

Unitarian Church of Montpelier (UCM)

Annual Reports 2024-2025 (FY2025)
To prepare for

ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 18, 2025
At 11:15 am in the Sanctuary and on Zoom



Photo of UCM taken by Emily Seifert on Valentine's Day, 2024.

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WARNING AND AGENDA

For the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Church of Montpelier

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 18, 2025, from 11:15 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. in the Sanctuary and via live video or phone through Zoom (*zoom link below).

All are encouraged to attend and discuss. Active Members will vote on the following business:

1. Welcome
 - a. Review protocols for hybrid in-person/virtual meeting.
 - b. Confirm Quorum
 - c. Election of meeting moderator
 - d. Approve Agenda
2. Chalice Lighting, In Memoriam
3. Approval of Minutes from 2024 Annual Meeting (May 19, 2024)
4. Update from the UCM Governing Board
 - a. Visioning and Strategic Planning Process
 - b. UCM Climate Resilience
 - c. Kitchen Renovation
5. Update from the Executive Team
6. Approval of the General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026
7. Approval of the Capital Fund Budget for FY 2026
8. Election of nominees to serve on the UCM Board for two-year terms
 - a. Katie Spring
 - b. Unfilled at time of printing on 5/10/2025
 - c. Ansel Ploog (returning)
 - d. Steve Gold (returning)
9. Election of slate of Officers to the UCM Board
 - a. President – Jeremy Beaudry
 - b. Vice-President – to be chosen by the board
 - c. Secretary – Jen Matthews
 - d. Financial Officer – Ansel Ploog
10. Approval of slate of changes to the [Bylaws](#)

11. Affirmation of 5 UCM Delegates to the June 18-22, 2025, Annual UUA General Assembly

- a. Jen Matthews
- b. Emily Seiffert
- c. Steve August
- d. Judith Hinds (attending remotely)
- e. Steve Grunewald (attending remotely)

12. Recognition of Staff and Volunteers

13. Conduct any other new business

14. Adjourn

*
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/92702727850?pwd=ecnABugbMYNp1tbzM0HhWK0YPG8MV3.1>

Meeting ID: 927 0272 7850
Passcode: 016575

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Unitarian Church of Montpelier (UCM)

Agenda and Minutes for Annual Meeting May 19, 2024 (in person and on Zoom)

1. Welcome – *President of the Board Claudia Clark opened the meeting, thanking people for participating.*
 - a. Review protocols for hybrid in-person/virtual meeting – *She reviewed slides with instructions for how to participate, especially if on Zoom. (See # 1-6 and # 15 of the slides at <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1jPGifPZASh2Mo682WN-zrQwtv eYDX1GtzTgfKPQuhk/edit#slide=id.p> .)*
 - b. Confirm Quorum – *Board members counted the people present and determined there were well more than the required 59 people present in person and/or on Zoom, so a quorum was declared.*
 - c. Election of meeting moderator – *Hugo Liepmann moved and multiple people seconded that Steve Gold be elected to serve as moderator. The motion was approved.*
 - d. Approve Agenda – *Steve Gold reviewed the agenda (slides # 8-12) and asked the congregation to approve it. A motion was made and seconded (by Steve Finner) to approve the agenda, which the congregation voted to do.*
2. Chalice Lighting, In Memoriam, Overview of Church year – *Rev. Joan lit the chalice in memory of church members who have passed: Eleanor Ott, ? and Colin Tait. Then she led us in speaking aloud the UCM covenant (slide #13) before giving us an overview of her 9th year, with all its trauma and resilience. (Add Rev. Joan's speech to the end of these minutes?)*
3. Approval of Minutes from Annual Meeting May 21, 2023 – *At the Moderator's request, Liz Benjamin moved and Dave Peters seconded approving these minutes, which the congregation voted to do.*
4. Approval of Minutes from Special Meeting, August 20, 2023 – *Sandal Cate moved and Mary Alice Bisbee seconded approving these minutes. Judith Hinds moved and Steve Finner seconded that an amendment be added to clarify that question #1 passed. The congregation voted to approve the amendment and then to approve the amended minutes.*
5. Update from the UCM Governing Board – *The Moderator invited Claudia to return to the pulpit. She thanked the FRuuT, pointing out that the flood recovery work is not yet done. Nevertheless, we have not yet needed to use any of the*

approved Long-Term Invested Funds (LTIF). Following along with slides # 16 – 17, Claudia explained:

- a. Elevator – *The contractor to rebuild the shaft-way will be here, and soon we will be able to order the ADA-compliant elevator, which will be installed by the time we open in the fall. Barbara Conrey will answer any questions at the location of the elevette after this meeting.*
 - b. Kitchen – *The laminated floor tiles and any damaged subfloor will have to be replaced. The ventilation fan must be replaced. We don't think we will need a restaurant-quality stove hood but we are waiting to learn more in June. 14 weeks are needed to order the hood and any other commercial kitchen equipment. There is a draft lay-out for the kitchen. For fire safety, we will have to remove the door at the bottom of the stairs to prevent entry into the kitchen. Once we have more information about the costs, we will call a congregational meeting to make decisions about what to do.*
 - c. UCM Climate Resilience – *Since February 11 the Board has received input about climate resilience. The Board now thinks the focus upon climate resilience is too narrow. We believe we should look more broadly at what is important to and excites our members and friends – i.e., how to build a resilient congregation that is also climate resilient!*
6. Update from the Executive Team (ET, slide # 18) – *Leslie Parr gave an overview of the ET work (e.g., managing the operations of UCM) for the year. Much of ET's attention was to flood recovery, also to financial oversight, especially given the unavoidable loss of rental income. She thanked people for pledging for FY2025.*

Dawn Evans then spoke about UCM's staffing, with vacancies for the permanent positions of Director of Spiritual Exploration (DSE), Sexton, Church Administrator, also for ministerial intern. We lack chairs and members for many committees, too, including on the ET [Leslie is resigning after 4 years]. Dawn invited people to volunteer!

7. Approval of the General Fund Budget for the FY 2025 church year – *Steve Gold asked Fran Dodd to give an overview of the General Fund budget. Fran used Zoom to introduce Scott Hess, Co-chair of the Finance Committee. He thanked people who helped figure out the budget - especially Rev. Joan (really our CEO, not just our minister!) and Fran Dodd, the Board's Financial Officer. Referring to slides # 20-26, Fran pointed out significant items:*

The pledge line is estimated to be about 0.35% (not the goal of 5.00%) more than last year. Nevertheless, the total projected income (\$434,069) is a 1.20% reduction from last year.

Over \$60,000 was cut from the desired budget to balance the expenses with the pledges and other income available. Some of the cuts were to delay hiring so positions are funded for only 11 months in FY25. (Thus, more money will be needed for the same positions in future years.) Bottom line: \$431,211 expenses, leaving a slight (\$2,858) surplus.

Dawn Evans moved and Steve Finner seconded to approve the General Fund budget. Discussion followed with Peter Thoms carrying a microphone to the speakers:

Steve Finner commented that the level of support in the FY24 and FY25 budgets for the UUA are much less than expected for the size of UCM; he will advocate for an increase next year!

Betty Roy asked about the staffing challenges for church administration (the Congregational Administrator, the Rental Coordinator, payroll and book-keeper services, etc.). Rev. Joan responded that the vacant Administrator position might not be filled as currently described.

Jeremy Beaudry asked about the projected decrease in rental income for FY25. Fran explained that in the FY24 budget the projected rental income was too aspirational, and now we do not have a kitchen for rent. Emily Seifert added that we cannot rent the Fireplace Room when the Vestry is rented to someone else because people in the Fireplace Room can no longer exit any other way (e.g., through the kitchen). Mary Alice Bisbee asked whether a door could be built directly between the back hall and the Fireplace Room. Claudia said that has been studied, and "No, there is not room." Mary Alice said a change is needed.

Emily Seifert described the existing cleaning service, which comes once a week and does not include any deep cleaning. She would like the congregation to give the ET flexibility to use the cleaning service budget for a Sexton who would be paid less per hour than the cleaning service and thus be able to clean twice a week. She moved and Judith Hinds seconded that suggestion. Rev. Joan said the ET already has flexibility in the use of funds as long as the line-item amount is not overspent. The amendment and second were withdrawn with the understanding that there is interest in UCM having flexibility to hire a Sexton. Sarah Franklin said having a Sexton dedicated to the church is better for the congregation than a cleaning service.

Sandal Cate spoke about this winter's 2 Clarke Lectures, which she considered wonderful, and a very generous donation made to replenish the endowment for the Clark Lectures to cover the expense of future events. She also expressed concern that the projected FY25 Clark Lecture income of \$2,500 might be too optimistic.

Fran said the Gifts of Love event raised \$3,500 in April, not the \$10,000 in extra fundraising budgeted for FY24.

John Poeton pointed out that the FY25 budget calls for \$22,000 in additional fundraising even though in FY24 we were able to raise only \$14,000, partly because of lack of a kitchen, which we probably still won't have by the time of the Holiday Fair in December. He eloquently called upon the congregation to support the fundraising.

Emily Seifert said while she loves being part of this congregation, she could not afford to work here if she was not part of a 2-income family. Others who are less privileged could not do this. Salary increases are helpful but not when retirement and/or health benefits are cut to make them possible.

Steve Gold said the Board would love to approve more salary and benefits for staff but cannot do so without higher pledging. Barbara Thompson said UCM might have to cut staff to pay fewer people more. Rev. Joan said budgeting this year has been very difficult and economic pressures are being felt all around. This is part of what the Board will be studying about congregational resilience.

The congregation voted to approve the General Fund budget.

8. Approval of the Capital Fund Budget for the FY 2025 church year – *Fran Dodd presented slide # 29 about the Capital Fund budget. AV equipment for \$1.075 is included. Flood insurance is being added; property insurance is being increased and moved to the Capital Fund from the General Fund. Any capital funds unexpended by the end of FY25 will be moved to the Capital Reserves [now \$39,000, saved in part (\$10,000) for new granite front steps if/when necessary].*

John Poeton moved and Meredith Warner seconded approval of the capital fund budget. Discussion:

- *Rev. Joan explained that income for the Capital Fund comes from 4% of the LTIFs.*
- *Phil Morse disagrees with paying for property and flood insurance through the Capital Fund Budget; they are operational (General Fund), not capital expenses.*

The congregation voted to approve the FY25 Capital Fund budget.

9. Election of nominees to serve on the UCM Board –
 - a. Steve Grunewald (for a one-year term) –
 - b. Emily Seiffert (for a two-year term) –
 - c. Jen Matthews (for a two-year term, following her appointment last summer) –

d. Jeremy Beaudry (for a two-year term) –

The Moderator introduced the Board's slate of nominees. No one else volunteered or was nominated for the Board during this Annual Meeting. Mary Alice Bisbee thanked the nominees and moved approval of the full slate; many people seconded. The congregation voted to approve all the nominees.

10. Election of Officers to the UCM Board –

1. President –

1. Vice-President - Ansel Ploog –

1. Secretary -

1. Financial Officer –

The Moderator asked the congregation for approval for the Board to choose its officers by the end of September, to be reported back to the congregation. Hugo moved and Steve Finner seconded this approval, which passed.

2. Affirmation of 5 UCM Delegates to the June 20-24, 2024, UUA General Assembly: Elaine Ball, Judith Hinds, Jen Matthews, Jim Phinney, Ginny Sassaman –

The Moderator invited Hugo Liepmann to the pulpit. Hugo described the UUA's GA and this year's important vote about Article II. He asked that the congregation affirm the delegates (who were introduced) as our representatives at the GA and charge them to honor the UCM mission. Done!

