous women during the International Women's Day service. This included welcoming Victoria Pezzo and Darlene King from Native Women's Resource Centre. Victoria spoke about the centre's work and Darlene led a workshop about Aboriginal culture after the service. The special collection raised for this Sunday \$2,311. This was donated to Native Women's Resource Centre.

Later in March, the AAG organized another event. Two of its members, Mike and Olja Muller, discussed their journey to the KI reserve. Thirty five people attended this event, which included a slideshow presentation of the experience, the screening of Third World Canada (a film by Andrée Cazabon about KI), an appearance and Q&A session with Andrée Cazabon, a sharing activity with Shawn Newton, and an Aboriginal lunch. Funds from the June 2014 special collection were used to support this event.

Over the past year we've increased our efforts to involve other UU congregations in our meetings and events. We did this by using the inter-congregational listserv and speaking about the AAG at an inter-congregation meeting last September.

Terry Lee met with Executive Director of Na-Me-Res in early April to discuss building a relationship and what this might look like. Steve Teekens, Executive Director of Na-Me-Res, provided several suggestions of what this might look like.

The AAG has undergone several changes in terms of membership in the last year. Last June the original four AAG members from First welcomed several new members. Since the group didn't meet during July or August, the full group only began its work together in the fall. With the sudden passing of Bruce Schwartzentruber in November, the AAG postponed November's meeting to grieve, and waited until December to continue its work. This impacted the planning of our large scale event, which ended up occurring in March 2015.

Planning for 2015-16: The AAG plans to hold at least two events next year, with one occurring in the fall and one occurring in the winter or spring. Most recently, we have decided to concentrate our efforts locally by focusing on

supporting local Aboriginal organizations, raising our knowledge and awareness of the unique circumstances of living as an Aboriginal person in Toronto, and taking actions in solidarity with Aboriginal peoples.

In the coming months, the AAG has decided to move forward in building a relationship with local Aboriginal men's shelter, Na-Me-Res. As a gesture of support we will be holding a special collection on June 21 and at least a portion will be donated to Na-Me-Res to contribute towards the cost of their annual pow wow. In addition, we will be advertising the pow wow to members at First, encouraging attendance, and attending ourselves. Next fall and winter we hope to arrange a visit to chemical valley, where two First Nations sisters lead a tour of the chemical plants and surrounding area they call home.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP 142 - Ted Wood

Amnesty members and supporters include: Carl Baar, Art Brewer, Peter Brydon, Douglas Buck, Edith Burton, Ellen and Doug Campbell, Kate Cottington, Kate Chung, Shirley Grant, Hanna Heger, Helen Iacovino, John Lewis, Glenn and Nancy Malone, Susan and Roderick McLeod, Elisabeth Michnick, Sally Moore, Jane Munro, Kathleen O'Hara, Victor Parker, Susan Phillips, Margaret Rao, Judy Skelton, Janice Tait, Kathy Thompson, Ingrida Wloszczynski, Ted Wood, Gwen and Larry Wulff, and many others.

For further information about First's Amnesty International activities, please contact Ted Wood at 416-429-6351, TedWood@FirstUnitarianToronto.org.

Meetings: We organize letter writing at our meetings on the third Wednesday of each month and letter signing on the fourth Sunday of each month after worship services and will continue to do so in the coming year.

Activities: Amnesty Group 142 campaigns to stop and prevent human rights abuses; our main focus is the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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. One of the key provisions is the right of Indigenous Peoples to free, prior, and informed consent before actions are taken which affect them. Our congregation's endorsement of the UN Declaration calls for us to work collaboratively with and advocate in support of Indigenous Peoples and to implement the values of the UN Declaration within the work and structures of the congregation when embarking on any projects or programs involving Indigenous Peoples. In the past year we have participated in actions in Canada and North, Central, and South America on behalf of Indigenous Peoples and will continue to do so in 2015-2016.

In addition, this past year we also participated in campaigns for refugee healthcare, rights of women and girls, protection of journalists, anti-death penalty, LGBTI rights, and Amnesty's campaign calling for the withdrawal of Canada's Security Bill C-51.

On Amnesty Sunday, December 7, 2014, we participated in the annual Write for Rights sending 134 letters on three cases. Thanks to your generosity a special collection raised \$1,552 for Amnesty International.

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

CENTRAL AMERICA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - CENTRL AMERICA PROJECT - Richard Kirsh

Members:

Sue Berlove	Margaret Kohr	Ulla Stenman
Art Brewer	Catherine Lake	Dave Tiffin
Peter Brydon	Nancy Lee	Ted Wood
Edith Burton	Terry Lee	Harold Wright
Don Forbes	Mo MacMahon	Judy Clarke

Primary Contact: Richard Kirsh - (416) 767-5837 - richardkirsh@sympatico.ca

Activities: Our goal is to build understanding between people and help improve the social, economic and living conditions in the poorest areas of Central America.

The primary method for doing this is through direct, personal service during the construction expeditions to Honduras and occasionally Guatemala – Construction Expeditions. Other participation is through the collection of supplies and charitable donations to support the programs and priorities of our partner NGO's.

In addition to economic, health, education and sustainable agriculture programs, our partners in Central America have programs that address the need for institutional change and social justice.

- Programa de Reconstrucción Rural (PRR) helps communities in Honduras organize so that they may determine and express their own priorities for development.
- In Guatemala, one of Mujeres en Acción's (MeA) most important programs is the training of indigenous women in basic human rights. MeA runs a "Spanish as a Second Language" (SSL) training program in order that its constituents, Mayan women, can speak the language of commerce and effectively deal with their suppliers and purchasers. MeA also operates a successful micro-credit program.

Participants in the construction trips learn firsthand about conditions in developing countries and an appropriate way to deliver international aid and development assistance. They also learn about what they have in common with non-Unitarians.

New in 2015: For the first time, the World Accord/First Toronto expedition partnership, sponsored a Medical Expedition to Honduras in March 2015. This trip helped reorganize the medical clinic located on the campus of our Honduran partner, PRR, so it could offer new services and existing services more effectively. The trip was lead by a member of the Unitarian Church of Edmonton who had been inspired through her participation in a Construction Expedition in 2014. Two members of First Toronto were members of the team. Future trips and activities are being planned.

Outcomes: Participating in a Construction Expedition is an opportunity for personal growth. Going to rural Central America is an eye-opener for most of our participants who come away with a different perspective of their own lives and circumstances. For many, it is a life changing experience. Growth ranges from a shift in or reinforcement of personal values and beliefs, to volunteering additional time at an indigenous NGO, to a commitment to personal action such as taking on the sponsorship of a school or the development of an initiative to meet a special need (e.g. provision of school books). Volunteers come away with a deeper and more personal understanding of conditions in developing countries and an appreciation for the spirit, talents and determination of the people.

More specifically, the project:

- Builds community facilities (schools, community centres, training centres) and/or houses in partnership with World Accord and our Central American partners.
- 30-40 people/year experience personal service in the developing world, firsthand.
- Builds connections between Unitarians from across Canada – over 105 people and 22 congregations to date.
- Builds connections between Unitarians and like minded Canadians, including those from other faith traditions – about 1/3 of participants are Unitarians, 1/3 from the Community of Christ and 1/3 other.
- Includes participation by young people:
 - Individuals and family groups
 - School groups from Kitchener, Mississauga and Burlington.

