

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Exeter Annual Report 2018 - 2019



Our mission: At FUUSE we seek to build a caring, inclusive community where we can ground ourselves spiritually, pursue justice in the larger society, and work to heal the natural world.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations used:

- BoT - Board of Trustees
- DRE – Director of Religious Education & RE – Religious Education
- FUUSE – First Unitarian Universalist Society of Exeter
- PC – Program Council
- UU – Unitarian Universalist/UUA – Unitarian Universalist Association

Annual Report of the Minister for Church Year 2018-2019

Somewhere in the middle of this year Jim Webber made buttons that said, “This Renovational will be Transformational”. The sense of transformation and the lightness with which he approached it was a delight. I think it has already been transformational for us and I think the process of going through the renovation and then living into the new space will be even more transformational.

One of the transformations that has already happened is that we raised \$100,000 more than the target our consultant suggest would be a good goal for us. I think it was a surprise to discover that we do have the capacity here to make this change, to take good care of our buildings and make them more energy efficient and more usable. And the operating budget is tight again this year. There are things we would like to fund that we cannot. It’s confusing to have the Capital Campaign do so well and still be struggling with the year to year, month to month budget. I am hopeful that part of the transformation that will come with the renovation is a resettling and rejuvenation of the operations of congregation.

We will spend the first part of the next church year worshiping at the Phillips Exeter Academy Chapel. It will be an interesting experience to be ourselves in another space. I think this will provide us with a number of insights and fresh perspectives on what we think is most essential to who we are.

And here is where I want to start the Gratitude:

The Renovation Team has been so thoughtful, so thorough, so intentional. They have modeled for all of us a good way to make decisions and go through a complex process. They have communicated regularly with the congregation and had so many different groups and members of the congregation come to their meetings. They have consulted many folks and brought in lots of different voices about history and hopes. Preparing for a renovation can be a very anxious time and their care in the process has made things less anxious and more smooth.

Greg Colling, our architect has been generous with and so thorough and aware of working within our constraints while still making sure we get to transformation.

Our Board has wrestled all year long with the questions of money and how we live into our vision for our congregation and our world. They worked hard to be in good communication and to improve understanding and connections. There is always more to do and they were steadfast and present which is such a gift.

Thank you to the Retreat organizers, Tony and Anne Tufts. This year I attended with fewer formal responsibilities and had a series of unplanned and wonderful connecting conversations. I am grateful for this place to deepen and start connections. Thank you to the RE Committee for all their work planning for and covering Maternity leave and planning and being so thoughtful about reconfiguring the job when Linsey-Jean asked to enter into a job share.

We continue our new form of RE in which we emphasize experience and community for children over information. So our children are in the worship service with us for more time and then for 20-30 minutes for time with their peers and some conversation or experience with peers on the same topic as the sermon. It’s different and we are still learning. And welcome all your reflections and questions.

Thank you to Yvonne for working more deeply and in more detail on all of our finances this year. We focused her job description this year because there were too many things in her responsibility. So we removed some things about member and volunteers. We need all those things and it's been good, especially with the capital campaign, to have to time to focus on finances.

The choir and music program have been thriving this year. Our contract with Mary was for three Sundays a month but she rehearsed the choir almost every week, which is part of why they have been some wonderful this year. Music has been rich and varied. And the Music Committee has had to do a lot of work they have not done in the past; I am grateful for their thoughtfulness and positive engagement in the conversations this year.

At the end of March we hosted an Extern a student named Destiny Magnett from my alma mater. Many of you spent time with her describing your justice work and she came away inspired by what faith communities can do to be a positive force in the world. Thank you for your time supporting a student.

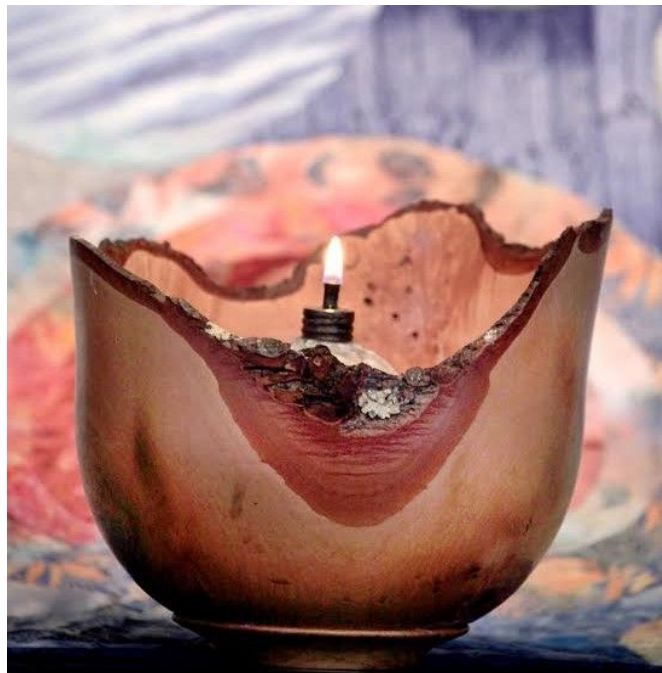
Thank you to the OutReach Team who connected us with the many local non-profits who are making a difference and who we got to support making that difference. And thank you for all the things they connected us to like volunteering at Seacoast Family Promise. Thank you to the people on the Social Justice Committee and all the ways they influence town and state decisions. Members of our congregation were instrumental on multiple items on the ballot in the election this spring – from LED lights (and all the behind the scenes work with Until) to the ordinance for the rights for all life. We have a powerful impact on the world.

We had some losses this year:

Joe Oldfield in August
Steve Hayes In November
Ingeborg Lock in November
Joyce Ferris in December
John Morgenthau in March
Joan Darlington in April

We had some joyful arrivals:

Arthur Francoeur was born in October
Elizabeth Joy Samuel was born in February



Board of Trustees Report to the Congregation

Members of the Board of Trustees (BoT) for 2018-2019: Jane Oldfield-Spearman, Chair, Jim Breeling, Treasurer, Jim Webber, Secretary, Jonathan Winsor, Roy Jones, Karen Patnaude, Janet Stephens, Cliff Sinnott, Holley Daschbach, Rev. Kendra Ford, ex-officio.

In addition to regular meetings on the second Thursday of each month, the BoT held a daylong retreat on March 30th. The Executive Committee of the BoT, comprised of Jane Oldfield-Spearman, Jim Webber, Janet Stephens and Kendra Ford, and Dawn Huebner, Chair of the Program Council, met monthly to coordinate the activities of the BoT and the Program Council and to plan agendas for both groups.