11. Recognition of Staff and Volunteers – Rev. Joan thanked staff who complete(d) their roles this year:

- Jason Kass (Sexton),
- Sierra Lowell (Congregational Administrator), and
- Sally Armstrong (Interim Director of Spiritual Exploration)]

She also thanked volunteers who complete(d) their leadership roles this year:

- Hugo Liepmann, 4 years on the Board,
- Fran Dodd, 2 years on the Board,
- Claudia Clark, 1 year on the Board,
- Sandra Haddock, Chair of the Climate Action Team,
- FRuuT members,
- Liz Benjamin, Chair of the Spiritual Exploration Committee,
- Sandal Cate, Alliance President,
- Betty Roy and Pat Carstensen from the Worship and Arts Committee.

Claudia then gave Joan a bouquet of flowers as thanks for her ongoing leadership! (She also gave bouquets to Hugo and Fran.)

12. Conduct any other new business – None

13. Adjourn(ed) – Fran Dodd moved and others seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The congregation gave approval by its vote and its feet!

Minister's Annual Report Unitarian Church of Montpelier 2024-2025

Summary of the Year

Resilience was the word of the year for UCM. “Cultivating Resilience” was our overarching worship theme in recognition of our community’s continued recovery from July 2023 flood as well as in anticipation of the other social and political upheavals that would call for our spiritual resilience. As it turned out, we have faced dramatic changes in the nation’s political and civic life since the November 2024 election which have challenged us to live even more deeply into UU values. In addition, the work of the Climate Resilience Study Group began this year to prepare our congregation to make adaptive choices for the future of our church facilities. Responding to change with creativity, flexibility, and integrity has become the primary orientation of our congregational work.

This year brought continued transitions in our staff team following the departure of UCM’s Congregational Administrator in May 2024 and the conclusion of the work of UCM’s Interim Director of Spiritual Exploration in June 2024. UCM welcomed Caitlin Frauton as the new DSE in August 2024 and welcomed back Jason Kass into the Sexton role in December 2024.

Our collaboration with local churches continued this year through the community meals program co-located at Christ Episcopal Church as well as the emergency overnight shelter hosted at UCM and staffed by volunteers from multiple congregations and the broader community.

Below are some highlights from the past year in various areas of our shared ministry. You can read in-depth reports in the rest of this Annual Report.

Highlights from Select Areas of Ministry

Worship

For the first time since introducing monthly themes into worship in 2015, the worship team developed its own set of themes to guide the planning of services from September through June. This year’s themes all connected to the overarching theme of “Cultivating Resilience.” Our average in-person attendance through the end of April was 124 (children and adults) with an additional 25-30 people joining the live stream each Sunday. A nine-person team of Worship Associates assisted in leading worship services with tech support from AV Operator, Bryce Douglass, and the Production Committee.

Pastoral Care

During the past church year, we welcomed two children into our church community, Benjamin Oscar Peebles (b. August 6) and Rella Brenda Sweet (b. November 9). We lost four church members: Rev. Maggie Rebmann (d. July 4), Heather Moz (d. November 26), Norma Raymond (d. February 11), and Rob Chickering (d. February 25). In addition, the church lost long-time

friend Irene Nightingale Nettler (b. December 30) and recently resigned member Marsha Bancroft (d. April 5).

We utilized \$2,065 of our general Care Fund to support people in our community with rent, electricity and phone bills, car repairs, and financial hardship. In addition, we received and donated over \$20,000 to support emergency motel shelter for community members in Barre, Berlin, and Montpelier.

Membership

We welcomed ten new people into membership and certified a membership number of 234 with the UUA in February 2025.

Spiritual Exploration

We experimented with hosting a weeklong summer camp in August which was a great success. Caitlin Frauton joined the UCM staff team as Director of Spiritual Exploration in August. A few changes were made to our groupings for the Sunday morning SE classes, and we offered Our Whole Lives for 7-9th graders.

On the adult side of spiritual exploration, church volunteers have provided leadership and support for continued Chalice Circle offerings. I co-facilitated a well-attended series called “Date with Death Club.” And, UCM has a new “church librarian” who is cataloguing the many books we have available for church members and friends to sign out.

Service and Prophetic Ministry

Over 40 church and community members responded to a request for financial support for people being evicted from the state’s emergency motel shelter program in the late fall. Members also responded to a request for social support for an asylum-seeking family residing in central Vermont. And, UCM again hosted a cold weather emergency overnight shelter in collaboration with area churches.

About a dozen people joined me in writing nonpartisan, get-out-the-vote letters to voters in several states ahead of the November 2024 elections. I worked with the Governing Board to send letters of solidarity and support to several Vermont-based organizations serving communities particularly vulnerable under a second Trump administration. After the November election, I co-facilitated a two-part workshop called “Defending Democracy: Preparing for What Comes Next” offered in conjunction with the We Are Worth Fighting For project. The Board also approved signing onto statements advocating for greater emergency shelter options, daytime shelter for the unhoused, and state leadership for protecting the rights of Vermonters.

The Climate Action Team was particularly active this year hosting a Climate Justice Revival and providing the congregation with opportunities for education and action.

Denominational Activities

Following last year’s UCM Annual Meeting, five delegates participated in the UUA General Assembly. At this all-virtual GA, delegates approved revisions to the UUA Bylaws which define

the values and covenant of the association. We received continuous support throughout the year from the New England Region UUA staff, primarily through Erica Baron who conducted a strategic planning and visioning workshop for UCM on April 13. The UUA has provided congregations with many helpful resources, including webinars and policy guidance, for understanding and responding to the current political moment.

Conclusion

As I approach the completion of ten years of service as your minister, I remain grateful for this calling and hopeful for the vital ministry we continue to offer. Much is unraveling in our broader world, but we continue to weave together community and imagine the world we want to live in and pass on to future generations. It is steadying to be facing these challenges within a compassionate and discerning community such as ours. Your continued kindness, open-mindedness, gracious love, and courage are inspiring. Thank you for being my partner in ministry.

With gratitude,

Rev. Joan Javier-Duval
Submitted April 30, 2025

Report from the Governing Board

At the start of the 2024-25 church year, the Board gathered for a full-day retreat where we reflected on the successes and challenges during the past year, imagined what the coming church year might entail, and then determined how we might best guide UCM toward the future. This report shares the results of our collective effort over the past year.

Goal #1: Initiate and lead a strategic long-term visioning and planning process.

It is the responsibility of the Board to lead the process of creating a strategic plan. UCM's previous strategic plan from 2016 (with its 2021 addendum) needs updating, and we initiated the first steps of a visioning process. We created a roadmap for engaging the congregation in the creation of our vision and actions for the next five years. A few weeks ago, about 50 Members and Friends participated in a workshop to help establish our collective vision for UCM. Your thoughtful input has been invaluable as we begin crafting a vision and strategy that truly represents our congregation's aspirations. We will continue this engagement process over the next several months in order to set our long-term strategic intentions.

Goal #2: Create a process and study group to identify and examine options for UCM's climate resiliency.

In the Fall, the Board formed and charged the Climate Resiliency Study Group to identify and examine options for future facilities that allow us to fulfill our mission in anticipation of ever-increasing climate change. This group is working diligently to gather valuable data, consult with experts, and draft preliminary findings that will inform our path forward. The Study, expected in early 2026, will objectively spell out the pros and cons of each option examined but make no recommendations.

Goal #3: Support UCM's financial health and long-term sustainability.

UCM's long-term financial health is top of mind for the Board. This year, we initiated a new fundraising event, the online art auction, which was successful in terms of both congregational engagement and funds raised. We supported the tireless work of the Stewardship Committee by providing feedback on the campaign and conducting additional outreach with individual UCM congregants to reinforce how important our financial commitment is to supporting UCM's mission. We also worked closely with the Executive Team during the budget drafting process to ensure that our budget aligns with our values while working within the parameters of our financial constraints so that our institution remains sustainable for the long term.

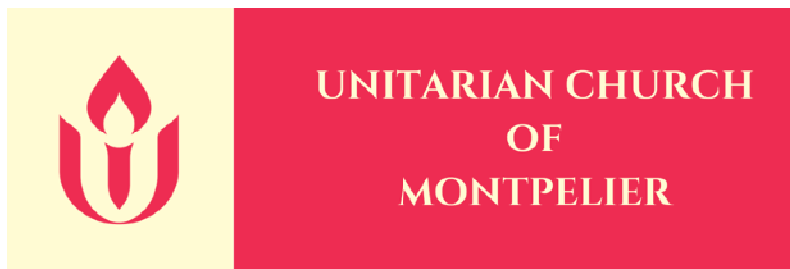
Goal #4: Clarify UCM's role and relationship to our local community.

Our mission calls us to build a loving community, serve human need, and protect the earth. UCM has an important public role to play to uphold these values in our community, as well as speaking out to address any harm that would contradict these values. This year, the Board used its collective voice to publicly support those organizations and issues that align with our values, through institutional statements of support for at-risk groups and enthusiastic support for Rev. Joan to continue her prophetic work as a leader and activist on a number of local and national issues of human rights.

In addition to these primary goals, the Board also completed other tasks important to the governance and operations of UCM:

- We advised and provided leadership when necessary to the kitchen renovation team (see below for a more detailed update on this work).
- We revised the UCM By-Laws for approval by the congregation at the Annual Meeting.
- Each month we reviewed and monitored our compliance with the UCM Governing Board Policies.

Overall, the UCM Board made significant progress in achieving our priorities for the 2024-25 church year, while remaining accountable to the congregation and acting responsibly with shared assets. The Board looks forward to building on this progress in the coming year, as we welcome two new Board members to the team.



UCM Bylaws Proposed Revisions

5/10/25

Below are listed the proposed revisions to the UCM Bylaws developed and approved by the UCM Governing Board in the 2024-2025 Church year. Except for a general change listed first, the current bylaw wording will be shown first, preceded by the Article number and sub-section. That is followed by the proposed new language. Additional language will be underlined. Elisions will be indicated by []. The bylaws will be listed in the chronological order that they appear in the current document.

General:

Capitalize “Board” throughout the bylaws.

3. Add references to Articles 6. Board, 7. Minister and 8. Executive Team to each appropriate Article 3. subsection.

3.1.2. Approve the annual Operating and Capital budgets and any expenditure not included in the Annual and Capital budgets that exceeds \$5,000.00

3.1.2 Approve the annual Operating and Capital budgets and any expenditure not included in the Annual and Capital budgets that exceeds [] two (2) percent of the combined Annual and Capital budgets.

3.1.5 Elect board members officers

3.1.5 Elect Board members and Board officers

3.2 Board Acting on behalf of the Congregation, the Board sets goals and policies and monitors the execution of these goals and policies. The Board ensures that the Congregation is acting in concert with and toward the achievement of its Mission. It functions as the Congregation's visionary leaders, creating policies, establishing priorities and monitoring and evaluating programs and policies in service to the Mission. The Board provides fiscal oversight.

3.2 Board Acting on behalf of the Congregation, the Board sets goals and policies and monitors the execution of these goals and policies. The Board ensures that the Congregation is acting in concert with and toward the achievement of its Mission and takes considered public action as guided by the Mission, which it reports to the Congregation. It functions as the Congregation's visionary leaders, creating policies, establishing priorities and monitoring and evaluating programs and policies in service to the Mission. The Board provides fiscal oversight to ensure that UCM resources are used efficiently, to prevent and detect fraud, to maintain financial stability, and to comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

3.4 Executive Team The Executive Team manages the operations and business of the Congregation and achieves the Mission of the Congregation and goals of the Board by recruiting, leading and coordinating staff and volunteers. The Executive Team convenes and authorizes committees, task forces or individual volunteers necessary to implement its responsibilities and carry out the Mission.

When the term "Executive Team" is used in these bylaws, it includes any committee, task force or individual which has been authorized, appointed or convened by the Executive Team.

3.4 Executive Team The Executive Team manages the operations and business of the Congregation and achieves the Mission of the Congregation and goals of the Board by recruiting, leading and coordinating staff and volunteers. The Executive Team convenes and authorizes [] groups or individual volunteers necessary to implement its responsibilities and carry out the Mission.