- Venture Scouts from Toronto.
- Raises awareness within the general public of the activities of World Accord, Toronto First and the Construction Expeditions:
 - A TV documentary prepared for The Learning Channel.
 - Newspaper articles have appeared in Toronto, Burlington, Mississauga, and Edmonton.
 - Address to the first anniversary celebration of Toronto's Spanish language community radio station - Voces Latinas AM 1610.
 - Show on Horizons Interfaith Television
- Recycles thousands of used soccer uniforms to community schools in Central America in partnership with the Swansea Soccer Association and Stony Creek Youth Soccer Association. This program was forced to end by the changing and less generous airline baggage regulations.
- Collects funds for hurricane and earthquake disaster relief.
- Collects funds to build 5 houses as part of the Houses for Health project in Honduras.

Funding Information

Total estimated project cost:

<p>98% of the financing required to carry out the project is for the cost of travel and construction. The total budget for the project is in excess of \$100,000/year. The entire amount is raised by the construction volunteers and flowed directly through World Accord with the exception of the funds raised at the <i>Central America Sunday</i> special collection. This streamlines administration and improves accountability. World Accord issues all tax receipts except for those collected on <i>Central America Sunday</i>.</p> <p><u>Administration:</u> World Accord provides the administrative funding both in cash and kind (existing supplies, equipment and staff). There are four categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Program management and overview by senior staff. 2) General overhead -staff, office space, etc. 3) Financial management - receiving donations, issuing tax receipts, transferring funds to Central America, dispersing funds in CA, accounting to CCRA 4) Project promotion - displays, slide shows, travel, printing, office supplies, long distance telephone, conferences and trade shows. <p>Financial management and promotion costs are covered through charges against the funds raised.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Airfare in the fall ● Construction and in-country in the winter ● Special collection in the fall
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Timing Information

Start Date	End Date
The project begins in the April with the planning for next year's projects. Traditionally promotion begins at the CUC ACM in May and continues through the fall and winter.	The project ends in March with the last trip and in April with the review of the previous year's activities.

Partner Agencies:

World Accord is a not-for-profit, non-governmental international development organization, located in Waterloo, Ontario. Since 1981 World Accord has provided programs that allow the poor in the developing world to break the cycle of poverty through their own efforts. World Accord works at the grass roots level through partnerships with, and under the direction of, indigenous NGO's, facilitating local solutions to local problems in seven countries. Major Canadian funding partners include CIDA, the World Hunger Fund and the Wild Rose Foundation of Alberta. World Accord is part of the Community of Christ community.

Programa de Reconstrucción Rural (PRR) is a Honduran development organization based in La Buena Fe and has been operating since 1983. At the core of its programming is an integrated and holistic approach to socio-economic development that focuses on four core areas: health, economic improvement, education, and social organization. PRR is committed to building community capacities among economically marginalized, rural families. Much of their work is to promote economically viable and environmentally sustainable agricultural techniques in the mountainous program area. In addition PRR provides adult literacy classes,

operates a health clinic at La Buena Fe and provides regular mobile health and dental clinics in the mountain communities. It also operates a loan fund for agricultural inputs, grain storage silos and home improvements. PRR is currently working with over 1,200 families in the departments (provinces) of Santa Barbara and Comayagua at the southern end of Lago de Yojoa.

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. The Centre's programs include the Guatemala Peace Accord, Women's Rights, Preventative Health Care, Girls' Education, Sustainable Agricultural Techniques and Small Business/Coop Management. Graduates of the Agriculture and Business programs are eligible for MeA's Micro-Credit Program that enables them to set up their own micro-businesses, achieving a degree of economic independence and providing for a better life for themselves and their children.

Additional Information:

The project requests a dedicated service, *Central America Sunday*, in late September or early October to kick off the heart of the promotional and recruitment campaign. A special collection is requested during this service with the proceeds going towards the cost of construction materials.

Active Involvement:

Provide opportunity for significant congregational involvement. The major contributions from the congregation will be: 1) participation on one of the construction teams and 2) financial support, principally on *Central America Sunday*. Other opportunities to participate are members and friends leading or assisting with one of the non-construction activities, such as, promoting participation to friends and other congregations and organizations, collecting school supplies, developing and promoting supporting activities such as, organizing support for schools in Central America and disaster relief.

Encourage hands-on effort. To date, our primary activity has been direct service during the construction trips to Honduras and Guatemala. On these trips, participants work for 2 weeks building facilities to support local programs. Other hands-on activities include: developing relationships with other organizations; developing and implementing new activities; and collecting supplies. 2 - 3% of the funds raised come from the *Central America Sunday* special collection. The rest come from external fund raising from: friends, family and colleagues; charitable foundations; and personal contributions from the participants. This focus on **external** sources ensures that participants extend themselves and spread the word about the work of First Unitarian and World Accord in the larger community.

Align and Promote UU Principles and First Unitarian:

Align with UU principles. Social, economic and living conditions in most of Central America continue to be among the worst in the Western Hemisphere. This is especially true in rural areas where there are fewer opportunities and resources. Through our partner, World Accord, we will continue to support the activities and initiatives of their partner NGO's in Guatemala and Honduras. These organizations are locally led, determine the programs and set the priorities to make sure local needs are met.

The project is clearly supported by and especially demonstrates these Unitarian principles:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all; and
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Connection to the larger community. In 1999 we formed a partnership with World Accord, a Canadian Development agency and, through it, a connection to the Community of Christ and World Accord's existing constituency. We've had participation from over 100 Unitarians from 22 congregations, many people from other faith traditions and people who have no current practice. We make presentations and exhibits annually at the CUC ACM. We have worked with many groups working for the improvement of humankind around the world: CUSO, CCFA (Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association), Asociación Maya, Guatemala Community Network, Friends of Honduras, San Lorenzo Anglican Church. The Swansea and Stony Creek Soccer Associations have collected soccer uniforms for our uniform drive.

CANADIAN UNITARIANS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (CUSJ) – TORONTO FIRST CHAPTER - Margaret Rao, Chair

Members: Margaret Rao, Chair, Douglas Buck, Kate Chung, Eryl Court, Beth Guthrie, Fred Lautenschlaeger, Gerta Moray, Janice Tait, Ruth Tait, Ted Wood

Contact Margaret Rao 416 658-0998 or email margaretrao@rgers.com

Meetings: The Toronto First Chapter meets monthly, hosting a Social Justice Sunday film series. Films reflect our concerns for social and ecological justice while holding up alternative, life sustaining solutions at the local and global level. This year's films included 'Origins', 'Snowden's Journalist of Choice' and '5 Broken Cameras' among others.

Additional Activities: The Toronto First Chapter of Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) is involved in local, regional, national and international debate and action in matters of economic, environmental, political and social justice. The CUSJ's excellent quarterly newsletter 'JUSTnews' is meant to engender discussion and action amongst our members.

The Toronto First Chapter of CUSJ aims to put into practice our UU principles of "justice, equity and compassion in human relations" with "the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all".

This past year we have raised our CUSJ banner in defense of the environment, sovereignty for First Nations, healthcare for refugees, the civilian population of Gaza and civil liberties in Canada. At this year's livestreamed May AGM in Ottawa, keynote speaker Bruce Campbell of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives addressed the question of democratic dissent and the targeting of charities by Canada's Revenue Agency.