The design and placement of new signage outside the Sanctuary and the Parsonage are just the *first signs* of exciting things to come as we prepare to renovate the parish hall, kitchen and religious education space. On January 13th, the BoT held a special congregational meeting in order to seek approval to proceed with the renovation plan subject to modification based on construction bids and available funds from the Building Renovations Capital Campaign. The approval of the motion to move forward authorized the Renovation Committee to proceed with putting the job out to bid. The goal is to begin construction in June, 2019. In the winter months, members of the BoT conducted a search for a space in which to hold worship services during the renovation. We are very grateful to Phillips Exeter Academy for offering us the use of Phillips Church for our Sunday services from September through December, 8:00am to 1:00 pm. Plans to move out of the spaces that will be impacted by the renovation are being coordinated by the Renovation Committee and the Program Council. Volunteers have been mobilized to sort through storage areas in preparation for packing up this spring. The Renovation Committee and all of its working groups must be recognized for their hard work, dedication and enthusiasm this year.

The BoT hosted one social event: a coffee hour pancake breakfast with the Junior Youth Group in September. When nominations for the Ethics in Action Award were received we had a particularly difficult choice to make and decided to recognize two members: Lisa Bunker and Herb Moyer. Congratulations!

The BoT revised several policies this year, including the Use of Space and Rental Policy, and procedures to be followed in the event of an active shooter situation. We revised the letters of understanding to be clear on the responsibility for all renters to abide by our Weapons Policy and Safe Congregations Policy.

We have worked to improve the way the BoT communicates with the congregation about our initiatives and goals. To this end, we have sent out monthly messages to members and friends. The Stewardship Committee surveyed the congregation to get feedback on how we can better run the annual fund drive. They used the results to inform the campaign, holding an informational meeting at the start where representatives from different committees spoke about how monies are utilized to make our community thrive.

We have also increased transparency concerning the budget formulation process and invited everyone to observe the BoT budget deliberations meeting on April 18th. Our efforts to get out

information early and often about the stages of the annual fundraising and budgeting process have been received very positively.

An initiative to engage members in using their gifts at FUUSE led to the formation of a workshop called “Know Yourself as a Leader” led by Mollie Allen with assistance from Jim Webber in February. More adult education opportunities and leadership trainings have been proposed for next year.

The Minister’s Annual Review was held on March 21st during which we helped to formulate the Minister’s goals for next year. At our Annual BoT Retreat, we spent the morning developing a Board Vision, with the Mission Statement in mind, that will guide our work next year. After a process led by Jim Webber, we came up with the following Vision Statement:

All who walk through our doors become part of a spiritual community brimming with hope, inspiration and renewal to empower us to be agents of change in a world of crisis. We create this community together, celebrating our interdependence. We will act with intention about all parts of congregational life including growth, meeting challenges and our commitments to one another. We will be public about our work-engaging, hopeful, playful, effective.

Everyone present affirmed that this statement described a desired future; that it was motivating; that it was spiritual in nature; and that it was the appropriate framework for goal setting. The goals for next year that we developed with this Vision in mind are the following:

1. Managing Renovation
 - a. Financial management and oversight
 - b. Add/alternate decisions-scope and change
 - c. Assess need for additional funds
2. Care and connection of Congregation during Renovation
 - a. Logistics on Sundays and beyond
 - b. Emotional/community cohesions
 - c. Communications
3. Increasing visibility in the community
 - a. Roadside signs/buttons
 - b. Publicity/public relations
 - c. Active Hope, Celebration of new space
4. Planning for growth
 - a. Investigate Future capital campaigns
 - b. Ways of accommodating growth in the Sanctuary, e. g., Sunday Cafe

Respectfully submitted by Jane Oldfield-Spearman for the Board of Trustees.
April 25, 2019

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee consists of three members: one appointed by the Board of Trustees, Leroy Jones , one member of the Finance Committee appointed by that Committee, Jim Morriss and one at-large member, Sean Tierney.

The Personnel Committee oversees the employment of the church staff, excepting the Minister, including advertising for positions, maintaining job descriptions, initiating staff evaluations, and negotiating terms and agreements relating to compensation, benefits, and employment status. The Committee solicits input on these matters from relevant committees as appropriate. The Committee drafts policies at the request of the Board of Trustees for their review and approval. We meet the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 in the parsonage. We are pleased to welcome a new member to the committee, Bruce Menin and board member Janet Stephens. We would also like to thank Roy for his patience and dedication to the committee.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee during this fiscal year has consisted of Miranda Lam, Jim Breeling (treasurer), Dan Garvey, Jim Morriss, and Doug Stephens (chairperson). The Investment Committee (Lam, Morriss, and Stephens) operates as a subcommittee of Finance and manages the FUUSE investments in our Endowment Fund (long-term fund) and the General Purpose Fund (emergency reserve).

During the year the Investment Committee (IC) streamlined the FUUSE General Purpose Fund (GF) to be 30-30-40% (cash, stock funds, bond funds) to maximize safer diversity in the course of a volatile 2018. This proved to be helpful when encountering the market corrections in October-December. The IC also significantly shifted its investment percentages in the Endowment Fund to hold now a large percentage in social index stocks, reflecting more closely the UU principles. The Endowment Fund is anticipated to eventually generate revenue from earnings that will assist in meeting staff salary and benefits. We anticipate that we will be able to realize that goal in the coming years, but not yet.

The overall Finance Committee (FC) met four times, along with several email meetings, to monitor the rate of cash flow during the fiscal year as compared to the expenses. Our FY2019 budget projected a deficit of approximately \$11,000 by the end of June, 2019. As of May it appears that we will come in slightly better than that, but still a deficit. It is important that all members realize that budget deficits ultimately require us to take from the GF to make ends meet. The GF currently exists for emergency capital repairs and improvements.

An example to illustrate the above is that in formulating the FY2020 budget after our stewardship drive for the annual operating budget the FC was facing a \$21,000+ deficit in the budget formulations. We suggested the idea of transferring \$10,000 from our General Fund as a revenue source, as well as eliminating our line item for cleaning services for the church and parsonage buildings (\$8,900). Both of these are painful choices but can be viewed as necessary in this coming year. We trust that the congregation will rebound in its abundance for subsequent years.

After more than ten years, Jim Breeling will be retiring as the FUUSE Treasurer, replaced by Dan Garvey (assisted by Miranda Lam). His job has been challenging, especially in our lean times. We are indebted to him. Respectfully, Doug Stephens, Finance Chair

Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee is grateful to the FUUSE community for money donated to the Annual Fund, the Capital Campaign, Special Fundraising initiatives, and Legacy Giving.

Capital Campaign Fund

A Capital Campaign fund was executed in the previous fiscal year (beginning in the fall of 2017) for renovations to the FUUSE building facility. At the commencement of the Capital Campaign Fund drive during the spring of 2018, 88 individuals and families pledged more than \$480,000.

Between July 2018 and May 2019, \$134,000 was donated to the Capital Fund, bringing the total gifts collected to date at more than \$388,000.

Annual Fund

In September of 2018, Stewardship decided to conduct research around the Annual Fund. This research information was gathered through an online survey and focus groups with interested congregants.