[]

4.1 The annual business meeting of the Congregation shall be held in Montpelier during May at a time and place designated by the Board, unless

otherwise determined by the Board in the event of an emergency.

4.1 The annual business meeting of the Congregation shall be held [] during May at a time and place designated by the Board, unless otherwise determined by the Board in the event of an emergency. The Board may adopt necessary procedures for conducting the annual meeting including allowing remote participation and voting [] by means of audio or video conferencing.

4.2 Special meetings of the Congregation may be called by the Board.

Special meetings of the Congregation shall be called by the Board upon request of at least ten members of the Congregation. Notice of matters to be discussed shall be included in a Warning.

4.2 Special meetings of the Congregation may be called by the Board. Special meetings of the Congregation shall also be called by the Board upon request of at least ten active members of the Congregation. Notice of matters to be discussed shall be included in a Warning which may be posted to electronic media.

4.3 A quorum for a meeting consists of twenty-five percent of the active members, except that for any meeting to call a Minister, to request a resignation from a Minister, to dismiss a Minister or to sell, purchase or mortgage real property a quorum is thirty percent of active members. Each active member present who has been a member for at least thirty days may vote. Written proxies are not recognized. In the event of an emergency, the Board may adopt necessary procedures for conducting the annual meeting, including allowing participation and voting in the annual meeting by means of telephone-, internet-, or satellite-enabled audio or video conferencing, or any other equivalent technology that enables persons to be clearly audible to one another.

4.3 A quorum for a meeting consists of twenty-five percent of the active members, except that for any meeting to call a Minister, to request a resignation from a Minister, to dismiss a Minister or to sell, purchase or mortgage real property a quorum is thirty percent of active members. Each active member present [] may vote. Written proxies are not recognized. In the event of an emergency, the Board may adopt necessary procedures for conducting the annual or a special meeting, including allowing remote participation and voting by means of audio or video conferencing.

5.6 Nominations By February 1 of each year, the Board determines which

officer terms are expiring, and the Secretary notifies the Congregation. Any member who wishes to be a candidate for one of these offices notifies the Secretary by April 15. The Secretary posts the name and statement of interest of each candidate in a public location in the church building and includes the names of all candidates in the warning for the annual meeting. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor at annual meeting.

5.6 Nominations By February ☐ Board meeting of each year, the Board determines which ☐ Board member terms are expiring, and the Secretary notifies the Congregation. Any member who wishes to be a candidate for one of these offices notifies the Secretary by April 15. The Secretary posts the name and statement of interest of each candidate in a public location in the church building and includes the names of all candidates in the warning for the annual meeting. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor at the annual meeting.

5.7 Vacancies The Board fills any elected vacancy until the next annual meeting. If, at that time, the originally elected officer had one ☐_year remaining of a two-year term, Church members will elect a new officer for one year in order to preserve staggered terms.

5.7 Vacancies The Board fills any elected vacancy until the next annual meeting. If, at that time, the originally elected ☐ Board member had one year remaining of a two-year term, Church members will elect a new ☐ Board member for one year in order to preserve staggered terms.

6.1.4 Adopt such policies and appoint such committees and/or task forces as it may consider necessary to accomplish its goals and responsibilities.

6.1.4 Adopt such policies and appoint and formally charge such ☐ groups and individuals as it may consider necessary to accomplish its goals and responsibilities.

7.1 The Minister is the religious and spiritual leader of the Congregation. The Minister has freedom of the pulpit and freedom to express his or her opinion outside the pulpit. The Minister convenes and selects the Executive Team and, as a member of the Executive Team, is responsible to the Board for implementing the Mission, the annual and long-term goals and the policies adopted by the Board.

7.1 The Minister is the religious and spiritual leader of the Congregation, as well as its Executive Director. The Minister has freedom of the pulpit and freedom to express his or her opinion outside the pulpit. The Minister convenes and selects the Executive Team and, as a member of the Executive Team, is responsible to the Board for implementing the Mission, the annual and long-term goals and the policies adopted by the Board.

8.4 The Executive Team approves and disburses expenditures from Congregation funds as authorized by the annual Operating and Capital Budgets. The Executive Team makes adjustments to the budget in the course of the year to reflect changing needs and income. Congregational approval is required for any expenditure exceeding \$5,000 that has not been approved as part of the annual Operating or Capital Budget as described in Section 9.2.

8.4 The Executive Team approves and disburses expenditures from Congregation funds as authorized by the annual Operating and Capital Budgets. The Executive Team makes adjustments to the budget in the course of the year to reflect changing needs and income. Congregational approval is required for any expenditure exceeding [] two (2) percent of the combined annual Operating and Capital budgets that has not been approved as part of the annual Operating or Capital Budget as described in Section 9.2.

April 2025 UCM Kitchen Update

Members: Barbara Conrey, Janet Poeton, Claudia Clark, Jason Kass, Phil Morse and Brenda Bean

Decisions and Progress

- Decision to design a kitchen to meet Community Lunch, renters and members' needs.
- Developed a layout and selected equipment based on input from numerous stakeholders.
- Met with Fire Marshal and Montpelier Building Inspector to discuss hood requirements for any size stove that would be located in the current space.
- Received two preliminary cost bids for construction work.
- Received quote for equipment.

Challenges & Issues

- Retaining the interior placement of the kitchen footprint.
- Inability to expand beyond current footprint. (Kitchen was already too small.)
- Inability to have equipment (freezer & refrigerators) and pantry items in the basement. (Need to relocate into the current kitchen footprint.)
- Need for additional hot water capacity. (Because of the flood the new hot water heater replacement is now located in a space that is not large enough for the same sized capacity heater.)
- Necessity of using an outside wall for placement of a traditional hood. (Placement on roof is the only viable location. It would be cost prohibitive to install and maintain it, if placed on the roof.)
- Requires a "ventless" hood unit to be placed over the stove which is more expensive than a traditional hood system. (Any stove (commercial or residential) that is placed in that space would require this type of hood.)
- Need for ventilation and cooling. (The ventless hood only traps grease/vapor particles and does not exhaust hot air like a traditional hood which will require a ventilation system. A cooling system is needed to maintain the kitchen at an acceptable working temperature – the space was already too hot in the summer.)
- Requirement for additional electricity for the building. (The need for additional electrical capacity has been an ongoing discussion for several years. The electrical needs of the proposed equipment will exceed the current capacity.)

Next Steps

- The HVAC engineer who designed our new ventilation system is developing a design using the proposed equipment. (The kitchen space was deliberately left out of the new ventilation system for a variety of reasons including potential updating of the kitchen.)
- An electrical engineer is evaluating our current electrical capacity and additional needs for proposed kitchen equipment. Our potential future needs (heat pumps, building expansion, etc.) are being included.

- A decision on whether to expand our building's electricity capacity will need to be made.
- Once the above decisions are made then the cost for the entire project can be determined.
- Decide whether to pursue the project now or wait until a congregational decision is made on Climate Resilience Study options.

Executive Team Annual Report for FY2024-2025

Members: Rev. Joan Javier-Duval, Dawn Evans, Diane Marie, and Donna Russo-Savage

Purpose: The role of the Executive Team (ET) is to manage the affairs of the Church at an operational level. Unlike the Governing Board, the ET does not make broad governing policies or set goals for the Church, but instead implements the Church's Mission. The ET operates by consensus and is convened by the Minister. The ET meets regularly with the professional staff as a combined Management Team.

Activities: During Fiscal Year 2024-2025, the ET worked to fulfill the vacancy in its own ranks with the departure of Leslie Parr as a multi-year member. Diane Marie joined the team in November. The ET worked in coordination with the Board, the Treasurer, and the Finance Committee to assure that financial and administrative responsibilities previously handled by the Congregational Administrator were addressed through contract labor or reassignment of responsibilities within existing staff or volunteers. A Sexton was re-hired in December on a very part-time basis. The ET also worked with volunteer members of a search committee to recruit for, interview, and recommend to the Board the hiring of a new Director of Spiritual Exploration. The successful candidate, Caitlin Frauton, began her work in mid-August.

The ET continued to work in conjunction with the Board on projects and issues that remained from the July 2023 flood including continued work in the basement, environmental testing to determine the safety of the building, installation of the new lift, and supporting the planning of work on the kitchen. In addition, a committee was formed to draft a Flood Preparedness Plan in order to lay groundwork for anticipated future events.

The ET also provided guidance and assistance to an array of committees and ad hoc groups concerning such programs and services as the Overnight Warming Shelter, the Community Lunch program, the Community Pouch, and the Clarke Lectures. The ET members have pledged to support with an open mind the work of the Climate Resilience Study Group, formed by the Board to examine safe, accessible, and climate-resilient facilities.

The ET supported three Committee of Chairs meetings on October 2, 2024, January 21, 2025, and April 2, 2025, which were facilitated by committee chairs and provided opportunities for sharing committee accomplishments and plans, and Board and ET updates.

Beginning in December, the ET began work with the Finance Committee on preparing a proposed budget for the Board's consideration. The process entailed collaboration between the ET, the Finance Committee, the Stewardship Committee, and the Board, with much support from Treasurer, Fran Dodd. As has been the case in post-Covid years, difficult choices were made in producing a balanced budget for presentation at the upcoming Annual Meeting. The ET is grateful for each person's participation in creating the budget, and for each and every person who has made a pledge in support of the coming year's budget.

Submitted by the Executive Team, April 2025

FY26 Proposed Budget Highlights

April 30, 2025

In putting together the preliminary budget for FY26, the Executive Team and Finance Committee have prioritized staff compensation and restoring expenses in the General Fund budget that had been cut in FY25. This includes increasing the UUA Annual Program Fund contribution and restoring the property insurance expense in the GF. Highlights of the preliminary budget are below.

General Fund Budget

Income

- Increase pledge income to \$358,150 (2.9% increase)
- Add Pledges Prior Year (\$5,000)
- Include 1% LTIF contribution (\$10,105)
- Reduce 4225 Fundraiser (\$10,000 to \$6,000)
- Reduce 4210 Holiday Fair (\$12,000 to \$10,000)
- Increase Building Rental (\$13,000 to \$16,000)

TOTAL INCOME = \$448,499 (\$14,429.65 increase)

Expenses

- All staff salaries placed at minimum of salary range or higher; 3 staff positions reclassified; Staff hourly wage increases range from 2.5% to 18.6%. (Total reduction of \$34,883 from FY25 budget.)
- Restore 10% retirement contributions to all eligible staff
- Extend health benefits to all eligible employees regardless of election of UUA Health Plan (\$17,600 additional)
- Increase Professional Development for Minister, Director of Spiritual Exploration, and Director of Music
- Addition of Youth Summer Camp (income and expenses)
- No funding for Congregational Administrator position (-\$61,687)
- Add contract Bookkeeper (\$11,000)
- Move Property Insurance back to General Fund budget (\$15,000 estimate)
- Increase UUA Annual Program Fund contribution (\$5,000 to \$9,000)
- Eliminate Contracted Maintenance expense due to hiring of Sexton

- Adjustments to programmatic and administrative/building lines as recommended by staff

TOTAL EXPENSES = \$448,819.57 (\$17,288.08 increase)

NET INCOME = **-\$0.57**

Capital Fund Budget

Income

- 4% LTIF contribution

TOTAL INCOME = \$40,420

Expenses

- Misc. Building & Grounds Projects (Specific projects TBD), \$13,000
- AV Expenses, \$1,075
- Flood Insurance, \$15,000
- Property Insurance moved to General Fund budget
- Capital Reserve Fund, \$7,345
- *New Expense* Allocate \$4,000 for expenses related to the Climate Resilience Study Group