Following this year's Sunday reflection by the President of CUSJ, \$820 was raised in support of our national social justice network.

We encourage your participation online and in the streets. Check out our bulletin board, the Sunday table in Workman Hall and the Eco/Social Justice bookshelf (and DVDs) in the library. With your support we will continue to lobby all levels of government and to raise our banner in keeping with CUSJ's purposes to protest 'abuses of human rights and the democratic process' and to promote 'peace and security' and 'environmental protection'. With like-minded allies, we will continue to promote fossil fuel energy divestment, 'right relations' with First Nations, the right to a dignified end of life and peace in the Middle East. Together, we move forward in hope to create a more just and loving world community. Standing on the Side of Love and Justice' www.cusj.org

CANADIAN UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (CUUWA) – TORONTO CHAPTER - Janice Tait, Chair

Activities: The Toronto Chapter of CUUWA sponsored a wonderful service at Toronto First on International Women's Day (IWD), which was dedicated to honouring native women in Toronto, therefore, it was organized in conjunction with the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto (NWRCT).

The main speaker was Delia Opekokew, a native woman and lawyer who was counsel to the Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, which examined the experiences of native men and women who were victimized in the residential schools. She told harrowing stories of their suffering, both as children and ongoing into adulthood. In addition, we heard a testimony from Darlene King, NWRCT Coordinator, who described the work of the Centre. The NWRCT is a community-based organization dedicated to providing resources and support to aboriginal women and their families. It delivers culturally appropriate programs and services that encourage the capacity and self-sufficiency of aboriginal women.

Post-service: A light lunch was served; then members heard from Victoria Pezzo, deputy chief of the Missanabie Cree First Nation and volunteer at Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto.

Donations: The success of this service was reflected in donations from members, totaling \$2,300, to be donated to the NWRCT.

International Woman's Day Sunday Services in UU Congregations across Canada, March 8, 2015

We know that many Congregations observed this day, dedicated to highlighting issues that women face wherever they live on Planet Earth as well as their accomplishments. These brief summaries from four additional representative Unitarian Congregations are an inspiring read and perhaps will motivate more members to organize such services, also to report them nationally so that we all might savour their rich diversity. A goal of CUUWA is to have every Canadian Congregation to voluntarily observe International Women's Day. Please join us!

First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa

Theme: Wisdom of the Generations

Decor: Quilts were used to decorate Worship Hall; these were requested from congregants, asking for quilts old and new that had a history or story; these stories were pinned to the quilt for people to browse.

Time for all ages: Two of the quilts, thought to be of most interest to the children were demonstrated and shown and their stories told by the quilt owners.

Chalice Lighting; honoured women from the past, today's women and hopes for the women of the future.

Two Homilies: Prairie Women: Joan Turner, one of our members from the prairies, spoke of the resilience of women in her prairie community (the related quilt) and Unitarian congregation; we also learned of the contributions of the Icelandic women, especially Margaret Benedictsson and Jennie McCaine Peterson, to the Women's movement and to the Manitoba Unitarian community. Joan reminded us that Manitoba was the first province to enfranchise women.

UU Pioneer: Linda Goonewardene told us the story of Mary Anne Church, a Universalist preacher and spokesperson and who is believed to be the first female preacher to form a congregation in Canada in Merrickville, about 40 km up the Rideau river from Ottawa.

Music - 'We are . . .' from teal hymn book, Two Anthems: Standing Before Us (Carole Etzler) and Kinder (Copper Wimmin). **Margaret Linton**

Unitarian Congregation of Saskatoon

We had a great International Women's Day service that Pam and Karen did together. I had an idea of having a small fair after church of women's organizations, or organizations that specialize in women's issues. It turned out to be fabulous: we had a ton of extra people – more than we usually have. Organizations included: Tara Green, Saskatoon environmental group (started by a women in our congregation) Mother's Centre, etc. We also invited the Raging Grannies to come and sing for the service; they also had a booth and recruited at least 3 people that day. So it went well. **Karen Baxter**

Comox Valley Unitarian Fellowship

Our service was presented by the Women's Spirit Circle of our Fellowship. There were readings, video quotes by famous women, a discussion, with a brief history to remind us why we celebrate IWD. Highlights were a drumbeat meditation to honour our missing, but not forgotten, Aboriginal sisters, singing the classic "Bread and Roses" song together, and singing with the music video called "One Woman" launched in 2013. **Jane Fox**

First Unitarian Universalist Church of Winnipeg.

We reflected upon the life and work of Nellie McClung (well-known pioneer teacher, author, suffragist, social reformer, lecturer and legislator) and Margret Benedictsson who were contemporary. Not as well-known as many other activists of her day, Margret – a Unitarian Icelandic Manitoban – has been called "the forgotten suffragette". "Nellie McClung and Margrét Benedictsson are but two of the women on whose shoulders we all stand in our efforts to make the world more just, more equitable, more humane for everyone. They modeled what it means to live a life of devotion, called to mind on this International Women's Day": Rev Milie Rochester. **Adina Lyon**

Compiled by Betty Donaldson, president, CUUWA from notes provided by members of the respective congregations.
Blessed Be!

FRIENDS OF NEW VISIONS TORONTO - Barb Wentworth

Members:

Richard Kirsh	Ainsley Kendrick	Lynn Atkin-Phillips
Terry Lee	Ilene Cummings	Nancy Lee
Wendy Dines	Judy Clarke	Beth Guthrie
Kate Chung	Peter Brydon	Meghan Edmonds
Harriet Xanthakos	Catherine Kentridge	

Primary Contact: Barb Wentworth – 416-652-6542 barbw@ica.net

Background:

NEWVISIONSTORONTO has an important role to play in the lives of the people we support. We believe that all individuals, regardless of ability, are capable of growth and change and have the right to enjoy their community to the fullest.

The goal of Friends of New Visions Toronto is to create a meaningful connection between two communities - the people who live with developmental disabilities at New Visions Toronto and our community at Toronto First - in a way that enhances the capabilities of both communities.

These two communities are vastly different.

Mark Jorgensen has been an enthusiastic member at Toronto First since 2009. Mark is also one of 56 people living in 2 homes and 13 apartments operated by New Visions Toronto.

At New Visions Toronto, Mark lives with others who communicate differently and have physical challenges in mobility. They are supported by caring staff. But New Visions Toronto is constrained by lack of resources which affects the quality of life for these individuals who can do nothing to improve their lives without outside assistance.

Toronto First, a welcoming community, is largely made up of physically and intellectually capable adults who have lots of questions/concerns about how best to engage with Mark. Children also have huge questions about who Mark is and why he is like he is.

There is quite a variety of methods available to create a meaningful connection between these two communities. We started at Toronto First by providing opportunities for enhancing awareness, education about the challenges facing this population, special initiatives that open the door to closer understanding and targeted advocacy initiatives. Then we engaged at New Visions Toronto with a number of hands on opportunities that will support and enhance daily activities, provide a chance for friendships to develop and make improvements to living environments at New Visions. And finally we are supporting New Visions Toronto in its many fundraising activities.