In December of 2018, an online survey was completed by 54 individuals who responded to a broadly distributed email. Results of the survey were provided to FUUSE community members by email link and a copy was posted on the bulletin board in the community room.

Two separate focus groups were held during January and February of 2019 involving online survey participants. The results of the survey were discussed amongst attendees; new ideas, past fundraising experiences, and opinions were shared.

The Annual Fund campaign, entitled The Joy of Giving (inspired by an online survey participant's comment), kicked off Sunday March 10, 2019.

The Annual Fund campaign execution reflected comments and ideas expressed during research initiatives, and included the following fundraising efforts:

1. A dedicated postal mailer. A cover letter and annual fund pledge form was mailed to 220 individuals and families who have provided gifts or pledges to FUUSE in recent years.
2. Sunday service for raised awareness. On four sequential weeks in March, individuals spoke during Sunday services about what motivates their generosity to FUUSE.
3. Email communications. On four sequential Tuesdays in March, the FUUSE community received emails about the Joy of Giving campaign, all of which included a link to the Annual Fund pledge portal.
4. An all church meeting. On March 17, the Stewardship Committee convened and lead an all-church meeting. Individuals from congregation groups, Ministry (Reverend Kendra Ford), Religious Education (Director of Religious Education) LJ Francoeur and committee members), Music (Nancy Fiske and committee members), and Administration (Administrator Yvonne Zinicola) could describe current activities and those for next year.

5. Phone calls. Thursday April 3, individuals from the Board of Trustees and Stewardship Committee made phone calls to FY2019 pledgers who had not yet pledged a FY2020 gift.
6. Targeted email. On Tuesday April 9, an email was sent to FY2019 pledgers who had not yet pledged a gift for FY2020.
7. New member education. Donna Jensen participated in the Pathways class to discuss stewardship aspects of FUUSE membership.
8. Personal asks. As appropriate, Annual Fund gifts were discussed with individuals and FUUSE groups.

The results of this year's Annual Fund campaign (as of May 13) are shown in comparison to recent years.

	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
Pledging units	126	123	116
Mean	\$1,671	\$1,658	\$1,777
Median	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200
Range	\$50-\$13,000	\$50-\$13,000	\$50-\$13,500
Total	\$210,512	\$203,991	\$206,091

*Stewardship data at conclusion of annual fund campaigns.

Special Fundraising

Last year, the Special Fundraising Committee disbanded. As the Board of Trustees liaison to Stewardship and past Special Fundraising Committee member, Karen Patnaude drove several fundraising activities with the assistance of many generous volunteers.

Yard Sale

A yard sale was supported by donations of furniture, books and clothes from the entire congregation. The sale was scheduled for Saturday October 13th. Despite the rainy day many hardy souls came to peruse and buy items from the FUUSE garage and under 2 tents. There were many items left over, so FUUSE volunteers continued the sale to the next day after Sunday services. Profit for the weekend was \$887. Leftover items were donated to Wonderland Thrift Shop and the Epileptic Foundation.

This event was widely support by FUUSE congregants and the volunteers who assisted with sales are far too many to list, but Pat Moore and Karen Patnaude were integral to the event's planning and execution.

Wreath Sale

Donna Morgado's wreath sale tradition was continued for the third consecutive year in November 2018. FUUSE volunteers decorated whimsical wreaths and sold them the week after Thanksgiving. A great turnout of people participated in the cheer and merrymaking, providing a great sense of community. Fifty three wreaths were sold decorated and a few were sold undecorated to the public and the FUUSE community. The net profit for the initiative was \$1,086.47. Thanks to the many people who organized this event, as well as those who came out for decorating fun, not to mention those who purchased wreaths to support FUUSE.

Auction

With the uncertainty of when the FUUSE renovation project might begin, auction planning was delayed until March but finally scheduled for May 4. Friends and members, as well as community vendors donated services, talents, and treasures. This included stays at vacation homes, a tree house adventure, a New Hampshire State House tour, and dinners were amongst the 102 items available for bidding. Wine, cheese, and hors d'oeuvres were served, as well as tasty desserts. Twenty five bid cards were issued to attendees, which included a few individuals who bid by proxy.

Paul Kuliga, Maggie Kuliga, Jen Morriss, Merci Voorhees, and Ren Kuliga charmingly provided event hospitality. The live auction was led by Bob Moore with the assistance of Holley Daschbach. Check-in and check-out was facilitated by Kristin O'Gorman and Karen Patnaude. Special thanks are extended to Pat Moore and Cliff Sinnott for set-up and clean-up duties, and to Jane Oldfield-Spearman for donating beverages.

The net profit for the event was \$4,075.

In total, \$6,048 was raised through special fundraising events during FY2019.

Legacy Giving

FUUSE's Endowment Fund is available for gifts to support the ongoing work of FUUSE into the future. Donations to the Endowment Fund come from members and friends who have bequeathed gifts in their wills, from gifts made in memory of members and friends, and from gifts that are unrestricted gifts or specifically designated for the Endowment.

This year the FUUSE community unfortunately lost two long-term members who passed away: Ingeborg Lock and John Morgenthau. Gifts of \$450 were made in their memory. In addition there were 2 unrestricted gifts of \$2,250, so total contributions to the Endowment Fund were \$2,700.

Respectfully submitted, Donna Jensen (Annual Fund), Wayne Loosigian (Capital Campaign), Stephanie Marshall (Legacy Giving) and Karen Patnaude (BoT and Special Fundraising)

Property

Raking and hauling leaves, shoveoing and blowing snow, mowing the lawn are ongoing tasks accomplished by volunteers. Sign ups have been organized this year by Doug Stephens. Late last winter it was discovered that some squirrels had chewed some wires in the dining room china cabinet. The wires were repaired and the entry hole in the attic was sealed and a one way door was installed. (They can go out but cannot come in).

The garage is now under control due to the efforts of the usual suspects. Lesson learned: Don't keep everything! The Property workbench in the Church cellar was cleaned and moved in preparation for the renovation. Lots of bits and pieces were recycled. Eighty cans of old paint were removed, solidified and disposed. Current paint was saved. Three new members are coming on board the property committee, details to follow.

Respectfully submitted by Jonathan Winsor, Chairman



Renovations Committee

Members: Deb Merrick, Dave Michelsen, Denise Short, Gwen Kenney, Nancy Fiske, Jed Waddell, Will Urban and the BoT liaison, Cliff Sinnott

The Renovations Committee has had a very busy and exciting year meeting every other week and sometimes more moving ever closer to the start of building renovations this summer. Summer–early Fall 2018

- Signed a contract with Greg Colling of Merrimack Design Architects (MDA)
- MDA produced existing condition plans of the building, MDA researched zones, codes and regulations and met with town and state officials involved
- Explored different options for the right plan and also met with staff and committees
- Attended Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) training
- Put together one plan with all the options for preliminary pricing
- Based on preliminary pricing, a design was decided upon that identified aspects of the plans we would keep and marked things we would like to do if we can afford it as Add Alternates. Some of these items are the lift from the lower level to the sanctuary level, redoing the front porch and steps and new custom front doors, a folding classroom partition, and window restoration

Fall -Winter 2018–2019

- Presented the plans to the congregation and the BoT for comment and approval
- A subcommittee formed to discuss the kitchen details and another for garden design
- Plans were finalized and sent out to consulting and engineering services

Spring 2019

- Full bid sets sent out to potential contractors
- Plans forming with Program Council for moving everything out of the construction areas.
- Pre-Bid meeting with potential contractors to walk through the building and plans and offer Q&A time
- Contract to be approved and signed by the BoT when a contractor is chosen
- Big move day of everything in the construction areas including what can be salvaged of the organ before demolition and construction can begin. Construction to begin in June.