TOTAL EXPENSES = \$40,420

NET INCOME = \$0.00

The Unitarian Church of Montpelier															LTIF as of 12/31/24 (adjusted by known \$):
Proposed FY26 General Fund Budget															\$1,010,511
										Actual	FY25	% of	FY26	Notes	
										Jul - Mar 24	Budget	Budget	Proposed		
Ordinary Income/Expense															
Income															
4000 · GENERAL FUND INCOME															
4100 · Contributions Income															
4110 · Pledges - Current Year										282,960.53	348,130.35	81.28%	358,150.00	95% of \$377,000 pledge total	
4111 · Pledges- Prior Year										10,322.51			5,000.00		
4120 · Checks & Online Gifts										8,309.69	3,000.00	276.99%	5,000.00		
4121 · Pouch cash										4,970.64	5,000.00	99.41%	6,500.00		
4122 · Donations to Community Pouch													0.00		
4123 · Christmas Eve										0.00	900.00	0.0%	900.00		
4122 · Donations to Community Pouch - Other										11,710.79	12,000.00	97.59%	12,000.00		
Total 4122 · Donations to Community Pouch										11,710.79	12,900.00	90.78%	12,900.00		
## Summer camp fees													2,600.00		
4130 · Coffee/Tea Table										810.00	300.00	270.0%	300.00		
Total 4100 · Contributions Income										319,084.16	369,330.35	86.4%	390,450.00		
4200 · Fund Raising															
4210 · Holiday Fair										9,415.54	12,000.00	78.46%	10,000.00		
4225 · Fund Raiser										7,266.54	10,000.00	72.67%	6,000.00		
4235 · Yard/Rummage Sale										1,462.50	2,000.00	73.13%	2,000.00		
4240 · Musical Events										40.61					
4260 · Clarke Lectures										920.00	2,500.00	36.8%	1,500.00		
Total 4200 · Fund Raising										19,105.19	26,500.00	72.1%	19,500.00		
4300 · Income from outside funds															
4311 · LTIF Transfers for Budget										0.00	9,177.00	0.0%	10,105.00	1% of LTIF	
4313 · Transfer from Keve										0.00	1,760.00	0.0%	1,612.00		
4314 · Social Responsibility Fund										0.00	2,000.00	0.0%	0.00		
4320 · from Wyman Trust										3,084.72	4,112.00	75.02%	3,932.00		
4360 · Interest from outside funds										20.01			0.00		
Total 4300 · Income from outside funds										3,104.73	17,049.00	18.21%	15,649.00		

					4400 · Use of Building/Resources	9,760.00	13,000.00	75.08%	16,000.00	
					4500 · Interest on General Funds	138.45	6,000.00	2.31%	6,000.00	
					4600 · Other GF Unclassified Income					
					4610 · Grants	0.00	1,650.00	0.0%	900.00	VT Quebec Convention
					4650 · Misc rebates refunds etc	0.00	40.00	0.0%	0.00	
					4600 · Other GF Unclassified Income - Other	0.00	500.00	0.0%	0.00	
					Total 4600 · Other GF Unclassified Income	0.00	2,190.00	0.0%	900.00	
					Total 4000 · GENERAL FUND INCOME	351,192.53	434,069.35	80.91%	448,499.00	
					Gross Profit	351,192.53	434,069.35	80.91%	448,499.00	
					Expense					
					6000 · GENERAL FUND EXPENSE					
					6100 · Ministry					
					6110 · Minister Compensation					
					6112 · Minister's Salary					
					6112a · Salary	19,400.57	27,379.08	70.86%	31,738.56	
					Total 6112 · Minister's Salary	19,400.57	27,379.08	70.86%	31,738.56	
					6113 · In lieu of FICA - Minister	5,005.82	7,067.00	70.83%	7,400.50	
					6114 · Retirement					
					6114A · UCM 10% Contribution	5,389.36	6,928.43	77.79%	9,673.86	
					6114B · UCM 2% Match	1,077.86	1,847.58	58.34%	1,934.77	
					Total 6114 · Retirement	6,467.22	8,776.01	73.69%	11,608.63	
					6115 · Housing Allowance	46,041.61	65,000.00	70.83%	65,000.00	
					6116 · Benefits					
					6116a · Life/Disab Insurance	898.80	1,389.00	64.71%	1,389.00	
					6116e Cafeteria Plan				4,400.00	
					Total 6116 · Benefits	898.80	1,389.00	64.71%	5,789.00	
					6118 · Minister's Professional	7,710.20	8,500.00	90.71%	7,500.00	
					Total 6110 · Minister Compensation	85,524.22	118,111.09	72.41%	129,036.69	
					Total 6100 · Ministry	85,524.22	118,111.09	72.41%	129,036.69	
					6200 · Spiritual Exploration					
					6210 · SE Director Compensation					
					6212 · Salary	21,853.22	32,245.36	67.77%	37,562.50	
					6214 · Retirement					
					6214a · UCM 10% Retirement Contribution	121.68	1,209.20	10.06%	3,756.25	
					6214b · UCM 2% Retirement Match	0.00	322.45	0.0%	751.25	

						Total 6214 · Retirement	121.68	1,531.65	7.94%	4,507.50	
						6216 · Benefits				0.00	
						6216d · Health Insurance/Cafeteria Plan	1,449.43	8,778.41	16.51%	4,400.00	
						Total 6216 · Benefits	1,449.43	8,778.41	16.51%	4,400.00	
						6218 · Professional Development	522.70	2,000.00	26.14%	3,000.00	
						Total 6210 · SE Director Compensation	23,947.03	44,555.42	53.75%	49,470.00	
						6220 · Teachers and Childcare					
						6221 Childcare				700.00	
						6222 · Nursery	728.98	2,838.00	25.69%	2,138.00	
						6223 · Teacher Training	25.26	1,000.00	2.53%	1,000.00	
						Total 6220 · Teachers and Childcare	754.24	3,838.00	19.65%	3,838.00	
						6230 · Youth Programs					
						6232 · Bridging	0.00	250.00	0.0%	250.00	
						6233 · Coming of Age/OWL	0.00	1,000.00	0.0%	500.00	
						6239 · HS Youth Group	44.08	600.00	7.35%	600.00	
						Total 6230 · Youth Programs	44.08	1,850.00	2.38%	1,350.00	
						6250 · Supplies/necessities	138.59	1,200.00	11.55%	1,200.00	
						6255 · Curriculum	21.18	800.00	2.65%	800.00	
						6260 · Adult Spiritual Exploration	20.51	1,400.00	1.47%	1,300.00	
						## Summer camp expenses				3,800.00	
						Total 6200 · Spiritual Exploration	24,925.63	53,643.42	46.47%	61,758.00	
						6300 · Music					
						6310 · Music Director Compensation					
						6312 · Salary	15,764.27	22,255.53	70.83%	24,040.00	
						6314 · Retirement					
						6314A · UCM 10%Retirement Contribution	1,298.23	1,669.17	77.78%	2,404.00	
						6314b · Retirement 2% Match	259.65	445.11	58.33%	480.80	
						Total 6314 · Retirement	1,557.88	2,114.28	73.68%	2,884.80	
						6316e as new ## Cafeteria Plan				4,400.00	
						6318 · Professional Development	828.49	1,700.00	48.74%	4,000.00	
						Total 6310 · Music Director Compensation	18,150.64	26,069.81	69.62%	35,324.80	
						6322 · Accompanist	6,981.30	9,573.66	72.92%	9,458.33	10 months (mid-August to mid-June)
						6330 · Organ/Piano Tuning	0.00	1,200.00	0.0%	1,200.00	
						6340 · Sheet Music	1,105.13	1,100.00	100.47%	1,100.00	
						6350 · Special Music	350.00	1,100.00	31.82%	1,500.00	

						6360 · Professional memberships	90.00	100.00	90.0%	180.00	
						Total 6300 · Music	26,677.07	39,143.47	68.15%	48,763.13	
						6400 · Administration					
						6410 · Cong. Admin. Compensation					
						6412 · Salary	0.00	49,811.67	0.0%	0.00	
						6414a · UCM 10% Retirement Contribution	231.00	1,867.94	12.37%	0.00	
						6414b · UCM 2% Retirement Match	46.20	498.12	9.28%	0.00	
						6416 · Benefits					
						6416d · Health Insurance	0.00	9,109.24	0.0%	0.00	
						Total 6416 · Benefits	0.00	9,109.24	0.0%	0.00	
						6418 · Professional Development	0.00	400.00	0.0%	0.00	
						Total 6410 · Cong. Admin. Compensation	277.20	61,686.97	0.45%	0.00	
						6420 · Office and Rental Manager Compensation					
						6422 · Office and Rental Manager Salary	19,635.00	21,540.73	91.15%	30,462.12	
						6424A · UCM 10% Retirement Contribution	1,386.00	1,615.55	85.79%	3,046.21	
						6424B · UCM 2% Retirement Match	277.20	430.81	64.34%	609.24	
						6426e as ## Cafeteria Plan				4,400.00	
						6428 · Professional Development	25.00	200.00	12.5%	200.00	
						Total 6420 · Office and Rental Manager Compensation	21,323.20	23,787.09	89.64%	38,717.57	
						6430 · Copier					
						6431 · Copier Lease	1,268.05	1,500.00	84.54%	1,527.00	
						6432 · Copier Maintenance	233.28	472.50	49.37%	460.00	
						Total 6430 · Copier	1,501.33	1,972.50	76.11%	1,987.00	
						6434 · Copier Paper	228.31	500.00	45.66%	560.00	
						6435 · Printing	91.22	250.00	36.49%	400.00	
						6436 · Supplies	216.87	132.00	164.3%	150.00	
						6440 · Postage	0.00	300.00	0.0%	250.00	
						6450 · Telecommunications	2,392.57	4,100.00	58.36%	4,500.00	
						6455 · Website					
						6455.1 · Online Contrib Fees	1,505.29	1,227.45	122.64%	2,000.00	
						6455.2 · Web Services	321.95	1,155.00	27.87%	2,400.00	
						Total 6455 · Website	1,827.24	2,382.45	76.7%	4,400.00	
						6460 · Equipment					
						6461 · Hardware	493.93			1,650.00	
						6462 · Software	540.00	1,800.00	30.0%	1,700.00	

							6460 · Equipment - Other	70.00	1,200.00	5.83%		
							Total 6460 · Equipment	1,103.93	3,000.00	36.8%	3,350.00	
							6480 · Banking					
							6481 · Bank Fees	99.94	117.85	84.8%	50.00	
							6482 · Supplies	92.37	200.00	46.18%	100.00	
							6484 · Payroll Subscription	350.00	912.66	38.35%	600.00	
							Total 6480 · Banking	542.31	1,230.51	44.07%	750.00	
							6491 · Contracted Professional Service	7,329.60	1,325.00	553.18%	11,000.00	Contract Bookkeeper
							6492 · Contracted Tech Support	0.00	1,000.00	0.0%	780.00	
							6499 · Administration - Other	389.00	4,500.00	8.64%	2,000.00	
							Total 6400 · Administration	37,222.78	106,166.52	35.06%	68,844.57	
							6500 · Building					
							6510 · Sexton Compensation	735.00			6,810.00	28 hrs/month
							6515 · Contracted Maintenance	0.00	3,000.00	0.0%	0.00	Will be expensed under Capital Fund
							6522 · Cleaning service	4,567.50	8,505.00	53.7%	8,550.00	190 hours x \$45/hr
							6524 · Snow/Lawns	222.72	400.00	55.68%	400.00	
							6526 · Rubbish Removal	767.55	1,300.00	59.04%	1,300.00	
							6527 · COVID-19 Related	29.48	200.00	14.74%	200.00	
							6530 · Fuel Oil	7,322.43	8,000.00	91.53%	8,000.00	
							6540 · Electricity	3,079.22	3,900.00	78.95%	4,800.00	
							6550 · Water/Sewer	1,175.02	1,600.00	73.44%	1,600.00	
							6560 · Custodial Supplies	656.49	800.00	82.06%	1,000.00	
							6565 · Fire alarm test	310.00	610.00	50.82%	310.00	
							6566 · Furnace Cleaning/inspection	341.99	450.00	76.0%	800.00	\$450 for furnace and \$350 for chimney liner cleaning/inspection
							6568 · Fire Alarm Monitoring	0.00	571.00	0.0%	571.00	
							6571 · Property Insurance		0.00	0.0%	15,000.00	Moved from CF to GF
							6573 · Elevator Inspection	375.00	300.00	125.0%	650.00	
							Total 6500 · Building	19,582.40	29,636.00	66.08%	49,991.00	
							6600 · Program expenses					
							6610 · Membership/Extension	268.19	700.00	38.31%	600.00	
							6611 · Welcoming Congregation	0.00	100.00	0.0%	100.00	
							6612 · Cong. Life Coordinator Compensation					