Outcomes: Friends of New Visions Toronto provide the opportunity and support so that everyone can expand and learn to reach a hand out to someone who is very different from themselves. This builds capacity within our community at Toronto First for people to step out of their comfort zone and develop skills in how to just be with someone. The ability to find a meaningful connection, even when words can't help, is an important life skill as we all age and face life's many challenges. In fact, it is at the core of the work of the Diversity Working Group and this project will enhance our abilities to be a welcoming community.

Specific Objectives: Specific objectives are formulated to appeal to everyone, young and old, no matter what their level of interest is. We want to make sure that there is something that can be done by anyone who wants to stretch and grow, whether that be at arm's length or a more hands on involvement.

Connecting: Because many people at New Visions do not have day programs to go out to, regular visits from Toronto First Friends mean a great deal. First Storyteller Catherine Kentridge has already visited at Mark's apartment, telling stories with great success. Other ideas include visits from:

- Musicians
- Visiting pet owners
- Hobbyists of all types – artists, model makers, bakers, woodworkers, etc.
- People who just want to come down and have tea/coffee and chat for awhile
- Other with latent talents not now identified!

New Visions also welcomes volunteer help to

- Paint a room;
- Paint/refurbish an apartment;
- Carpentry help; and
- Gardening help.

There are also opportunities to become part of a skilled volunteer board that supports New Visions.

Fundraising:

New Visions must find regular funding from sources other than the Government of Ontario or reduce the current level of spending which will impact the current level of service provided to 56 residents. This past year, First members have helped by:

- Attending various New Visions fundraising events:
 - Bowl-a-thon on May 25, 2014
 - Garage Sale on June 21, 2014
 - Golf tournament on August 19, 2014
- Providing auction items
- Helping raise money for a wheel chair van by contributing Canadian Tire Money. This drive has raised more than \$330 to date.
- Dining out at O’Noir Restaurant. This event raised \$306.00.
- Supporting a Special Collection. This collection raised \$1,762.00 for New Visions Toronto.

Activities in 2014-15:

Spring 2014

- Mark’s ‘Our Story’ video on the Toronto First Website. To date = 395 viewings. It’s been closed captioned to make it accessible for people who live with a hearing loss.
- Pet visiting team: April 8, 2014 – Brigitte and Gremlin (her bearded collie) came to visit.

Summer 2014

- Three Toronto First golfers enjoyed the NVT Golf Tournament with two additional guests for dinner. All hope to come back again next year with an outreach to others.
- First in a series of visits from First Storytellers Catherine Kentridge and Peter Brydon.

September 2014

- Mark entered his very first Run4Rett charity walk. He collected \$1,300.00 in sponsorships for the Ontario Rett Syndrome Association, \$900.00 of which came from Toronto First friends.
- Another visit from First Storytellers.

October 2014

- Group outing to the Fashion Follows Form Exhibit at the ROM about adaptive clothing.
- A third visit from First Storytellers.

November 2014

- 68 people had lunch at O’Noir restaurant to experience eating in the dark, well supported by blind servers.

January 2015

- In partnership with the Toronto Alzheimer’s Society, app. 50 people watched the Alive Inside documentary about the impact of individualized music on the lives of those living with dementia.

February 2015

- Valentine's Day dinner and dance at New Visions Toronto

March 2015

- Collection drive for Used I-Pods for donation to the Toronto Alzheimer's Society.

April 2015

- Neurological Health Charities Canada interactive stations that highlight challenges in vision, sensation, mobility, cognition and communication for the RE kids to try out.

Planned Activities:

Advocacy

- Letter writing campaign to Select Committee on Developmental Services regarding funding
- Letter writing campaign to Police Services Board regarding impact of 3 month delay in police checks
- Others as necessary throughout the year

Education

- More 'All about Mark' type sessions hosted throughout the year
- Initiative with the children's RE to raise awareness and answer questions
- Speakers

Special Events at First

Examples:

- Birthday cake for Mark at coffee hour (*March 16, 2014*)

Telling the story

- Create a video log of the year long project
- Create a page on First's website with pictures, links to NV, and a place to put information (like Barb's presentation to Developmental Services committee so more people can see it)

Networking

- Brainstorm for and facilitate connections between local businesses, other churches, community groups and New Visions Toronto.

We Encourage Everyone to Consider Becoming a Member of New Visions Toronto

This is an easy way to receive regular, ongoing updates about activities. We hope you will also consider becoming a regular donor.

- NV is a registered charity and provides tax receipts for all donations of \$25.00 or greater.
- Donations can be made directly to the agency or, if donating through the United Way, by designating all or portion of your donation to New Visions Toronto.

Many thanks to all who lent their efforts and resources to Friends of New Visions Toronto!

History of New Visions Toronto

1980 New Visions Toronto began life as Ceci's Homes for Children, in memory of Debra Cecile Heinrichs, affectionately known as Ceci to her family and friends. Building on their experience, Ceci's parents, Elfrieda and Vern Heinrichs, planned a program to assist other parents caring for children with severe disabilities. This was eventually made possible through the determination and love of many people and with the assistance of the Heinrichs Foundation.

The four original residences operated in Toronto's historic St. Lawrence neighbourhood and are part of the Cathedral Court Cooperative Homes.

1986 Ceci's Homes was incorporated as New Visions Homes for Children and Adolescents.

1991 We opened a residence in North York, near Steeles and Leslie.

1992 We opened another residence in the City of York, near Eglinton and Keele.

- 1997 We opened six more residences in apartments located in the New Hibret Cooperative Homes, again in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood.
We were recognized for our contribution to the quality of life for people with disabilities with the City of Toronto's Access Award.
- 1998 We updated our name to NEWVISIONSTORONTO to reflect the growth of the individuals in our residences.
- 2004 Keeping the same name, we updated our logo to NEWVISIONSTORONTO to emphasize our vision towards the future.
In recognition of our outstanding support and commitment in the sport of Dragon Boat Racing, we received the 2005 Youth Spirit Challenge Award of Excellence.
- 2006 We entered into partnership with a family and are providing staffing support for two brothers in their own residence in the Mount Pleasant and Davisville area. The Board of Directors approved the purchase of a condominium at 65 Scadding in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood.
- 2009 We opened a respite location *in one* of Market Street homes to offer families still supporting their adult children at home some much needed respite.
- 2012 Our Board of Directors approved a partnership with Delisle Youth Services that will support two people in our 65 Scadding Location.
- 2013 We received \$25,000 funding from the Toronto LHIN to create a second respite location in another of our homes on Henry Lane Terrace.

A volunteer Board of Directors governs NEW VISIONS TORONTO. The agency is funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Ministry of Children and Youth Services and by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, (through the Toronto LHIN). NEW VISIONS TORONTO is a registered charitable organization with Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

New Visions Toronto Partner:

Prime Contact: Lyndel Hill lyndel.hill@gmail.com

Secondary contact: Andy Rotsma arotsma@newvisionstoronto.com Telephone: 416 868-1493 ext 224

For more info go to www.newvisionstoronto.com

THE GREEN SANCTUARY GROUP - Margarete Wiebe / Cathy Brown

This year the Green Sanctuary Group focused on the following:

- The Green Moment each week in First Light;
- Workshops on divestment, container gardening, energy saving tips in winter;
- Letters to various politicians on climate change;
- Contributions to earth- themed services;
- Financial contributions to the Property Committee (for new tower lights, for example);
- Purchases for the library ("This Changes Everything"); and
- Educational sessions with the children on environmental issues and planting.