Program Council

The Program Council is just now completing its first year with a new model proposed by incoming chair, Dawn Huebner. The aim of the new model was to get more people to the table so Program Council might more fully represent the wide array of goings-on at FUUSE. We have gone from having a small handful of people, including staff, to upwards of 20 people at any given meeting. Representatives from the Board, Outreach, Social Justice, Green Sanctuary, Connections, Religious Education, Music, the Contra Dance, First Friday Coffee House, Small Group Ministries (when they are in existence), Mindfulness, Knitting Ministry, Artists, Welcoming Circles and more now routinely come to Program Council meetings. The trade-off – to make it feasible for such a large

group to attend – was moving from monthly meetings to approximately bi-monthly. By all accounts, the pros of our new model far outweigh the cons.

In addition to experimenting with a new model, the Program Council has developed a Protocol clarifying the process for proposing new programs. FUUSE members and standing committees can conceive, plan, schedule and execute new programs without formal Program Council approval. Programs or events proposed by FUUSE friends (non-members proposing programs on their own rather than through a committee) will be reviewed for approval. In either case, the Program Council is available to vet ideas and offer practical suggestions to those proposing new programs or events.

The main function of this year's Program Council has been to communicate the various program-related activities at FUUSE and coordinate schedules. In our April meeting, we agreed to add consideration of the programmatic needs of the FUUSE community, and to attempt to fill those needs. A recent proposal for a new Adult Learning program – a cross between We the People and Adult RE – is an excellent example of identifying a need and attempting to creatively fill it. We look forward to the launching of this new initiative.

The Program Council was also behind the creation of The Buzz Before the Hum, a 5-minute period of FUUSE-related announcements before the hum of the singing bowl and the start of Sunday services. We expected the learning curve to be steep but in reality, the congregation has quickly gotten on board with quieting down in response to a piano riff and listening attentively to announcements about Contra Dances, Mandala-making, Active Hope, and other programs and events run by and open to our vibrant FUUSE community. There is a clear process in place for submitting announcements for The Buzz, with an announcement curator (Dawn Huebner) and a team of 4 Buzz-ers (Lisa Bunker, Bob Moore, Brad Robinson and Barbara Rimkunas). We expect to continue The Buzz into the new church year.

The Program Council responded enthusiastically to the Board's suggestion that this be a year of Joyful Celebrations, and a handful of committees stepped up to the plate to host. In true FUUSE form, Joyful Celebrations were uniquely interpreted to include potlucks, special Coffee Hours and in-the-sanctuary presentations/discussions celebrating everything from simply being together to democracy.

In recent months, the Program Council has worked with members of the Renovations Committee to coordinate the move and ensure a smooth transition to our new temporary home (wherever they may be). We are mindful of the need for creative solutions to space conundrums and join with the Board in a commitment to keeping committees functioning, programs running and our community together.

We will soon be celebrating the (as yet undisclosed) recipient(s) of the annual Paul Beswick Award, and are in the midst of planning an end-of-church-year picnic/potluck/gathering of some sort to mark the end of the 2018/2019 church year and say good-bye, for now, to our soon-to-be-transformed building.

It has been my pleasure to serve as chair of the Program Council, an active, diverse, effective group serving the program-related needs of FUUSE, and serving them well.

Dawn Huebner, Program Council Chair

Active Hope

The FUUSE Active Hope Group has been active this year in many ways- sponsoring a climate corner at coffee hour- participating in Neal Ferris's "Natural Religion as the Climate Changes"-conducting multiple sessions of Joanna Macy's practice "The Truth Mandala." Current members include Kendra Ford, Sylvia Foster, Stephanie Marshall, LeRoy Jones, Karen Merriman, Heather Crowley, Joan Pratt, Carol Zickell, Jim Webber, and Coleen O'Connell (Revered teacher). "Yes, we experience practices dealing with living with unpleasant uncertainties" as Kendra would delicately put it.

We have learned that there is a multiplicity of ways of addressing climate change in our committee, our congregation and in our community. Also, there are different ways of knowing. Favorite authors/theorists cited during the year: Joanna Macy, Charles Eisenstein, Jean Huston, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Lynne McTaggart, Bill McKibben, and David Wallace-Wells. There are different levels of change: individual, group and system. There are different paths of change such as political, moral, creative, analytical and mythical. These differences can be pictured as a patchwork quilt or, perhaps, as a mixed salad with a dressing of spiritually-appropriate, systems thinking. We help members discover their passion and preferred approach. We are active. We are hopeful. Please join us in creating a climate for change.

Or as Nancy Clover Glock-Grueneich urges:

1. Change the Story, Change the Future
2. Change Our Ways: Find Solutions and Take them to Scale
3. Move the Money: Divest, Reinvest, Realign
4. Change the Rules: Make all Sectors Part of the Solution
5. Change the Politics: Stop Fighting Each Other, Start Solving Our Real Problems
6. Change the Game: Shape the Systems that Shape Us
7. What We Can do: Connect through Strategic Citizen Action, Community TV series available at: nglock@post.harvard.edu

Aesthetics Report:

This has been a quiet year for our committee. We were consulted over a few small items like the placement of a banner in the Community Room for Social Justice, fixing some drapes in the parsonage and continuing to oversee the bulletin boards in the Community Room.

We have voiced that we will be there to assist the Renovation Committee when the need arises in the upcoming year. As the church year closes, we will help with the cleanup of the paint area in the church basement and the storage of the acoustic panels, bulletin boards and various plaques.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Patnaude.

Artivists

As a reminder – the mission statement is: "Artivists for Social Change" is a group of local artivists who create art and projects that speak to the soul to educate, inspire, and transform societal divisiveness into re-connection, with a view to a more uplifting future for all.

In 2018 the activists created a varied collection of pop-up plays and poems and performed them as a group in the show "Persistence" at a FUUSE CoffeeHouse in June 2018.

A third mini-mural was created in our series, entitled "Women Writers of Exeter" which was displayed at the town literary festival in April 2019. The fourth and final panel in the series was donated to Exeter High School's ELO club. Two students created a mural depicting three black men from Exeter's history, which was also displayed and discussed at the Exeter LitFest. Both murals will make their way around town this summer.