						6612-A • Memb. Coordinator Salary	14,581.41	20,585.51	70.83%	24,003.20	
						6614 • Retirement					
						6614A • UCM Retirement Contribution	1,200.83	1,543.91	77.78%	2,400.32	
						6614B • UCM 2% Retirement Match	240.16	411.71	58.33%	480.06	
						Total 6614 • Retirement	1,440.99	1,955.62	73.69%	2,880.38	
						### Cafeteria Plan			0.0%	4,400.00	
						6618 • Professional Development	75.00	1,250.00	6.0%	1,250.00	
						Total 6612 • Cong. Life Coordinator Compensation	16,097.40	23,791.13	67.66%	32,533.58	
						6622 • Donations to Community Pouch	8,277.84	12,900.00	64.17%	12,900.00	Total of 4122 and 4123
						6625 • Communications Comm.	0.00	400.00	0.0%	400.00	
						6630 • Worship/Arts	2,191.16	2,000.00	109.56%	2,760.00	
						6631 • Flowers	734.40	1,200.00	61.2%	1,500.00	
						6632 • AV Operator Wages	2,734.90	4,128.00	66.25%	4,128.00	
						6641 • UUA GA Delegate Support	200.00	2,000.00	10.0%	2,000.00	
						6645 • Governing Board	70.08	500.00	14.02%	500.00	
						6655 • Stewardship	1,035.69	2,000.00	51.79%	1,500.00	
						6660 • Racial Justice Team	0.00	500.00	0.0%	500.00	
						6661 • Climate Action Team	0.00	100.00	0.0%	100.00	
						6672 • Lay Pastoral Care	0.00	100.00	0.0%	100.00	
						6680 • Church Historian	0.00	900.00	0.0%	900.00	
						6685 • UCM Community Lunch	1,133.32	1,000.00	113.33%	2,000.00	
						Total 6600 • Program expenses	32,742.98	52,319.13	62.58%	62,521.58	
						6700 • Outreach/Denominational					
						6720 • UUA Annual Dues	5,000.00	5,000.00	100.0%	9,000.00	80% increase
						6750 • VT Interfaith Action Committee	1,500.00	1,500.00	100.0%	1,000.00	
						6751 • Soul Matters Sharing Circle	0.00	375.00	0.0%	0.00	
						6755 • VT Interfaith Power & Light	0.00	200.00	0.0%	200.00	
						Total 6700 • Outreach/Denominational	6,500.00	7,075.00	91.87%	10,200.00	
						6800 • Other Expense					
						6810 • Coffee/Tea Table	1,033.12	500.00	206.62%	500.00	
						6820 • Clarke Lectures	300.00		100.0%	150.00	
						6831 • Holiday Fair	1,879.15	3,500.00	53.69%	2,500.00	
						6890 • Miscellaneous					
						Total 6800 • Other Expense	3,212.27	4,000.00	80.31%	3,150.00	
						6900 • Payroll					

							6910 · Employer FICA	5,121.96	10,893.06	47.02%	8,682.15	6.2% x non-ministerial wages (6.2% SS, 1.45% Medicare)
							6920 · Employer Medicare	1,197.88	3,190.80	37.54%	2,030.50	1.45% x non-ministerial wages (6.2% SS, 1.45% Medicare)
							6940 · Payroll Expenses	2,444.25				
							6950 · Worker's Comp. Ins.	-179.00	6,000.00	-2.98%	2,800.00	
							6951 · VT Childcare Contribution Tax	474.64	1,033.00	45.95%	721.93	0.44% of employee wages
							6900 · Payroll - Other	0.00				
							Total 6900 · Payroll	9,059.73	21,116.86	42.9%	14,234.58	
							Total 6000 · GENERAL FUND EXPENSE	245,447.08	431,211.49	56.92%	448,499.57	
							Total Expense	245,447.08	431,211.49	56.92%	448,499.57	
							Net Ordinary Income	105,745.45	2,857.86	3,700.16%	-0.57	
							Net Income	105,745.45	2,857.86	3,700.16%	-0.57	

The Unitarian Church of Montpelier										
Proposed FY26 Capital Fund Budget										
					Jul - Dec 24	FY25 Budget	% of Budget	FY25 Estimate	FY26 Proposed	Notes
5100 · CAPITAL FUND INCOME										
	5191 · Transfer from LTIF				0.00	36,710.84	0.0%	36,710.84	40,420.00	4% of LTIF
Total 5100 · CAPITAL FUND INCOME					0.00	36,710.84	0.0%	36,710.84	40,420.00	
7000 · Capital Projects										
	7024-A · Building Projects 2024									
		7024.01 · Misc. Building & Grounds			318.19	13,085.84	2.43%	13,085.84	13,000.00	Projects TBD
	Total 7024-A · Building Projects 2024				318.19	13,085.84	2.43%	13,085.84	13,000.00	
7024B · Unbudgeted 2024										
		7024.04 - AV Equipment			340.20	1,075.00	31.65%	1,075.00	1,075.00	
	Total 7024B · Unbudgeted 2024				340.20	1,075.00	31.65%	1,075.00	1,075.00	
Transfer to Capital Reserves									7,345.00	
Total 7000 · Capital Projects					658.39	14,160.84	4.65%	14,160.84	21,420.00	
7100 · CAPITAL FUND EXPENSE										
	7101 · Flood Insurance				11,285.00	11,285.00	100.0%	11,285.00	15,000.00	estimate
	7102 · Property Insurance - CF				9,535.00	11,265.00	84.64%	11,265.00	0.00	moved back to GF
	## · Climate Resilience Study Group						0.0%	0.00	4,000.00	
Total 7100 · CAPITAL FUND EXPENSE					20,820.00	22,550.00	92.33%	22,550.00	19,000.00	
Net					-20,820.00	0.00	-92.33%	0.00	0.00	

Annual Reports 2024-2025

Report of the Caring Network

The Caring Network continues to provide meals, rides, and sometimes out of the ordinary things for our church community.

Here are some highlights from 2024 – 2025: a family with a child with whooping cough and another baby on the way who lived in a very rural area received meal support; a request for financial support was referred to the Care Fund; help with finding housing was requested and posted to the list after the Plainfield flood; rides to services were provided to two older members; the Good Samaritan Haven requested help with finding bedding; a new baby meal train was established; help with sorting, packing and moving was provided to an older member.

Other activities included: a most unusual request for help with finding support for an out of state UU who wished to use the VT Aid in Dying process; Paula Gills and Caitlin Frauton having conversations about how the Network might coordinate with a new baby welcoming procedure within the congregation; attempts to arrange rides for a church member residing in the Mad River Valley that, unfortunately, did not resolve; and, finally, four new members volunteering to join the network list.

Submitted by Paula Gills, Coordinator

Report on Church Records & History

Members 2024 - 2025 Elaine Ball, Claudia Clark, Sarah Franklin, Kenric Kite, Dave Peters, Barbara Thompson, and Peter Thoms.

Church Records A continuing endeavor – shepherded by Claudia Clark and Peter Thoms – is to gather and file active and recently discovered older documents. These include copies of Weekly Announcements, Sunday orders of service, sermons, obituaries, important financial documents, and records of significant capital improvements.

Vermont Quebec Universalist Unitarian Convention (VQUUC) This year's annual grant was \$900. In May of this year, UCM member Steve Finner will begin the second of his two-year term as President of VQUUC. Peter Thoms will represent UCM at the 2025 Annual Meeting in Burlington. VQUUC, incorporated in Vermont in 1888, includes all UU congregations in Vermont and Quebec.

Highlights of the Year

- *Women's Alliance* In January, Elaine Ball gave a stirring presentation to a Women's Alliance meeting. After deep research, she found roots connecting her family in Utah, where she was raised in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS/Mormon), to ancestors in early New England colonies; they were active in founding what would become Unitarian Universalist congregations.
- *Historic 1928 Blueprints* This Spring, we will present an exhibit on a Sunday morning, of the restored blueprints, discovered by Ana Neuburger under the vestry stage on the morning after the July 2023 flood. Part of the exhibit will include a determination of whether the blueprints' recommendations were followed. The blueprints will then be safely stored.
- *Climate Resilience Study* We have made archives materials available as a resource to the Climate Resilience Study, looking to our building's long-term future.
- *Exhibit to Honor Thomas Silloway* Before the end of the 2024 – 2025 church year, we will consult with the ET and other interested members to make decisions on the design and placement of an exhibit honoring Thomas Silloway. He was the architect (and Universalist minister), who designed the State House, 1857, and UCM, known then as the Church of the Messiah, 1865.

Looking to 2025 – 2026 We will make a decision whether to retain over 50 very old books from the 19th century. And we will offer historical sources – as UCM looks ahead to celebrating the 160th anniversary of the first service in our sanctuary, January 26, 1866.

Submitted by Peter Thoms

Report of the 2025 Grace Clarke Lecture Committee

Members 2024 - 2025 Sandal Cate, Abby Colihan, Kathy Johnson, Mary Jane Ohlson, and Peter Watt. Many volunteers were recruited to assist with baking desserts, ticket sales, set up, serving and clean up. All help was greatly appreciated.

Activities The Grace Clarke Lecture Committee met on November 19, 2024, to plan for our 2025 series. We set the lecture dates as January 18, March 15 and April 19 to accommodate the speakers. Again, we hosted a dessert and beverage social followed by each lecture. Initial planning included lining up notable presenters as well as soliciting bakers and workers. We coordinated with the UCM office to have tickets sold online via Breeze as well as in person during coffee hour, receiving payment in cash, checks and credit cards via Square.

The January presenter was Samantha Ford of Turn Stone Research speaking on “History on the Land: Old Forested Farmscapes.” She shared images of investigating an old farm site in north central Vermont and revealed modern day techniques for looking at historic land use patterns. We had about 40 attendees. We coordinated with the Vestry “overnight accommodations team” as they would be having people in the building later on due to the cold temperatures.

The March presenter was Bridget Butler of Bird Diva Consulting who spoke about “Rewilding Your Yard for Birds and You.” She had a lively talk showing ways to improve your yard habitat to help birds, native plants and beneficial insects survive. About 65 people attended that night, some for the social time and others joining for just the lecture.

The April 19 presenter was Dr. Paul Bierman of the UVM Geology Department speaking about “Greenland, Ice Cores and Climate Change.” He gave a detailed talk about the history of human research work on and under the ice cap of the land. He shared data about climate change and predictions for future changes to the land and oceans. Sixty people attended.

For all events we had tasty desserts donated by several church members. We charged \$12 for adults and \$5 for children to join in the social time. There was no charge for people simply attending the lecture.

Our total intake was \$1600 and expenses were \$165. The main purpose of the series is for ecological education and sociability, and we charge for food and beverages. This format of “dessert and beverages” was much easier for the Committee to arrange, and we do recommend keeping with this format in the future. We appreciated both church attendees and area guests who supported our efforts by buying tickets or who came for the talks.

The Committee and the UCM Executive Team were quite pleased to be offered a substantial amount of money by a church member to re-endow the Grace Clarke Lecture funds starting this year. This allows the series to host either professional or reputable speakers who can present enlightening talks in the realm of ecology and the environment well into the future. It supports our church mission goal of helping to “protect the Earth, our home.” This year’s lecturers seemed very pleased with the opportunity to present on their topic and with the hospitality of the evening.