We plan to work on improving the Secret Garden and focusing on environmental issues in the fall. One idea we will explore is how to limit our use of paper; we will also bring environmental issues to candidates in the Federal election in October (possibly holding a scrupling session with the local candidates).

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST UNITED NATIONS OFFICE (UU-UNO) – TORONTO FIRST
- Eryl Court, Envoy

The opening words of the Charter of the United Nations, are;

“WE, THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS” are “DETERMINED TO SAVE SUCCEEDING
GENERATIONS FROM THE SCOURGE OF WAR”.

Our Unitarian-Universalist United Nations Office was established on that premise more than a half-century ago. Whether or not we shall have any descendants depends upon our fulfillment of it.

Our congregation, which has for numerous years been awarded a “Blue Ribbon” for its support of UU-UN’s overall United Nations work, continues to do so in the following ways:

- In October of each year (normally on the Sunday closest to United Nations Day, which is October 24), we hold a service to support our global U.N. work. In October 2014, this was conducted primarily by young people from our congregation who had attended the UU-UN Seminar (see below). The service and related events raised several hundred dollars for our global work.
- The inspiring annual SEMINAR organized by our central UU-UN Office in New York City in April (when Spring blooms), takes place mainly in and near the United Nations building (across the road from the Office in the beautiful Church Centre for the UN). YOUNG PEOPLE are increasingly present and active, contributing independently and creatively to the programme. They come in ever greater numbers. These are the leaders of the world to come.
- We join in the periodic Social Action showcases at First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto, exhibiting posters and leaflets, etc. about the UU-UN’s varied activities and programmes concerning critical global issues (climate change, women’s and children’s rights and problems, disarmament, LGBT matters, and many more).
- We join in the annual commemoration at the PEACE POLE in front of our church (one of tens of thousands around the World, inscribed with one message in one or more languages –“MAY PEACE PREVAIL ON EARTH”)
- We plan to continue our work more vigorously, and I urge you to join us (“the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few”). What YOU do may indeed “tip the balance” to determine whether or not we shall “save succeeding generations from the scourge of War”. There is no better life’s work.

Eryl Court ekort@sympatico.ca; 416 368-3270.

SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUPS APPLYING FOR STATUS

1. Aboriginal Awareness Group (AAG)

- Chair: Genevieve Iacovino.
- Contact at 647 637-1866 or geniacovino@firstunitariantoronto.org

2. Amnesty International

- Contact: Ted Wood.
- Contact at 416 429-6351 or TedWood@FirstUnitarianToronto.org.

3. Central America Community Development - Central America Project

- Primary contact: Richard Kirsh
- Contact 416 767-5837 or richardkirsh@sympatico.ca

4. Canadian Unitarians For Social Justice (CUSJ) – Toronto First Chapter

- Chair: Margaret Rao.
- Contact at 416 658-0998 or margaretrao@rogers.com

5. Canadian Unitarian Universalist Women’s Association (CUUWA) – Toronto Chapter

- Chair: Janice Tait.
- Contact at 416 483-7398 or janicetait@rogers.com

6. Friends of New Visions Toronto

- Primary Contact: Barb Wentworth.
- Contact at 416 652-6542 or barbw@ica.net

7. Unitarian-Universalist United Nations Office

- Contact: Eryl Court.
- Contact at 416 368-3270 (leave a clear message) or ekort@sympatico.ca

SUNDAY SUPPORT

SUNDERLAND GALLERY – Kate Cottington

Arts Committee Annual Report May 31, 2015

Kate Cottington, Judy Clarke, Judy Skelton, Jean Galt, Wendy Dines, Brigitte Nowak

Sunderland Hall monthly art exhibitions provide a stimulating and welcoming atmosphere. Art receptions attract a diverse audience to enjoy the artwork, discussion and refreshments. The artists' talks have been well-received. Commission fees (20% of sales) collected from June 2014 to May 2015 totaled \$852.00.

2014

June – Rob Croxford

July and August – Sue Berlove – *Bolivian wallhangings*

September – Shir Libeynu group exhibition

October – Chris Peters – *Diverse Worlds*

November – Brigitte Nowak and Ana Gribbons – *Space and Place*

December – Christine Campbell - *Art on HIV on Art*

2015

January – Michael Battenberg – *Portraits of an Overlooked World*

February – Carol Harrison and Judith Donoahue - *Transitions*

March – Members and friends of First group show

April – York Artists Guild

May – D.D. Gadjanski

Artists wishing to exhibit their work in Sunderland Hall should email Kate Cottington at Arts@FirstUnitarianToronto.org. In the library, members' exhibitions rotate every 2 months. Interested artists should contact Judy Clarke to schedule a library show.

USHERS – Jim Mason

Our Congregation is blessed with a loyal and dedicated group of ushers who serve on teams of four for each Sunday of the month. This year we have recruited a few new volunteers. We have had no significant problems.

BOOKSTORE – Lynn Hughes, Coordinator

The bookstore is open on Sunday mornings during coffee hour. The store is normally staffed by four teams of two volunteers each. At present the bookstore is somewhat short-staffed, with only 6 active volunteers. New volunteers would be welcome.

The congregation supports the bookstore with donations of used books, CDs, and DVDs. Recently we have had to call a temporary halt to donations, as the amount of material was outgrowing the storage space. We should be ready to start accepting donations again this summer.

Our most popular items continue to be copies of sermons, used paperback books, and used CDs and DVDs. There is a smaller but steady demand for Unitarian books and jewellery from the UUA Bookstore in Boston. Among the new books, the most popular items are hymnals and introductory books on Unitarian Universalism.

Seven members of the congregation are currently offering 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. We are continuing to sell jewellery and woven bags made by Unitarian Universalist women in Kenya. 100% of the proceeds from these sales goes to the craftswomen. In 2014 the bookstore made a profit of approximately \$1300.

GREETERS - Linda Brown Coordinator

Unfortunately, we have lost a few greeters this year so we are always looking out for potential new greeters. Our weekly teams are not fully staffed some Sundays. We will carry on trying to find new individuals and families that would be willing to act as greeters.

Our plan to divide the greeters into two groups, door greeters and roving greeters, still has not been implemented due to not having enough volunteers.

LIBRARY - Gerta Moray

Three exciting developments to report this year:

1. We now have shelves dedicated to essential books on Social Justice, on Green/Climate issues, and on Aboriginal Awareness, stocked by donations from those groups, and we hope congregation members will avail themselves of this opportunity.
2. We have retooled our cataloguing system (Library of Congress numbers) to group together books on Unitarianism, on various faith traditions and other topics so people can more easily find what interests them by scanning the shelves. The First Unitarian Library catalogue remains accessible on the congregational website's Library page.
3. Our Issues & Ideas book review series, now focussed on the journey theme of the month, has continued this year with excellent contributions from congregation members. Please consider joining us with a contribution next year or in our discussion circle.

We are still actively recruiting for people interested in joining the library committee and/or serving as volunteers on the library desk once a month to check books in and out and help readers find the books that interest them.

Our current committee members are: Doug Campbell, Albert Frey, Peter Hughes, Lynne Hughes, Louise Jacob, Gerta Moray and Lorraine Wilson.

WORSHIP STORYTELLING TEAM - Lynn Torrie / Diane Bosman Coordinators

The Worship Storytelling team functions as a part of the Sunday worship team. Our objective is to enhance worship by offering stories that speak to people of all ages while deepening or expanding the worship theme.