Caring Committee/Visiting Ministry

The Caring Committee exists to help FUUSE members with situations of temporary crisis or transition, due to difficult events such as illness or death, or in the case of happy events such as a new child in the family.

We consist of six to eight members who rotate being "on duty" each month, who send out cards, arrange for meals, or in the sad event of a FUUSE member's passing, organize and carry out a reception at the church after the memorial service.

Meals (and occasional visits or rides) are provided by members of the committee as well as a long list of members and friends of the larger FUUSE community who have volunteered to be called when the need arises. We meet as a committee with Kendra once a month, including in the summer (without Kendra). We have combined our meetings with the Visiting Ministry Group of four members whose mission is similar to our own.

We have a very small budget which is used for stamps and cards. Any expense incurred for memorial service receptions is absorbed by committee members or the wider community.

During the church year of May 2018 through March 2019, we made and delivered 56 meals and sent out 86 cards. There were 12 visits made to ill or bereaved members and the Visiting Ministry members made approximately 36 visits. We provided transportation on three occasions.

In addition we held two "Soup Making Parties" where we gathered to make and freeze soup for our outreach when the need arises at the last minute. We were joined by other members of the greater FUUSE community for this project.

The year brought much sadness with the passing of beloved members and friends: Ingeborg Lock, Joyce Ferris and Steve Hayes. They are missed more than we can possibly articulate.

Respectfully submitted by Amy Robinson, March 28, 2019

Caring Committee Members: Gwen Kenney, Jane Oldfield-Spearman, Helen Kruppa, Amy Robinson, Ginny Berrien, and Charlotte Ramsay

Visiting Ministry Members: Gail Nostrom, Joan Pratt, Marylee Welling, Stephanie Marshall

Connections Committee

The Connections Committee seeks to support the FUUSE mission to build a caring, inclusive community by welcoming newcomers, assisting with the transition from newcomer to member and providing meaningful activities that increase our connections to one another.

We meet monthly, usually on the third Sunday of the Month. We mentor newcomers to FUUSE, assist in the planning of the New to UU and Pathways classes that orient newcomers to our church and our faith, hold a Newcomers' Tea once or twice a year and welcome new members at a New Member Service held each spring.

The Committee is comprised of 6 members:

Karen Patnaude
Marylee Welling
Bill Downall
Sujeong Shinn
Carrie Thomas
Jan Stephens

Accomplishments this year included staffing the Welcoming Table in the Community Room following the Sunday service each week, assisting with the New and Renewing Pathways classes, completing the Congregational Welcoming Handbook for newcomers, holding a Newcomers' Tea in the fall, and overseeing the design and installation of new signage for the church and parsonage.

This year we welcomed nine new members to FUUSE: Marilyn King, Harry King, Daniel Garvey, Kathryn Nelson, Lindsay Sonnett, Malcolm Sonnett, Bruce Menin, Diana Eddins-Wiggin, and Amy Farnham

Respectfully Submitted by Jan Stephens, Chairperson
04/29/19

Contra Dance

The FUUSE Contra Dance was held eight times this year, on the 2nd Saturday of every month except July and August and without May and June due to the upcoming church renovation. As always, our regular caller was Laurie Barr and music was provided by Stone Soup. FUUSE member Anne Tufts filled in as guest caller on a few occasions, and not surprisingly did a fabulous job every time. FUUSE members or at least FUUSE regulars Cindy Harnett, Tessa Hartnett, and Brad Robinson comprised the band, along with friends Jim Dicarolo, David Moore, Ruby Dicarolo, Sadie Dicarolo, John Blackwell and the occasional PEA student. This year we worked hard at advertising the dance on social media, Contra Dance websites, signage around town, and in the Buzz-Before-the-Hum. In general, attendance at the dance was up, averaging 20 or so people a night, though in January only three people came so we ended up going home after the band jammed for half an hour or so. On two occasions so many people showed up, that I was worried we would run out of room. On both of those occasions, we had to split the dancers into two separate contra lines and they barely fit in the Parish Hall. A number of FUUSE members came semi-regularly,

which was wonderful, but for the most part, participants came from the contra dancing world and not from the congregation.

With the upcoming church renovation, we have begun discussing a new home for ourselves at the Robinwood Center in Stratham. This will initially be entertainment provided for the workshop participants that will be held regularly in this new space. Assuming we all find this to be a good fit, the Robinwood Center is interested in hosting the Exeter Contra Dance – either temporarily or permanently depending on how everyone feels. This means that we may or may not be returning to FUUSE after the renovations. If we do not come back for the monthly dance, I am hoping that we can still participate in the FUUSE community by providing music and dance on a less regular basis. This will all be decided during the fall of next year. ~ Brad Robinson

The First Friday Coffeehouse

The First Friday Coffeehouse is a monthly coffeehouse held in The Community Room on the first Friday of every month. The coffeehouse is organized by featuring either a poet or a musician in the first hour of the evening which starts at 7 PM. The featured performance is followed by an open-mike. Featured performers in the 2018-2019 season included singer-songwriter Steve Dionne of Decatur Creek, singer-songwriter Artty Raynes, The Sidewalk Boys, Better Late Than Never, singer-songwriter Stew Aaronson, singer-songwriter Joel Glenn Wixon, NH Youth Poet Laureate Cate Dixon, and blues singer and guitarist Bob Halperin. During the renovations period this coming 2019-2020 season, the coffeehouse plans to be held at The Red Brick Church (Baptist Church) on the corner of Elm Street and Front Street next to the Exeter Historical Society. The hours of the coffeehouse typically run from 7-9:30 PM. Donations are suggested at the door and are shared with the featured performers if they've traveled a distance and also with FUUSE. For more information, contact Bob at bmoore628@comcast.net.

Green Sanctuary Committee

Green Sanctuary members have been working on our signature projects as well as collaborations and celebrations.

Following Rev. Emeritus Neal Ferris' sermon "Natural Religion in A Time of Global Warming", congregants joined a collaboratively planned "Talk Back" and follow up discussion "Celebrate into Action". Social Justice Committee members, Active Hope group and other church members and friends joined us to discuss ideas on steps to help heal our suffering planet. Next steps included to participate in elections, speak with town officials about the proposed "right to a healthy climate" legislation, plant trees, commune with the natural world, join the Great Bay Stewards, stay grateful, express your grief, and stop using plastics.



- Meg Schoene organized first-Sunday **Beach Cleanups** in Seabrook

with Phillips Exeter Partners

and some warmly welcomed old and new members of FUUSE. We cleared 500 pounds of trash making it safe for seabirds and other animals to feed without plastic, Styrofoam and cigarette filters in their paths.

- Merci Voorhees continues to inspire us with her **Green Tips** to live our faith through the Seventh Principle.



- Anne Tufts joined Merci and many other helpers to host the eco-friendly **Holiday Shopping Table** with the Junior Youth Group taking in the cash and wrapping gifts. Thanks to FUUSE members and friends, we contributed \$200 to the church operating budget.