If you know of potential speakers or wish to assist with this series in the future, please contact an Executive Team or Clarke Lecture Committee person listed above at the start of the 2025 – 2026 church year. We welcome your ideas and help. The Committee maintains a file box of information related to the process of running the lecture series.

Submitted by Sandal Cate

Report of the Climate Action Team

Mission The UCM Climate Action Team (CAT) works with our congregation and our community to inform, inspire, act and create change that will promote climate justice and protect the earth, our home.

Attendees 2024 - 2025 Mary Alice Bisbee, Allen Clark, Rev. Joan Javier-Duval, Tim Flynn, Maryann Ludlow, Anne Sarcka, Karen Voll, Dell Waterhouse, and Peter Watt.

Guest speakers Diana Chace, Jon Copans, Jared Duval, and John Jose.

Given that our state has endured three profoundly damaging floods in the past year, the Team’s work is more significant and timely than ever. After the previous chair resigned in April of last

year, Anne Sarcka took on the position on an interim basis. A big change this year is that the UUA dropped its Green Sanctuary Certification program, which had been a major focus, realizing that it was burdensome and counterproductive for some congregations. The revised program recognizes churches for their work if they can demonstrate progress in the areas of Mitigation, Congregational Transformation, Community Resilience and Climate Justice.

The CAT has been active on a number of fronts. During the summer we hosted four 350VT lectures on climate which were well attended. We participated in the UUA's Climate Justice Revival program, and spent most of late summer and early fall preparing for and then offering a one-day event on October 6. The program seemed successful but did not have a long term impact. Two people from the Stowe (UU) Fellowship attended. A major effort is the ongoing work to switch the church heating system from fossil fuels to biofuels. We have learned that we need to modify some parts on the oil feed line in order to use B20 or B99 (20% and 99% biofuel), but the work has not yet been scheduled.

Other projects currently underway are development of a Resource Bank, a listing of church members who have made substantial upgrades to their homes and lifestyles such as installing solar panels and heat pumps and using electric cars and bicycles, and are willing to talk about their experiences with others interested in similar efforts; creating a recycling program for prescription bottles; a film festival; and a celebration of Earth Day.

The Team has held a meeting with Jon Copans, director of the Montpelier Commission for Recovery and Resilience, to understand the work being done to mitigate damage and future challenges, and sponsored a workshop led by Diana Chace and Jon on emergency preparedness, with the goal of preparing a Go Bag; a brainstorming discussion on saving energy at home, a workshop on recycling with John Jose from CVSWMD, and a presentation by Jared Duval on the Energy Action Network's annual report and its implications. We created a bulletin board for posts of useful information; promoted UCM's climate library; adopted a mission statement; and hosted a meeting of Third Act VT to find out whether a Washington County chapter could be created.

A focus for the months ahead will be to review and implement this year's new Green Sanctuary 2030 materials. In the coming year we hope to find ways to engage more of the congregation,

collaborate on climate issues with other churches, government and private organizations working on similar issues, and perhaps take on some legislative initiatives.

We continue to seek new members, as well as a younger chair!

Submitted by Anne Sarcka

Report of the Climate Resilience Study Group

The UCM Governing Board, early in this church year, appointed a thirteen-member Climate Resilience Study Group composed of volunteers from the congregation to thoughtfully examine suggestions made by the congregation last church year for options that might protect our building and make it more resilient to future predicted floods, and, as importantly, enable the congregation to continue to effectively live out its mission. The Board charged those involved in the study to objectively and thoroughly research the congregational suggestions and to present their findings to the Board without making any recommendations. The five options the Study Group will research range from simply repairing any future damage to raising the building to moving church functions to another site.

The Study Group has been given calendar year 2025 to identify the challenges, opportunities, and costs associated with each suggested option with a report due to the Board in January of 2026. The Board will then present the Study Group's findings to the congregation for discussion and action. A decision-making process to thoughtfully consider and discern the best possible option for the church's future will be determined by the Board and presented to the congregation in the coming months.

To date, the Study Group has divided into five smaller working groups that are investigating the individual options. The entire Study Group meets as a large group every six weeks or so to share each small group's progress in researching their individual option, discuss areas of overlap, and address any challenges encountered. A Steering Committee, made up of four of the now 12 members of the whole group, is guiding the effort and keeping the Board informed.

Submitted by Steve Gold, Co-Chair

Report of the UCM Community Lunch Committee

Volunteer coordinator: Liza Earle-Centers; Site Manager: Janet Poeton.

There were no Advisory Committee meetings. Many who had been members were not available to attend meetings. Requests for members did not bring in more members. There are an average of 14 volunteers each Monday.

STRONG is what we make each other - has been the theme for the UCM church year. We are a strong group - many volunteers are 'regulars,' others come once in a while – ALL ARE NEEDED! We value each one.

Three volunteers, two who had been 'regulars' for MANY years, Rob Chickering and Michael Sherman, and Shanda Williams who was a drop in volunteer between 2017 and 2019, passed from this life. We remember each one making our lunch a special place to be each Monday.

The Good Sam Haven has held a warming shelter in the dining area between 8:15 and 4:15 each weekday since January. We all became a stronger community because of this activity.

Each Monday nutritional meals are served with food from the Vermont Food bank, the Gleaners and local stores. Home baked desserts, as well as breakfast treats, are served daily. Paula Gills continues to share her musical talents with the group!

Presently meals are served at Christ Episcopal Church between 11:30 and 12:30. There have been meetings and talks about a move to Trinity Church. Albert Sabatini and Anna Saxman have been attending meetings and making many decisions to have this happen.

We are stronger due to the financial support YOU make through contributions as well as through the UCM budget. If you want to volunteer please check the weekly e-news. It takes a team to put out 75 to 100 meals each Monday.

Submitted by Janet Poeton

Report of the Community Pouch Committee

Members 2024 - 2025 Sarah Franklin, Judith Hinds, Kenric Kite, Leppurd MacMartin, Ansel Ploog, Juliana Plummer, Dell Waterhouse, Dawn Evans (ET rep), and Janet Poeton (chair).

Mission To direct half of the pouch cash, and other monies labeled Community Pouch, to a local non-profit aligned with the mission of UCM - showing diversity of organizations throughout the years.

New members joined the Committee this year giving a positive energy and making this a STRONGER group. Wording for the website, the file of past recipients, and outcomes after a group receives the pouch were worked on and are nearly complete.

Suggestions for the pouch recipients are received from committees, individuals, and groups from UCM ~ YOU can suggest an organization by submitting the name to:

ucm.communitypouch@gmail.com.

The generosity of UCM has made the larger community a stronger community in many ways. Thank you for your contributions.

Submitted by Janet Poeton

Report of the Congregational Life Coordinator and Membership & Hospitality Committee

Mission Statement of the Membership & Hospitality Committee The Membership & Hospitality Committee provides welcoming and outreach to newcomers, members, and friends of the church with the intention of fostering a sense of belonging in our spiritual home.

We no longer have an active Membership & Hospitality Committee, and are working to adjust/re-define what we do, and how. As Congregational Life Coordinator, some of the responsibilities Elaine fulfills include:

- Offer hospitality & welcome for newcomers, and fellowship within the church community (at the Welcome Table on Sundays, and through virtual and in-person communications and events).
- Assist UCM's Minister, Rev. Joan Javier-Duval, and UCM Committee Leaders with planning & offering "UU History and Theology" classes, Activities Fairs, and other "New UU" sessions for newcomers and visitors each Fall and Spring, as well as one or two "New Member Sunday" services each Church Year.
- Promote understanding of Unitarian Universalist (UU) principles – in part by offering "Intro to the Pathways to Membership" sessions.
- Coordinate Circle Suppers, Potlucks, Brunches, and Receptions throughout the Church Year, in collaboration with other committee leaders, staff, and volunteers.
- Collaborate with Rev. Joan and staff to keep in touch with church members and friends; contact persons interested in the church; and keep accurate Membership records.

Deep gratitude to Peter Thoms, Jen Roberts, and Jo Romano for organizing Ushers, Baristas, and Lift Operators this Church Year; to Dave and Ellie Peters and Clara White for stepping in to help with numerous Sunday-morning tasks nearly every week; to John Poeton for assisting at the Welcome Table; and to UCM Board and Executive Team Members for supporting Membership-related classes and events.

During the 2024-25 Church Year, we held "UU History and Theology" classes with Rev. Joan Javier-Duval in the Fall and Spring. Approximately sixteen participants attended in October 2024 or March 2025, or listened to the audio recording if they weren't available to attend.

Last Church Year, very few people attended the "All About UCM" program we have offered for over five years. We decided instead to hold a Fall Activities Fair, and to do more to promote our "Pathways to Membership" program, a self-guided way for people to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and our UCM community. On January 19, 2025, Elaine Ball held an "Intro to the Pathways to Membership + Building Tour" after the worship service which reached about eight-ten participants, including Elaine and Rev. Joan.

There were many opportunities to connect over meals, from Circle Suppers in the Fall/Winter and Spring, to Potlucks and Brunches throughout the year. Ten people hosted or attended a Circle

Supper in the Fall, and ten in the Winter; this Spring, eight have signed up to host or attend so far, with another eighteen scheduled to host or attend through the end of the Church Year. We have also hosted and/or collaborated to offer a Thanksgiving Leftovers Potluck in November, Cider & Cookies in December, the Third Annual Black OurStory Month Human Family Potluck in February, a Membership Brunch in March, and a New Member Sunday Reception in April. An End-of-the-year Outdoor Coffee Hour is planned for June.

We hosted one New Member Sunday service this Church Year, on April 13, 2025. Two members had signed the Membership Book prior to the service, and one was renewing her membership. Seven signed on April 13th, and one plans to sign soon. These eleven new members will bring our active, voting membership to 242 (234 certified December, 2024). Since January 2025 we have lost two long-time members to death, Rob Chickering and Norma Raymond.

In April 2024, we comprised 240 active, voting members (236 certified December, 2023). From January-December, 2024, three members moved/resigned, and one person was removed from the membership list who had been included in error. An additional three members died in 2024, Heather Moz, Rev. Marjorie (Maggie) Rebmman, and Colin Tait. Five new members joined in 2024 (Scottie Brower, Lotus, Steve Grunewald, Amy Handy, and Elsie Murphy) and one person renewed their membership.

While we mourn the loss of eight beloved members to death/attrition in the past year and a half, we are honored to welcome into our beloved community the seventeen new and returning members and long-time friends who have joined us in that time.

Submitted by Elaine Ball, Congregational Life Coordinator

Report of the Denominational Resources Group

For the second year in a row, the Board will be bringing forth five UUA General Assembly Delegates for ratification by the congregation. Three are current Board members, two have been delegates before, and one is a new member of the congregation. Three will attend the GA in Baltimore and two will attend GA virtually. Newsletter articles, one-on-one conversations, a table at coffee hour, and other recruiting activities were carried on to try to attract candidates.

UCM was represented at the annual Vermont Quebec Unitarian Universalist convention by Peter Thoms, who is the treasurer. The president is UCM member Steve Finner.

UCM continues to participate in organizing committees of Vermont Interfaith Action, which has over 70 Faith congregations as members. However, we invite more participation. See Steve Finner or Tory Rhodin for more information.

However, the Denominational Resources Group continues to be one person and we urge other members of this congregation to become part of us.

Submitted by Stephen L. Finner, Ph.D.

Report of the Finance Committee

The Finance Committee's main concentration this past year, and especially during the first part of calendar year 2025, was to develop a budget recommendation. This was sent to the Executive Team and then to the UCM Board for them to present to the membership for a vote. We established a preliminary budget and then refined it once the final anticipated pledge drive amount became clear. The Committee also monitored our cash investments. The Finance Committee is contemplating having a financial audit conducted next year as one has not been performed in many years.