This year, we have had a team of 9 storytellers- enough to provide some variety and ensure coverage if anyone is away or unable to tell. We work with the sermon-giver and other team members until the right tale is found. Each five-minute story represents hours of discussion, research, crafting and practicing. We continue to explore ways to provide feedback to each other and perfect our skills.

In addition to Sunday morning stories, the team undertook several other projects this year:

Diane Bosman and Lynn Torrie offered an "Introduction to Storytelling" workshop at the Mississauga congregation in September. In exchange, our congregation gained a parenting workshop from Pamela Smith-Loeters, their DLRE.

A number of our storytellers polished some longer stories for Storyfire- a fundraiser and Outreach event, which was coordinated with the Toronto Storytelling Festival. We had a smaller audience than last year, likely due to the fact that 10 other Storytelling events were happening that afternoon and it was the school March break.

We ended the year with Storytelling as a theme for the month of May. Many of us contributed to your readings in New Horizons. On one Sunday, the story was moved into the sermon spot and Diane Bosman told her version of "The Silent Prince." The month concluded with an "Introduction to Storytelling" workshop which was also an opportunity for interested members to consider joining the team.

Outside of Sunday morning worship, storytellers have also contributed their skills and passion to other aspects of life at First including the children's Religious Education Program and New Visions Toronto home.

2014-2015 Worship Storytelling Team: Diane Bosman, Peter Brydon, Catherine Kentridge, Kate Kudelka, Chris Moore, Curtis Murphy, Norman Perrin, Lynn Torrie, Harriet Xanthakos.

FUTURE FOCUS PROGRAM – 2014/15 ANNUAL REPORT

The goal of the FFP this year was to increase First's readiness for the future, particularly in the context of making a significant decision to either stay at or leave our current location. We have made progress on multiple fronts, as described below.

Governance

- Presented a decision-making process, approved by the Board, outlining the steps and approval methods for decision-making in the event of an unsolicited offer to purchase 175 or the discovery of an attractive alternative property before a renovation plan is available for comparison

Mission

- Worked with members of the Board, the Executive Committee, the Committee on Ministry, and the Director of Religious Education to develop our thinking about minimum needs and opportunities for focus and simplification. Understanding the essential characteristics of our mission will enable us to be more nimble and to be clear about what we would need from any building and/or from any other change in the way we operate.
-
- Participated in writing a proposal and negotiating with the Don Heights UU Congregation to join with us and begin developing a multi-site congregation model (which would increase our presence in Toronto while not adding strain to our existing premises)

Finance

- The Board achieved a balanced budget, setting the necessary precedent for credit-worthiness if required in future

Alternate Property

- Presented a proposal, approved by the Board, to obtain a professional assessment of the value of our current property; action deferred to let local developments pan out for points of reference
-
- Reviewed properties provided by real estate agent, but found none attractive

Renovation

- Developed a proposal, to be presented to the Board in June, to obtain architectural designs and costing for renovations to our current property (as a point of comparison against an alternative property purchase)

Next Steps

If our proposal is accepted by the Board, we plan to launch a significant work effort in the fall of 2015 to develop a renovation plan for consideration. We will continue to explore multi-site congregation models, discuss opportunities with Don Heights, and examine any alternate properties presented.

Future Focus Program Leaders

Karen Dunk-Green, Bill Dunk-Green, Richard Kirsh, Gina Page

HEALTHY CONGREGATION

The Healthy Congregations Team (HCT) continues to develop new initiatives to promote harmonious relations between members. Most significantly, we worked to develop a new covenant that would spell out our commitment to each other. Entitled “To Dwell Together”, it offers ten possible ways we promise to practice right action toward each other. The new covenant will be voted on at the 2015, AGM.

In addition, the HCT pursued educational goals as part of its mandate. We assisted at several committee meetings and social justice events to observe interactions between members and advise leaders where requested. We also created monthly vignettes for First Light addressing ways in which we can become more sensitive to the needs of others. A sermon was offered by Doug Buck, Chair, and Shawn on the covenant and what it will mean for members of Toronto First. Several other testimonials were also presented.

We have also been working with a committee addressing the tangled web of Israeli/Palestinian relations. Facilitating dialogue on difficult issues is an important part of the HCT and our hope is that members will feel comfortable seeking our assistance should the need arise.

COMMITTEES OF THE CONGREGATION

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Committee Members 2014-2015: Ilene Cummings and Sean McCaughey (co-chairs); Diane Bosman, Terri Marks and Allan Brand.

The Nominations Committee met three times starting in late February and ending in May. We conferred and exchanged information on e-mail throughout the process and interviewed numerous people in the process. We are pleased to present a full slate of nominees. In addition to the following nominees, we have requested Art Brewer to continue on the board for a further year to which he has agreed and Sarah Thurston has agreed to continue for a further two years on the board, having served only one.

For the Board: Joe T. R. Clarke and Heino Nielsen

Funds Management Committee: Nathan Cox

Nominations Committee: David Priebe; Winnie Larsen and Carol Damioli

2015 Nominees for the Board of Trustees

Joe T.R. Clarke

Joe began attending the Unitarian Church of Edmonton in 1964 and joined the congregation a year later. In 1974, he moved his family, which by then included two children, Jennifer and Michael, from Calgary to Halifax. He became active in the Universalist-Unitarian Church of Halifax, where he served twice as president of the vestry and ran several financial campaigns over the next 9 years. In 1983, Joe moved his family to Toronto. In 1986, after a long and difficult struggle, Lesia died of breast cancer. Joe joined First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto in 1991, where he subsequently served on the Board, organized financial campaigns, and ultimately served a term as President of the Board. He was very active for some years teaching RE, the famous Blue Group of pre-adolescents including Carly Gaylor, Robbie Brydon, Adam Kirsh, and others. He also sang in the choir. He recently accepted responsibility for leading a new campaign to improved the planned giving campaign, a task interrupted for some months by a catastrophic, but luckily remediable, illness.

Heino Nielsen

Born in Sudbury, Ontario Heino received a degree from Laurentian University. During university he worked at the LCBO. This job got him involved with the union that represented their workers. As his social justice awareness grew, his involvement in union work also increased. He became a staff member of the union at the LCBO, working at their Mississauga office. After 18 years with that union he went to work with the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU). He first was the Executive Assistant to the President, and later Division Administrator. He retired early from that position this January. He now hopes to work again in a community agency or similar agency.

He started attending services at First Unitarian in Toronto late in 2014. He soon felt he had found a new spiritual home. This spirit manifests within the positive and inclusive views of community members, together with the words and music of Sunday services. He became a member of the community in May, 2015 and now hopes to make a contribution to First Unitarian as a Trustee on the Board.

2015 Nominees for the Funds Management Committee

Nathan Cox

I am a 28 year old electrical engineer. I grew up in southwestern Ontario, went to university in Hamilton and moved to Toronto when I started my career. I was raised Roman Catholic and still attend services with my family around the holidays. My wife and I found First about 8 months ago when we were planning our wedding. We discussed getting married in the Catholic church but we found on closer inspection that the views of the church did not align with ours on some key issues. We came across First in a search for an alternative place to get married and we instantly felt at home in the congregation. We were married in February by none other than Intern Minister Curtis Murphy.