- Rev. Kendra and visiting Joanne Macy apprentice **Coleen O'Connell** helped us collaborate with the FUUSE Active Hope group for another workshop based on "The Work That Reconnects" – expressions of grief and gratitude empowering participants to heal and to do the work of healing the planet.

- We continue collaborations on **Skip the Plastic** initiatives in our school cafeterias.

- Our meetings with the **Seacoast Interfaith Stewards of the Earth** involves collaborating on local projects such as a fundraiser to stop the Granite Bridge Pipeline with its proposal to lay miles of fracked gas lines and holding tanks that threaten our ecosystem and the people living near the planned construction.

- We hosted a Coffee Hour letter-writing campaign for correspondence with Governor Sununu thanking him for his willingness to appoint an offshore wind energy task group and also to our lawmakers in Washington for supporting **A Green New Deal**.

The following members played direct and/or supporting roles in this work: *Renay Allen, Cathy Chandick, Mary Doane, Frank Orifici, Stephanie Marshall, Meg Schoene, Cliff Sinnott, Mercedes Voorhees, Chair Sylvia Foster*. Thank you also to Dan Hummel and David Weber for their participation in our Beach Cleanups.

Knitting Ministry

The Knitting Ministry which has been meeting for the last 13 years, met every 2nd and 4th Monday from September to June and enjoyed evenings of purposeful and thoughtful knitting on comfort shawls. The group mainly consisted of 11 women, Merci Voorhees, Jennifer Morriss, Marylee Welling, Janet Szarmach, Meg Schoene, Dottie Bragdon, Karen Patneau, Pat Moore, Holley Daschbach, Ceci Haynsworth, and Anne Tufts with other women dropping in when their schedules allowed. While knitting discussions were UU oriented, often lively, but always meaningful and supportive of our mission to make shawls for our UU friends and members who were in need of comfort. As of this report the Knitting Ministry has given 9 shawls to the church family. This year we also contributed our knitting of hats and mittens to the Give It Away agency who would give them to homeless teenagers in the area. The Ministry is sad to lose Janet Szarmach a long time member of the group as she moves on to Mt Desert Island in Maine. ~ Anne Tufts

Music Committee

Chair: Nancy Fiske. Members: Janis Tierney, Cliff Sinnott, Melanie Shields, Peter Waltz, Merci Voorhees, Jed Waddell, and Bill Downall. Adhoc Members: Mary Doane, Kendra Ford, and the FUUSE Choir members.

The Music Committee has been busy updating the Music Director job description for both FY 2019 and FY 2020. Due to the constraints of the position being 12 hours per week, our Music Director, Mary Doane, was only contracted for 30 of the 41 Sunday services this year from September to June, meaning she was unable to be present or coordinate the music of our worship services for 11 services. This challenge was met head on by our hard working committee of volunteers this year as we orchestrated the selection of musicians and leaders to provide the welcoming music, hymns, special music, offertory music, recessionals and music for the continuity of 9 worship services, so there would be music in our sanctuary 4 Sundays of the month. We did have two months with five Sundays, with no music on the 5th Sunday. The Committee additionally orchestrated the music for both Christmas Eve services which were not in the budget.

Much of our time was spent promoting the half time position we felt we needed after a close look at how a music director spends time providing music, both the performance observed on Sundays and the preparation and coordination time. We also developed a plan for how we might function if the position could be increased to an average of 15 hours per week. The Committee spent much time communicating with the Finance Committee, Personnel Committee and the BOT to provide information about what was minimally needed to have continuity and stability in the music that permeates our worship services on Sundays, and our need to include Christmas Eve in the budget.

The choir has met weekly on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 for a brown bag supper and rehearsal from 7-8:30. We have welcomed new members and have been able to sing four-part music with a balanced choir of many voices, and the enthusiastic, talented, and creative leadership of Mary Doane. The choir sings two Sunday per month.

The Music Committee has had a voice on the Renovation Committee and helped clarify acoustic and space needs. We have also made plans for moving the piano, hymnals, and choir music during the renovation along with finding a place the choir can meet for rehearsals during construction.

We dedicate ourselves to providing a high quality of music on Sundays because we believe it is a major reason why, after people walk in the door, they come back again.

Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee is happy to report that we have had another successful year through donations to the monthly Give It Away offerings and through our wonderful volunteers, giving of their time and efforts, for a variety of causes.

- October brought the annual community wide CROP walk. We had approximately 20 FUUSE walkers participate and \$2036.00 was collected through our October GIA.
- 10 Thanksgiving food baskets were gathered for 10 needy families for the SAU 16 area. A total of 140 families benefited from this wonderful program through the Exeter School system. We also provided 1 additional basket for the SFP families.
- 50 seniors from Meals On Wheels Secret Santa project were given holiday gifts
- Ongoing food donations are collected for End 68 Hours of Hunger SAU 16 and smaller amounts for the CAC food pantry. We decided to give specific items to be collected each month and have found this has increased the food amounts collected.
- Warm clothes and boots have been collected all year for the Run Away Youth program.
- Over 50 FUUSE volunteers helped shelter, feed and assist homeless families through Seacoast Family Promise partnering with Exeter Christ Episcopal Church.

FUUSE has generously given over **\$12,527.00**, so far for this church year, to support those in need in our community through the Give-It-Away program every third Sunday. We have been very successful in having guest speakers join us on GIA Sunday to explain their wonderful programs. This year's recipients have been:

- Homeless Youth/Runaway Program
- CROP Walk
- Seacoast Family Promise
- Safe Place and Crossroads House
- CAC/St. Vincent de Paul food pantry
- Gift of Warmth/Fuel Assistance through Rockingham Community Action
- Minister's Discretionary Fund
- One Sky Community Services
- Connor's Climb
- Blue Ocean Society

Once again, we can be proud of the difference FUUSE has made as we join together with other services, to help those in need in our larger community.

Personal Mandala Workshop led by Mollie Allen and Heather Crowley:

On 4/13/19, 12 FUUSE members and 1 person from the wider Exeter community came together to learn about mandalas, the Tao, Eastern philosophy, synchronicity, personality type, and Jungian psychology. Participants were able to view mandalas from different religious and cultural traditions and created their own personal mandala for further personal reflection and meditation. \$135 was raised for FUUSE. (artwork on back cover by Deb Merrick)

Religious Education(RE) Children's Programming/Family Ministry

Director of Religious Education/Family Ministry: Linsey-Jean Francoeur; joined by Emily Samuels in April 2019. RE Committee: Alex Allen (chair), Jessica Michelsen, Michele Mainz, Anne Tufts, Emily Samuels (THANK YOU RE Committee - it has been a great year with your support!)

It's been a fun and busy year! A HUGE thank you goes out to the RE Committee this year, for stepping up and continuing to provide programming for our FUUSE children while LJ was away on maternity leave from November to February. They did a phenomenal job, and put many hours in to planning our programs, finding volunteers, and helping on Sundays. Thank you so much REC!!