I'd like to thank all those who participated in the Finance Committee's work.

Submitted by Scott Hess, Chair

Report of the UCM All Church Holiday Fair Committee

This All Church activity is led by Sandal Cate, Kristin Glaser, Ginnie Humphreys, Leslie Parr, Jo Romano, and John and Janet Poeton.

The Gazebo graced the center of the Vestry. The kitchen is still unusable, hence there was no lunch of Norma's Ham Loaf.

New traditions continued Friday night Youth Music with an amazing Cocoa Bar - this year the entire Fair was open on Friday night - baked goods were available as well as jewelry, children's books, and items for gifts. The number of wreaths was increased AND this year they were decorated by UCM friends and members, fresh pecans had arrived the week of Thanksgiving

New events added Themed Raffle baskets - donated by a variety of UCM small groups, staff members, and individuals - AND Fairy Lights - a hit with many people - raised nearly as much money as the lunch, which was the goal!

All were welcome to donate, volunteer, and purchase. There was a lot of positive energy creating a loving community. Items remaining at the end of the Fair were donated to local charities to support the protection of the Earth from an abundance of things.

Planning for the 2025 Holiday Fair has begun. It will be the first weekend in December – Friday the 5th and Saturday the 6th.

Hope we see you at the Fair!

Submitted by Janet Poeton

Report of the Music Program/Committee

For the first time since I have been in this position, this report will not begin with a description of our adaptation to unfortunate circumstances, whether the flood, ongoing Covid restrictions or a Covid outbreak!

The core of our music program remains the choir and pianist Eliza Thomas' offerings. At the same time we strive to provide opportunities for others within the congregation to express their musical gifts, as well as trying to find new ways to engage the congregation as a whole.

Our UCM choir generally sang at about 3 services per month, with guest musicians performing for the remaining services. We have presented a diversity of music, including music from classical, folk, popular and African-American musical traditions. We have done less music from non-western traditions than we have in some recent years, which I see as a weak spot in our programming. Slightly more than half of the music we have performed has been by women

composers/arrangers, and we featured trans composers in our service honoring International Trans Day of Visibility.

Our choir numbers have remained at around 20, although for periods of the year they were substantially lower mostly due to health and medical issues. We gained a couple of new/returning members this spring. Throughout these fluctuations, the choir has remained a strong, cohesive musical and supportive community. The choir enjoyed a collaboration with the LSE program, together singing local children's songster Mr. Chris' "YooHoo," for a service with many of the children and their parents. We intend to reprise this collaboration on LSE Sunday.

Most of our guest musicians this year have come from within the church, with a handful from beyond our immediate community, and have included: The Crones, Paula Gills, Bronwyn Fryer, Callum Robeck, Aaron Marcus, Lotus, Kris Hammer, Marc Gwinn and Dee Davis, Lillian Broderick, Kate Latz, Eric Oberg, Hilary Poff, Stephen Brown, David Ruffin, Michael Close, Carolyn's Angel Band, the Montpelier Community Gospel Choir and a number of our children and youth. In the fall Heather Moz joined Lindsay Wade and Peter Lind in her last public performance before she died, an exquisite rendering of These Green Hills. Many choir members have also had featured parts in our choir offerings.

For the second year the December Community Carol Sing was held at the Unitarian Church, with the added feature of a combined choir comprised of the UCM and Christ Church choirs, and additional members from Bethany Church and the Old Meeting House. Kenric Kite's traditional music ensemble "North Branch" joined us, as well as vocalist David Ruffin. It was a well-attended, feel-good event highlighting community collaboration, raising money for Good Samaritan Haven. Despite the significant additional work needed to prepare extra music for the combined choir, the choir greatly appreciated and enjoyed the experience of singing with the larger group.

With LSE Director Caitlin Fauton's impetus, we inaugurated some Community Music events, inviting families and individuals to join together for fellowship and casual singing and music-making. We had our first event in January, which was positive and in many ways a success, although we also learned ways we wanted to do some things differently. The next event is planned for after this report is submitted (!), and will be held on a Sunday afternoon after

church and mostly feature casual group singing. Our hope is to establish these events as a regular feature of our program offerings.

In contrast to last year's Music Sunday program, where our performers were entirely "in-house", this year we have slated several outstanding guest musicians as a special treat both for the congregation and the choir. Each approach has its rewards, and we are happy to mix it up in this way. As we did 2 years ago, this year we again plan to offer an afternoon performance of the same program for the general public.

A huge happening and shift in the music program is the impending retirement of our beloved pianist and accompanist Eliza Thomas. She has served us for 10 years and through 3 Music Directors. Her exquisite playing for preludes and postludes, generous and skilled accompaniment, and sweet spirit has enriched our musical life immeasurably.

We had a smooth hiring process for a new pianist/accompanist, and are glad to have hired Sara Huff who will begin at the end of the summer. Sara has great breadth and depth of experience as a pianist, organist, accompanist, choir member and leader, and church musician (including UU), and is excited to be joining our staff.

In addition to the choir serving the mission of the church community through its contributions to church services and community collaborations, as a church group our non-auditioned choir serves to fulfill the church's mission for its individual members. In order to welcome all, build a loving community, serve human need and nurture each person's spiritual journey, we continue, for example, to provide support for members in need, to provide extra support for people to learn their music with practice tracks as possible, and to recognize important milestones in each other's lives. While for many in the choir the act of working hard together to produce high quality music is an important spiritual activity, the choir is also a close-knit supportive community in itself.

Submitted by Donia Prince, Director of Music

Report of the Property Committee (currently inactive)

Report of the Racial Justice Group

RJG Team 2024 – 2025 Dell Waterhouse, Steve Finner, Judith Hinds, Paula Gills, Peter Thoms, Liz Benjamin, and Barbara Thompson. We meet every other month on Wednesdays.

Activities

The focus of our work continues to be:

1. Advocate and educate within UCM community around the 8th principle of building the Beloved Community.
2. Outreach to local racial justice groups and BIPOC-led organizations.

Under the first point, RJG this year:

- Nominated community organizations for the UCM pouch.
- Provided a basket for the Holiday Fair raffle.
- Supported antiracist training for UCM's SE program.

Under the second point, UCM again opened our Vestry to Farmer Ama and Salon Black Walnut for a successful gathering honoring Black OurStory Month and the Human Family Potluck in February.

For the third year in a row, UCM will be a sponsoring congregation for DRUUMM's (Diverse & Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries) Public Worship and fund raiser to be held on May 15, 2025, with Rev. Joan as Guest Preacher.

Submitted by Barbara Thompson

Report of the Spiritual Exploration Committee and the Director of Spiritual Exploration

Members 2024 - 2025 Susan Koch (Chair), Caitlin Fraiton (Director), Hilary Poff, and Tim Favorite.

Mission Statement The Spiritual Exploration Committee, working in community, supports opportunities for transformational learning, faith formation, action, and fellowship across the lifespan within our congregation.

Activities The SE Committee works with the Director of Spiritual Exploration to support our volunteers. We discuss curricula for children and youth programs, advise on the SE program's overall mission and goals, support family ministry events, support volunteer events, staff the Spiritual Exploration welcome table, create and deliver welcome baskets for growing families, and are in the process of developing a Spiritual Exploration Resource Library for families and volunteers.

Every week, the program nourishes around 20-30 children and youth, from nursery to middle school to those who stay at the service. There are around 51 enrolled, and 25 non-enrolled.

This year we restructured our age groups to combine preschool and early elementary (up to second grade) and late elementary (third grade) to middle school. This was done for a couple of reasons - one, to reduce the amount of volunteers needed each week (while keeping a safe ratio of adults to children), and two, to allow siblings of mixed ages to remain together. We generally have quite large attendances in the younger group. It is great to see so many kids in the Children's Chapel. The Grades 3-6 group has had more challenges with engagement, but a middle school service project had 8 youth and their adults attend in early March, and worked very well. We are in the process of moving to a service project offering for the remainder of the year for the older children and youth. We also offered OWL this year, with 5 youth attending regularly, and 2 overnights.

Overall, the program is growing very nicely, as families are beginning to return from the lean years of Covid and floods. Our program's greatest strength continues to be our volunteers who are dedicated to guiding the faith formation of our children and youth. Their many and varied contributions – from our caring nursery volunteers to our dedicated PreK-2 team to our passionate Grades 3-6 and middle school group to our amazing OWL volunteers - are the foundation for all our offerings across the various developmental stages. We want to particularly acknowledge and thank them for their contributions this year. Our Director, Caitlin Fauton, is in her first year and has already made a big impact, inspiring us with her innovative ideas and kind

heart. We look forward to continuing down exciting new paths and welcoming ever more families in the coming year.

Submitted by Tim Favorite

Report of the Adult Spiritual Exploration Team

The purpose of the ASE Team this year was to support Rev. Joan in her Adult Spiritual Exploration ministry. Our goals were:

- to maintain and expand the Chalice Circle program;
- to support ASE offerings by other UCM groups such as the Climate Action Team (CAT), the Racial Justice Group (RJG), and the Membership & Hospitality Committee; and
- to offer one or more faith development classes/discussions.

Organized more as a network than a formal committee, we held no in-person meetings. We have worked via email and informal contacts. Contributing members included Elaine Ball, Paula Gills, Judith Hinds, Rev. Joan, Hugo Liepmann, Paul Ohlson, Gale Pekar, Anne Sarcka, and Barbara Thompson.

Regarding Chalice Circles: Six Seasoned Souls groups, two Small Group Ministries, and one Caregivers Support group are thriving. We will need more facilitators in order to generate more groups in the fall; we hope to offer facilitator training in the near future.

See reports of the CAT, RJG, and Membership & Hospitality Committee for details of their small and large group offerings.

Rev. Joan and Bronwyn Fryer offered a year-long, nine-part course known as the Date with Death Club, using a curriculum developed by Rev. Karen Johnston, a UU minister in Burlington. It was well attended; 35 congregants and friends participated in various sessions. Topics included death themes in poetry and music; grieving; preparing for your own death; Medical Aid in Dying (MAiD); caring for a dead body; and planning your own memorial service, obituary, and legacy.

The ASE Team welcomes more members and ideas for new offerings. One caveat – if you suggest a new offering, please be prepared to help make it happen!

Submitted by Judith Hinds, Team Leader

Report of the Stewardship Committee

This year, UCM's Stewardship team led the annual pledge drive, themed "Strong is What We Make Each Other." Our goal was to showcase the many ways that our spiritual community works together and how UCM serves as an inspiration and home for community care. The Stewardship team used the drive to talk about the ways that UCM's independence means that we are both self-funded and protected from federal funding cuts in ways that other institutions around us are not. It is a strength and a responsibility to collectively support this spiritual home.

During our pledge drive, we raised \$376,934, about 97% of our goal of \$386,000. We had 181 pledges. The average pledge was \$2,083, up from \$1,963 last year. Pledges ranged in amounts from \$50 to \$15,000. Each pledge is a crucial part of raising the funds for our community, thank you.

Last fall, the UUA offered a series of webinars focused on pledge drives. There were many tips offered but one stood out to me: the loss of institutional trust means that congregations need to demonstrate organizational reliability, responsibility and transparency. When our Stewardship team gathered in the fall, we began our preparations for the drive by analyzing pledging data and creating the 'Pledging and Financial Resiliency' handout. We shared this information with members and friends of UCM to reveal more details about pledging, vulnerabilities in the distribution of our pledges and ways that we can all make UCM a little more financially resilient.

Stewardship is part of a much bigger practice than raising the funds for our mission. We are fortunate at UCM to be a we, held in covenant and guided by our mission. Our gifts are not only financial but made up of our time and presence. We handle all of our gifts with care because we know that they cost something to give.