I have been living in Toronto and working at Hydro One for about 5 years now. Aside from my work I have a deep interest in finance. I really have to understand how things work. I started reading all kinds of books about finance and investing and started investing a bit for my retirement. I am currently enrolled in a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Program. I have passed 2 of the 3 examinations and I will be writing the final examination this June.

2015 Nominees for the Nominating Committee

David Priebe

It was the late, great Bruce Schwartzentruber who introduced me to First Unitarian. The incredible musical quality of that first service moved me to join the choir. I have been a member for two years now, and also serve as a Greeter.

My career started with the Social Planning Council and ended up with the Ontario public service, where I served as Special Advisor to the Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing. I now work part-time, offering research, policy and communications services to community agencies, including HabitatServices, United Way Centraide Canada, Ontario 211, and Social Housing Services Corporation.

As a father of four and grandfather of one, family life plays a large role in keeping me grounded. The fellowship I have so enjoyed at First has become my larger community. I would be honoured to serve on the Nominating Committee

Carol Damioli

Carol Damioli has been a member of First Unitarian since 2009. She took over organization of the Dinner Series shortly after that and continued it, with her husband, for about five years. She has also been a regular coffee server for many years.

Carol grew up in Michigan and graduated from Central Michigan University with a degree in journalism. She started out as a newspaper reporter in Michigan. She also worked as a newspaper copy editor, in international radio, and as a trade magazine editor. She has lived in Florence, Munich, Prague, Tokyo, Manila, Chicago, and San Francisco, before she moved to Toronto in 2007. Carol has written two historical novels: *Rogue Angel* (Branden Books) in 1994 and *Portrait in Black and Gold* (Inanna Publications) in 2013. Carol and her husband, Brian Deming, were married in 1984. Brian is also a member of First Unitarian.

Winnie Larsen

I have been a member at Toronto First for about 25 years, starting to attend when Mark and Donna Morrison-Reed first came to First. My children were raised Unitarian, attending RE classes, participating in family and later in youth programs.

I have service on the Board, later, I was program convenor and I was a founding member of a women's group that ran for several years. Over the years, I have participated in many activities at First. I have enjoyed singing in the Choir, which I look forward to returning to in the fall. I value being part of the community and feel fortunate to be a member of this community. Currently, I am active at Unicamp and I am serving on the Board there.

I hope I can be of value on the nominating committee.

APPENDIX 1

2014 FUNDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

1. Overview

The mandate of the Funds Management Committee (FMC) is to oversee the congregation's long-term capital funds. The assets at December 31, 2014 totaled \$1,106,881 and comprised six funds, designated as either expendable or endowed:

- Endowment Fund (endowed)
- Foundation Fund (endowed)
- Heritage Fund (endowed)
- Rouff-Mackie/Jenkins Teaching Congregation Fund (expendable)
- Ratcliffe Growth Fund (expendable)
- Opportunities Fund (expendable)

For expendable funds, both earnings and capital can be withdrawn. For endowed funds, only earnings, not capital, may be withdrawn unless the congregation grants special permission as described in the by-laws.

The capital funds are segregated from the congregation's operating funds. Each fund is tracked individually, and pooled into one investment account managed by a professional third-party investment manager. The manager, Alan Harman, is with a large, reputable investment firm (Scotia McLeod), and was chosen in 2008 through a formal evaluation and selection process. Criteria included commitment to Socially Responsible Investing ("SRI") using a formal screening protocol (at this time, Jantzi Sustainalytics).

2. The Funds Management Committee

In 2014, the Funds Management Committee comprised:

William Glassman (Chair) Calvin Drake

Nancy Marini

Karen Dunk-Green (Board Representative to May 2014) Cheryl Gordon (Treasurer to May 2014)

Karen MacDuffee (To May 2014) Loo Russell (To May 2014) Brian Deming (From May 2014) Janine Gliener (From May 2014)

Stan Yack (Board Representative from May 2014)

The congregation's Treasurer is a designated member of the FMC. However, the congregation was without a Treasurer for much of the year.

3. Funds Management Committee Activity

On a monthly basis, the committee reviews the Fund activity and performance reporting received from Scotia McLeod. In February 2014, the FMC met with Alan Harman, our Investment Manager at Scotia McLeod, for the annual review. We 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.

The congregation's Green Sanctuary committee appraised the FMC on current issues regarding divestment and shareholder engagement in the fossil fuels sector, including excluding investments to the "Carbon Tracker 200" ("CT200") list of companies. The Jantzi/Sustainalytics screening employed by the Investment Manager filters out the vast majority of these companies.

As described below (4. Policy Compliance), the FMC undertook a comprehensive review of all FMC-related by-laws and policies, and policy monitoring.

4. Policy Compliance

a) Compliance Framework

The management of the congregation's long-term capital funds is governed by the congregation's By-Laws, Financial Policies and Investment Policy. The Investment Manager, in consultation with the FMC, creates an Investment Policy Statement reflecting the congregation's by-laws and policies. This document dictates how the Investment Manager will manage the investment account.

b) Policy Review

During 2014 (with completion expected by mid-2015), the FMC undertook a review of these governing by-laws and policies, and began identifying explicit monitoring requirements. Proposed updates to by-laws and policies will be presented to the Board in 2015. The monitoring mechanisms will also come into play in 2015 and will explicitly define the activities that the FMC must undertake throughout the year to monitor by-law and policy compliance.

c) Compliance Issues

i. Over-Commitment in Specific Equities

The Investment Policy requires that no one equity investment can account for more than 10% of the total portfolio. At the end of the year, the investment fund held 10.02% and 11.00% of its total value in Royal Bank of Canada and Toronto Dominion Bank respectively. The FMC is taking steps to correct this.

ii. Prohibited Investments

The Investment Policy prohibits investment in exchange-traded funds ("ETFs") because it is difficult or impossible to ensure that the underlying investments that make up ETFs pass our screening requirements. At the end of the year, the investment account acquired shares of iShares Canadian Corporate Bond Index, an ETF. This was disposed of in 2015.

iii. Asset Mix Guidelines

Towards the end of the year, it became apparent that there was a misalignment in how asset mix guidelines were presented in the congregation's Investment Policy versus the Investment Policy Statement that is created by the investment manager based on the FMC's instructions. Policy revisions were drafted to correct this.

iv. Monies Borrowed from Capital Funds

As of December 31, 2014, amounts totaling \$22,282 were owed to the congregation's capital funds by the operating funds. While the committee understands that, due to the nature of the bookkeeping and cash flow between the congregation's various accounts, there may be amounts owing to or from the capital and operating accounts at various times throughout the year, we would expect these to be cleared on a regular and timely basis. The amount is not insignificant; we have concerns that: i) the amount may be considered to be a loan and, therefore, an invalid type of investment to be made by our capital funds; and, ii) the amount is not gaining income for the benefit of capital funds.

The FMC encourages the Board to establish policies and practices whereby there is a maximum amount that can be due to the Funds (say 5% of the Fund's value) and that interest is paid to the Funds.

v. Operational Risk Management

Once again in 2014 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 and quality control processes.

5. Performance

The 2014 performance targets for the funds have been exceeded:

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 2014, the Target was 5.7%. The Actual Annual Net Return was 6.36%.