After our retreat in the beginning of the church year, it was fun to work with the Board for the Annual Pancake Breakfast at church. Also in the fall, we raised money and participated in the CROP Walk for Hunger.

This year, we've settled into our "new normal", which has been that children spend the majority of the service IN worship with us all. We've developed worship service tools and supplements for both children and their parents to use, and will continue to enhance and add to these things as we move into next year! We thoughtfully planned a handful of "Whole Congregation" worship services that engaged children and youth in meaningful ways. Sometimes this meant quite a lot of planning and preparation was done, and this was particularly celebrated for our annual Solstice Service, when the RE Committee was responsible for this planning and collaboration and worked hard to make the service special and memorable.

We've stayed at the same average attendance as last year. We are, however, excited to report that we have been seeing an increase in consistency for attendance, which is wonderful on many levels!

This year, we added programming for 3 - 5 year olds. It was exciting to be able to follow through with this expansion and start engaging our preschoolers in their own UU identity and in learning about our principles and values.

Next year we will run OWL for our 7th and 8th graders, and we are also excited about reviving the Junior Youth Group. Our plans also include starting a Senior Youth Group that will be an ongoing Coming of Age Program, and we've been busy starting to plan for that!

Over the course of the church year, we have had a couple of Family Pizza Nights, and they were well attended and a lot of fun! We are also planning some Parent Nights, as a way for parents to feel supported and build connections to each other and to our faith. We'll end this year with a Family Picnic which will be a wonderful way to celebrate the upcoming summer and our fun church year!

Throughout the year, there was often an activity table in the Parish Hall during Coffee Hour. A big thank you Jim Webber for his enthusiasm and generosity in doing this! Kids had a lot of fun making buttons, hats, and more!

It's been an exciting year full of conversation, exploration, and togetherness. A HUGE thank you to the dedication and commitment of those on the RE COMmittee this year, and to ALL the volunteers who helped make our programming possible this year!

Joyfully, LJ Francoeur and Emily Samuels, Co-Directors of Family Ministry

FUUSE Retreat

After a year off the **Annual Church Retreat, the 10th**, was revived at Camp Huckins on the shores of Lake Ossipee with around 60 people of all ages attending, many returning people in addition to new families and adults. This event began on a Friday night and included gathering activities and community building games. Saturday workshops led by congregants included a challenge course, a small group ministry discussion, nature walks, intergenerational mountain bike ride, how families can have conversations together in the technology age, friendship and UU bracelets, Kids Music, and worship preparation for the Sunday outdoor service. Other happenings people enjoyed were evening campfires, talent/no talent show, informal discussions with each other and with the Minister, Tai chi on the beach, merry-go-round rides, talking, communal meals, sports field games, and swimming. The weekend concluded on Sunday with a service by the lake, one last swim, and travel home.

The Social Justice Committee (SJC)

SJC sponsored two events at FUUSE this year: a panel on ethical investing and a celebration of the culture of democracy. The first of these featured Debby Miller of the NH Community Loan Fund and Allison Pyott of Veris Investors. Though the focus was on individual efforts to align one's investments with one's deepest values, the discussion did also include thinking about investments by organizations, especially non-profits whose declared mission is ethical. The second event was a blend of respect for MLK Day and our delight that two members of FUUSE, Skip Berrien and Lisa Bunker, are now NH State Representatives (Skip was re-elected; Lisa is a first-termer). They both spoke, as did Kendra and David Weber (SJC chair). Music was provided by Bob Moore ("The House I Live In" and "This Land Is Your Land"), visuals by Herb Moyer, festive and evocative buttons by Jim Webber.

The Committee continues to consider the trade-offs between an in-house focus and a wide-ranging set of commitments. Among our members are several activists with deep attachments to other organizations. E.g., Pat Yosha serves on the board of the NHCLU, Joan Pratt on the board of the Southeast Land Trust of NH. In any case we have begun to organize a new program for FUUSE, tentatively called the Adult Forum, which is to offer monthly deliberative discussions once the congregation can return to its renovated building. In developing this program we plan to draw on the resources of the National Issues Forum, which is secular, but will also be mindful of the UUA's Seven Principles and the rich history of Unitarian and Universalist courageous ethical leadership. We hope that other members of the congregation will join us in planning this series, either to organize a single event or to oversee the evolution of the program.

Team FUUSEion Lego League

For the past 10 years, we have sponsored a *FIRST* LEGO League Team for children aged 9 -14 who are interested in "becoming tomorrow's innovators through imaginative thinking and teamwork." As sponsor the church covers the team's fees, supplies the equipment and houses the activity. Team membership is open to the community as a public service.

This year's coaches were Paul Wheeler of Epping and Dianne LeBlanc of Exeter, assisted by Jon DeWitt, our church member. They guided the team of 7-10 members in applying science, engineering and math concepts, plus a dose of imagination, to develop real-world challenges. This year's challenge was Into Orbit, a space challenge. They designed, built and programmed LEGO MINDSTORMS-based robots to perform self-directed "missions" on a playing field. They participated in two levels of state tournaments and had fun in doing so.

In the next Lego year starting in late August, the team will be meeting at the house of Ashley and Bert Lamb in Exeter while the church undergoes renovation. Sean Tierney will be Ashley's co-coach.

I would like to thank Dianne LeBlanc and Paul Wheeler for their coaching contribution to Team Fuuseion over the past several years.

Jim Webber, Team Godfather

We The People Committee Annual Report

The *We The People Lecture Series*, an area resource exploring topics at the intersection of current events, ethics, and religion, was founded in 2005 as a joint project of FUUSE, the Congregational and Episcopal churches in town, Phillips Exeter, and the Water St. Bookstore. Each founding group sends members to the organizing committee; FUUSE members currently serving include Debby Kanner, Pat Yosha, Renay Allen, and Lisa Butler.

We The People hosted eight events during our September-to-June 2018-2019 season, addressing varied topics such as mindfulness, "effective altruism," the refugee experience, the Poor People's Campaign, civic engagement, area farming and land stewardship, immigration issues in NH, and challenges to our democracy. Our attendance varies from 50 people to nearly over 200 and our mailing list is now over 300 names. As always, we welcome suggestions for future topics and presenters; please feel free to contact any of us with your recommendations or requests to join the mailing list.

Respectfully submitted, Lisa Butler, Committee Member

Welcoming Circle - we help make Sundays happen

Our Welcoming Circles continue to go well. We have 8 teams with approximately 10 people on each team who rotate throughout the year to provide warm and welcoming spaces on Sunday mornings filling roles of greeters, ushers, social hour, opener and closers. The team leaders have met twice this year to discuss schedules, volunteers and other topics.

This spring we introduced the leaders to the new training videos which will be used to teach team members about the various roles. Many, many thanks to Sarah DeWitt, Bill Downall and Jim Ellis for their assistance with these- they couldn't have happened without their help. Also thanks to Yvonne Zinicola who spearheaded this idea and saw it through. Everyone seems very excited about these- they will be a helpful tool.