Thank you to all for your generosity. Thank you to the Stewardship team: Rev. Joan Javier-Duval, Brenda Bean, Scott Hess; thank you to Brian Prendergast for graphic design; to

Peter Thoms, who worked with Stewardship in the fall; to UCM staff members Elaine Ball and Emily Seifert for web and database work; and to everyone who made worship during the drive a joyous celebration of our community!

Submitted by Ansel Ploog

Report on UCM's Administration / Office / Rentals

It has been another busy year in the UCM Office! Here is a sampling of what we've been up to.

This was a year of transition as we adjusted to the departure of our previous Congregational Administrator, Sierra Lowell (in May 2024) and the ET decided not to refill that full-time position. My schedule increased to 24 hours per week, I took on additional financial and administrative responsibilities, and became the Office and Rental Manager. We engaged Shannon Blais as our contracted bookkeeper, and Fran Dodd returned to her volunteer role as Treasurer. The three of us worked collaboratively to close the books for Fiscal Year 2024 and tune up our procedures for FY 2025. My immense gratitude goes to Fran for her countless hours spent solving financial puzzles, wrangling reports from QuickBooks, and relentlessly pursuing details. Shannon's expertise has also been an asset to UCM and we are fortunate to have her.

We continue to utilize Breeze, our church database software, for Member & Friend contact info, activities and events, and records of financial support given to UCM. Pledge management and financial record keeping in Breeze are core parts of my job. I'm always happy to answer questions from congregants about their pledges and contributions.

UCM moved into the 21st century this year by offering a credit card payment option for the first time at the 2024 Holiday Fair! We also set up a PayPal account for use by our UCM fundraisers such as the online auction. My favorite piece of technology we acquired this year is our floor cleaning robot, whom I have affectionately named "vacUUm."

It was a successful year for our space rentals program. I'm happy to report that as of April 30, 2025 we have exceeded our FY25 income goal of \$13,000 and will likely reach \$15,000 by June 30th. We had over 110 separate rentals from 54 distinct non-UCM individuals or groups. Some

met here just once or twice, while others used our building weekly throughout the year for a wide variety of purposes including rehearsals, retreats, recitals, concerts, dances, meetings, trainings, parties, activism, fundraisers, celebrations of life, public input sessions, and one wedding! Making our space available at affordable rates is an important way to build connections with the broader community. Renters often remark on how lovely our building is and how welcome they feel here.

Another core part of my job is building use scheduling and communications, and oversight of maintenance & upkeep. Recovery from the 2024 flood continued into this church year, primarily with the installation of the new lift and the accompanying shaft reconstruction & painting. Special thanks go to Jason Kass, who returned to UCM as our very part-time Sexton to help with building maintenance and is advising on the kitchen renovation plans. Weekly cleaning is capably and efficiently provided by Hannah from Cleaning Green Vermont. I'm always looking for additional volunteers to serve as on-call helpers when extra cleaning is needed, such as during busy concert weekends or after UCM events. Please contact me if you can help occasionally!

A special and unanticipated project I attended to this fall and winter was administration of UCM's Emergency Housing funding for unhoused folks who were exited from motels, and coordination with the Emergency Overnight Warming Shelter at UCM. I felt pride and gratitude for the way our congregation stepped up to serve human need in a time of crisis.

I delight in being part of the UCM community, helping folks from within and beyond the congregation with a myriad of needs, and working together to live out our shared mission.

Submitted by Emily G. Seifert, Office & Rental Manager

Report on UCM's Support for People to Stay in Motels & UCM's Emergency Winter Shelter

Support for People to Stay in Motels – Fall 2024 In the Fall of 2024, when State support for motel stays ended for hundreds of Vermonters in many communities, churches in Montpelier and Barre banded together – to raise funds, to enable at-risk families with children and disabled and elderly adults – to remain housed. For the period October 4 through the end of November, UCM raised close to \$18,000 from many donors. At the nightly rate of \$70. at the Economy Inn in Montpelier and the Hilltop Motel in Berlin – the congregation's efforts funded 257 nights. This translated to UCM supporting over four individuals or families every night for close to two months, as the weather moved from early to late Fall.

UCM's Emergency Overnight Winter Shelter Also related to individuals and families leaving motels, when many faced living outdoors in the winter, and in collaboration with Beth Ann Maier of Christ Church and Rick DeAngelis (former Co-Executive Director of Good Samaritan Haven), UCM opened the Emergency Overnight Winter Shelter in the vestry - on December 14, 2024. The weather standard for opening: either temperature below 10 degrees – or that reading, taking wind chill into account. The shelter was open 46 nights, ending March 2. Over those 77 nights – it was open 60 percent of the time, during an exceptionally cold winter. With a (State Fire Marshal) capacity of 15 – the shelter welcomed an average of 11 guests each night. Sixty volunteers, from UCM and the wider community, covered three four-hour shifts each night, with two volunteers present at all times. Individuals, churches and agencies (Capstone, for example), provided food and drinks for guests during the shelter season. Clothes were donated regularly. Chiefly through Beth Ann and Christ Church, 15 air mattresses, 10 cots, and many blankets were on hand. At the end of each overnight shift, all shelter equipment was put away neatly on the vestry stage, to make room for using the vestry – and to be clear for Sunday morning services and other vestry and sanctuary events. Shelter volunteers worked closely with staff at Good Samaritan's Elks Club Shelter, and the Montpelier Police. Reflecting the community's generosity, the shelter received \$7,000 in donations.

Submitted by Peter Thoms

Report of the Women's Alliance

About the Women's Alliance The Women's Alliance, originally founded in the 1860s as The Ladies' Society, and now open to all regardless of gender identity, is an organization whose purposes are to raise funds for the church, enjoy each other's company, and learn together during the church year (September – June).

Alliance members and friends meet the first Tuesday (usually) of each month at 5 p.m. with a brief business meeting, followed by a potluck dinner at 5:30 p.m. and a program starting around 6 p.m. All are welcome. Dinner guests are invited to bring a dish to share or make a contribution.

Leadership 2024 - 2025 Jo Romano and Leppurd MacMartin led the Alliance as President and Vice-President, respectively. Betty McKinnell and Abby Colihan continued their good work as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. Janet Poeton and Sandal Cate, past presidents, remain the steadfast organizers of events that the Alliance hosts. Barbara Thompson, Ginnie Humphreys and Sarah Franklin designed and led interesting and educational programs. Special thanks to these outgoing program planners, to Nancy Schulz and Anne Ferguson, who set up the tables prior to each meeting, and to Elaine Ball for her overall support. Thanks to everyone who attends, helps set up and clean up!

Next year's 2025-2026 officers include Jo Romano, President, Leppurd MacMartin, Vice President, Betty McKinnell, Secretary, Abby Colihan, Treasurer and Program Committee members Patty Latz, Connie Kite and Liz Benjamin.

Programming The following programs were presented:

Sept: *Self Coaching for Deeper Understanding* led by Jo Romano

Oct: *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion* with Leppurd MacMartin and Emily Seifert

Nov: *A Visual Experience of Haiti* with Irina Markova

Dec: *Poetry Out Loud* with Sarah Franklin

Jan: *Conversions: A Spiritual Journey* with Elaine Ball

Feb: *All about Amy's Armoire* by Amy Anderson

Mar: *Honoring Carolyn McDade: Songs that Inspired the Feminist Movement* with Ginnie Humphreys

Apr: *A Creative Life* with Anne Sarcka

May: *Love Letters from Pig - Experience the 1964 Meridian, MS Freedom School* with Gail Falk

June: End of Year Picnic and Looking Ahead with Rev. Joan Javier-Duval

Financials and Fundraising Efforts In addition to social gatherings with educational programs, the Women's Alliance supports UCM and local non-profits through a few key fundraising efforts. We donated a total of \$275 to Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice, Circle, Just Basics, and Have Justice Will Travel. Our fall rummage sale raised \$2924, of which half goes to the General Fund. We netted \$650 from the Holiday Fair pecan sales and added that to the Fair's total profit. The 2nd Sunday Soup Sales netted \$600 which will be donated to a local non-profit. We also gifted each staff member a small "honorarium" at holiday time. We will hold a May rummage sale.

We purchased 8 table cloths for total of \$90.00. We purchased a rolling cart for the card tables and a coffee machine totaling \$750.00. We anticipate making a donation to the kitchen project when needed.

All are welcome to attend Alliance Monthly meetings and to bring along friends and visitors. You do not need to join us officially to attend, though only dues paying members may vote. Check the weekly UCM e-news for details about our gatherings.

Submitted by Jo Romano, President, Women's Alliance

Report of the Worship and Arts Committee

Members 2024 – 2025 Steve Finner, Sarah Franklin, Jim Phinney, Jen Roberts, Rev. Joan Javier-Duval (Minister), Donia Prince (Music Director), Caitlin Fauton (Director of Spiritual Exploration)

Mission Statement The Worship & Arts Committee is the steward of the Sunday service. In collaboration with the Minister, Music Director, and Director of Spiritual Exploration, we strive

to ensure that elements of the service — music, movement, meditation and prayer, joys and concerns, readings, announcements, the sermon — nurture each person's spiritual journey. The Committee is responsible for ensuring the pulpit is filled on Sundays when the Minister is away, whether by guest speakers or through special services led by members of the congregation. We coordinate service elements such as candles, flowers, and multimedia offerings with a dedicated budget.

Highlights of the Church Year 2024-2025

- *Worship Planning and Collaboration*
 - Worked closely with Rev. Joan, Donia Prince, and Caitlin Frauton to create a schedule of monthly worship themes connected to overarching theme of “Cultivating Resilience” and to design services tied to the monthly themes (e.g., Repair, Wonder, Letting Go, Purpose, Imagination).
 - Used creative approaches including participatory rituals, enhanced visuals, somatic practices, and strong thematic storytelling.
- *Guest Preachers and Pulpit Support*
 - Organized and supported services led by guest preachers: Rev. Patience Stoddard, Eyal Amiel, Ginny Sassaman, and Rev. Kendra Ford.
 - Supported pulpit coverage during Rev. Joan’s absence in the month of April while she served as a UUA Ambassador to the Philippines.
- *Special Services*
 - Coordinated multiple all-ages services, including "One Wild and Precious Life" and "Purposeful Moments," blending movement, readings, and multigenerational participation.
 - Organized the annual "To Say Their Names" memorial service with improved ritual flow.
 - Developed the lay-led "Thresholds to Wonder" service in December and planned a "Poetry Sunday" in May.
- *Creative Enhancements to Worship*
 - Introduced special lighting effects for the "Wonder in the Dark, Wonder in the Light" service in December.

- Strengthened musical engagement by supporting cantor-style leadership and consistent gathering songs.
- Encouraged diversity of music offerings, including future planning for a revived Music Committee and exploration of small ensembles.
- *Expanding Visual Arts in Worship*
 - Began exploring opportunities for integrating visual arts into the sanctuary aligned with monthly themes.
 - Discussed intention to recruit a visual artist to the Worship & Arts Committee to provide perspective and foster engagement with local artists.
- *Support for Congregational Needs*
 - Integrated somatic practices such as humming, movement, and communal touch (opt-in) to support emotional resilience.
 - Hosted services post-election focused on grounding, resilience, and shared purpose.
- *Committee Growth and Sustainability*
 - Actively planned for leadership transitions, including recruiting 2-3 new Committee members for next year.
 - Focused recruitment on balancing skills and perspectives — visionary, structured, and spontaneous thinkers.
 - Strengthened Committee operations by rotating leadership roles and clarifying guidelines for service elements.

Appreciation

The Worship & Arts Committee is grateful for the ongoing dedication of the Production Team, who provided live streaming for services throughout the year. We also extend our thanks to all Worship Associates, musicians, storytellers, artists, and volunteers whose contributions made our worship services vibrant, meaningful, and welcoming.

We look forward to deepening our commitment to inclusive, creative, and spirit-filled worship in the year to come.

Submitted by Jim Phinney