We also set a Target 5 Year Annualized Return of annualized inflation plus 3.5%. For 2014, the Target was 5.19%. The Actual 5 Year Annualized Return was 5.98%.

After consulting with the investment manager, the FMC decided to change the weighted industry benchmarks it uses from the MSCI World Index to the S&P/TSX for the equities proportion of the portfolio, as the latter is more reflective of our investment goals. The portfolio's performance is below the new benchmark for 2014 (6.36% vs. 9.02%), but comparable over 3 and 5 years. The FMC will continue to evaluate the most appropriate benchmarks to use.

6. Distributions

The congregation has two types of long-term capital funds: expendable and endowed (see Section 1 for the list). For expendable funds, both earnings and capital can be withdrawn. For endowed funds, only earnings, not capital, may be withdrawn. Any use of withdrawn/distributed money is subject to the terms of each fund.

In calculating the amount available for distribution from the endowed funds, it is necessary to retain some of the earnings within the fund to prevent the value of the capital from eroding because of inflation. This adjustment for inflation becomes part of the capital going forward.

The calculation of distributions up to and including the 2013 distributions (paid out in 2014) did not include unrealized income. However, a careful review of the investment policies revealed that they do, in fact, require that unearned income be included. In 2015, along with the 2014 distributions, there will be one-time additional funds available as a result of unearned income from 2013 and prior years.

7. Details by Fund

As noted in 6 above (Distributions), prior to 2014, the distributions on funds were not based on market value, as they did not include unrealized income. The opening and closing balances were, consequently, presented as an “Adjusted Cost Base”. This year’s fund reports includes an “Adjustment to Market” so that, henceforth, all reporting will be done on Market Value.

The figures presented below are subject to adjustment pending final comments from the auditor in the course of their annual audit.

a) Endowment Fund (Endowed)

The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to help secure the long-term survival and mission of the congregation through the long-term accumulation of capital. It is not used to cover normal operating expenses. Any other proposed use must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the congregation.

Fund Balance as of Jan 1, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$411,491
Bequests/Donations	-
2013 Distributions	(\$5,693)
Management Fees	(\$4,795)
Income (Realized)	\$21,179
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$422,183
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2014	\$21,872
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2013 & Prior	\$62,886
Unrealized Income on Equities - Fixed Income & Preferreds	\$3,048
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Market Value)	\$509,989
<i>After allowance for the preservation of capital:</i>	
Funds Available for Distribution from 2014	\$27,536
Funds Available for Distribution from Prior Years	\$62,609

b) Foundation Fund (Endowed)

The mandate of the fund is to promote the advancement and growth of the Unitarian Universalist movement in Canada, focusing specifically on assisting new congregations and established congregations with concrete proposals for growth. Any other proposed use must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the congregation.

The congregation has delegated the administration of the proceeds of the Foundation Fund to the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) to be managed in conjunction with the CUC’s Sharing Our Faith Fund, as the objectives of both funds are the same. Applications for grants are solicited and evaluated by the CUC, with subsequent approval by the Board of this congregation.

Fund Balance as of Jan 1, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$95,450
Bequests/Donations	-
2013 Distributions	(\$1,433)
Management Fees	(\$1,112)
Income (Realized)	\$4,913
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$97,818
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2014	\$4,882
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2013 & Prior	\$13,498
Unrealized Income on Equities - Fixed Income & Preferreds	\$699
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Market Value)	\$116,896
<i>After allowance for the preservation of capital:</i>	
Funds Available for Distribution from 2014	\$6,290
Funds Available for Distribution from Prior Years	\$13,463

c) Rouff-Mackie/Jenkins Teaching Congregation Fund (Endowed)

In 2000, a bequest of \$130,000 from Ken Rouff specified that it be used to provide grants to UU ministerial students in need of financial assistance. The “Mackie/Jenkins Trust” is named in memory of Mrs. Emily Mackie and Reverend William Jenkins.

In 2014, the Teaching Congregation Fund was combined with Rouff-Mackie/Jenkins Fund to create the Rouff-Mackie/Jenkins Teaching Congregation Fund.

Each year, 20% of the distributions available from the Fund are to be made available towards the salary of a ministerial intern at First. The congregation has delegated the administration of the balance of the proceeds of the Fund to the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) to be managed in conjunction with the CUC’s Theological Education Bursaries Fund, as the objectives of both funds are the same. Applications for grants are solicited and evaluated, and nominees proposed, by the CUC, with subsequent approval by the Board of this congregation.

Fund Balance as of Jan 1, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$273,724
Donations	\$2,500
2013 Distributions	(\$4,015)
Management Fees	(\$3,189)
Income (Realized)	\$14,089
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$283,108
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2014	\$13,865
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2013 & Prior	\$36,650
Unrealized Income on Equities - Fixed Income & Preferreds	\$2,006
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Market Value)	\$335,629
<i>After allowance for the preservation of capital:</i>	
Funds Available for Distribution from 2014	\$17,968
Funds Available for Distribution from Prior Years	\$36,788

d) Heritage Fund (Expendable)

The mandate of the Heritage Fund is to provide appropriate means for contributions in memory of deceased persons and in honour of living persons. Funds may be used for purchases of a permanent nature especially appropriate to the persons in whose names contributions have been made. The Heritage Fund is an expendable fund – that is, there is no requirement to preserve the principal of the fund.

Fund Balance as of Jan 1, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$40,732
Donations	\$1,784
2013 Distributions	(\$912)
Management Fees	(\$475)
Income (Realized)	\$2,096
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$43,225
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2014	\$2,124
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2013 & Prior	\$6,600
Unrealized Income on Equities - Fixed Income & Preferreds	\$312
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Market Value)	\$52,262

e) Ratcliffe Growth Fund (Expendable)

The Ratcliffe Growth Fund was established by Elinor Ratcliffe in memory of her husband, Ed Ratcliffe. The mandate of the Ratcliffe Growth Fund is to promote the growth of First Unitarian Congregation. The Ratcliffe Growth Fund is an expendable fund, not intended to exist in perpetuity.

Fund Balance as of Jan 1, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$44,053
Bequests/Donations	-
2013 Distributions	(\$29,972)
Management Fees	(\$513)
Income (Realized)	\$2,267
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$15,835
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2014	\$2,401
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2013 & Prior	\$9,496
Unrealized Income on Equities - Fixed Income & Preferreds	\$167
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Market Value)	\$27,899

f) Opportunities Fund (Expendable)

The mandate of the Opportunities Fund is to provide funding for one-time purchases or seed- funding for special initiatives, and monies are not to be used for operating expenses. As an expendable fund, disbursements may include capital as well as income.

Fund Balance as of Jan 1, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$86,195
Bequests	\$10,000
2013 Distributions	(\$17,005)
Management Fees	(\$1,004)
Income (Realized)	\$4,436
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Adjusted Cost Basis)	\$82,623
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2014	\$3,954
Unrealized Income on Equities - 2013 & Prior	\$0
Unrealized Income on Equities - Fixed Income & Preferreds	\$521
Fund Balance as of Dec 31, 2014 (Market Value)	\$87,097

8. Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Bill Glassman for his many years of commitment to, and leadership of, the Committee. We would once again like to thank Kathy Thompson, Treasurer Emerita, for her generous and on-going support to the work of the Committee.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Funds Management Committee

First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto (Kalvin Drake, Interim Chair – Jan-May 2015)