Many thanks to our leaders for this year: Anne Tufts, Barbara Rimkunas, Cliff Sinnott, Dave Szarmach, Gwen Kenney, Jim Ellis, Kathy Beggin, Keturah Kreps, and Merci Voorhees. Heartfelt thanks to our retiring leaders: Cliff Sinnott, Kathy Beggin and Dave Szarmach (also co-founder of Welcoming Circle at FUUSE, a model that came out of "leap of faith). Thanks to all remaining to

lead next church year: Anne Tufts, Barbara Rimkunas, Gwen Kenney, Jim Ellis, Keturah Kreps and Merci Voorhees. Welcome aboard to our incoming leaders Margery Prazar and Kristin O’Gorman.

We have had some rotations of volunteers, some people moving off of teams, and new people joining teams. We are always looking for more people to become involved, so if you are interested in this, please contact us. We recommend it to everyone- it’s a great way to be with people and not too much time is required (about one Sunday every 2 months).

Respectfully submitted- ~ Gwen Kenney and Yvonne Zinicola

FUUSE Communications ~ Bill Downall and Yvonne Zinicola

Elvanto ChMS

FUUSE uses a Church Management System to do many things:

- Keep track of people
- Keep track of money, pledges, donations
- Organize groups and activities
- Plan worship services
- Organize volunteer assignments
- Create calendars and event entry
- Book rooms and buildings for events
- Provide a repository for church documents and minutes
- Provide a directory of church members and friends
- Deliver timely reports to the staff and committees about their goals and progress

... and more.

Our "ChMS" has been called simply Elvanto for the three years we have used it. Use of Elvanto ChMS by members and leaders in all of the areas listed above increased measurably during this church year. Training and workshop sessions have been held during the year for groups and individuals who felt the need to become more familiar with the Church Management System. Many "how to ..." videos and articles have been created, with links to them from the fuuse.elvanto.net landing page. More training will be offered in the coming year, especially on basics of logging in and editing your own profile, creating events on the calendar, communicating within your groups, and sharing plans for worship services.

In December, 2018, Elvanto merged with one of the largest online non-profit donation platforms, a company called "Tithe.ly." So whether you call it "Elvanto" or "Tithe.ly ChMS" or "chums," it's all the same thing, and you can find it at **fuuse.elvanto.net**. A few features are available to anyone without logging in, but to view the church member directory or add something to the calendar, you would need to log in.

The merger has resulted in lowered costs both for the ChMS, and also for the fees charged when people use online methods of donating. It also means the merged company has more resources for development and technical support.

Online Giving

Online giving helps the FUUSE office operate more efficiently. Among the benefits are:

- Prevention of data entry errors
- Savings of dozens of hours a year in data entry, check processing and physical bank deposits
- Better leveling of bank balances during the year
- Better privacy protection for donors

The way online giving works is that you set up your own funding source, such as a bank account or credit card, and instructions about how much money to send to FUUSE, for what purpose (Annual Fund, Capital Campaign, etc.) on what schedule. "Donate" buttons and links on the web page at ***exeteruu.org*** and on the ChMS at ***fuuse.elvanto.net*** lead to ways to set up your own giving plan.

In the past, many people have set up online giving to FUUSE through Mogiv, and a few years ago through Vanco. We hope to remain with "Tithe.ly Giving" for a longer period of time. Each change of provider has had some growing pains, but each change has also reduced costs, improved the experience for the givers, and improved the reporting and efficiency of systems for the FUUSE office.

FUUSE Directory

Two hundred forty-five of the adults who are part of FUUSE have given permission to be listed in the online FUUSE Directory at ***fuuse.elvanto.net***. The directory is only visible to FUUSEians who have logged in to the ChMS. Forty-five of those people have edited their profiles to share some short, biographical details about themselves. There are still fifty-nine adults who have not allowed themselves to be found in the directory. Thank you to the 40 or so who changed their status from "hidden" to "show" after a reminder was sent out in March. If you are one of those people still hidden and would like to be listed, log in and change your own profile privacy preference to "Show in Directory," or ask the office for help to include you.

The FUUSE Website and Social Media

Separate from the ChMS is the church's web page, ***exeteruu.org***. The web page is not just for active members and friends, but also for the world beyond FUUSE. More than half of people attending services at FUUSE for the first time learned about us beforehand through our website.

This year, for minimal costs (but with considerable volunteer time), we have:

- tightened security against hacking
- improved the display of photos and news items
- improved the speed at which pages load in your browser
- Improved organization of the audio podcasts of past sermons
- added resources for the choir to review and learn music

According to Google Analytics, in the 10 months from July, 2018, through April, 2019 about 14,000 pages were viewed by about 4,000 people. 86% of those people were estimated to be "new visitors" to the website. Among the most frequently used phrases typed into Google search bars that resulted in people visiting our web page were these:

- unitarian universalist
- unitarian universalism
- unitarian church exeter nh
- unitarian universalist church

- uu
- uu church
- exeter churches

The website provides a lot of "about us" information, shows the calendar, hosts video and audio recordings of past worship services (under the "Worship" menu), and provides links to related pages in Elvanto ChMS, or at the Unitarian Universalist Association, or other places.

Assistance by members and friends to help keep our web page fresh, accurate, up to date, and interesting is always welcome.

Social Media

FUUSE members and friends engage with each other often through the FUUSE **Private** Group on Facebook. The Group is used for lost and found, event announcements, family news (good and bad), requests for volunteer help, and other purposes. About two hundred times a month this year people have posted, commented, liked or otherwise reacted to items in the closed group. Administrators of the group have to approve membership of people who ask to join.

Meanwhile, a **public** Facebook page named First UU Society of Exeter is visible to anyone on Facebook, and shows up sometimes in the feeds for any people who are Facebook friends of those of us who post, comment, or like things on the FUUSE Page.

Our web page and our ChMS homepage both show Twitter messages ("tweets") from UU-related accounts. FUUSE continues to seek a volunteer who would make our own dormant Twitter account come to life, someone who would tweet or retweet regularly on behalf of FUUSE, and/or would create an Instagram presence for FUUSE.

Help Wanted - The communications team at FUUSE could more effectively reach newcomers and longtimers if we had some more digital-world volunteers. Of particular need are these:

- A **co-webmaster** (could start as an assistant webmaster!) -- Exeteruu.org is developed on the WordPress platform using the UUA Outreach "Theme for Congregations." The webmasters maintain the web page, back it up, keep it fresh, and occasionally troubleshoot problems. These people could also learn and help with Elvanto from an administrative perspective.
- A **graphic artist** -- There is always a need for fresh design elements and improvement of existing ones, and for logo/icons for activities and groups and calendars.
- **Authors** -- to write articles about happenings at FUUSE and keep content fresh and exciting
- **Social Media coordinator**-- to make the best use of our Facebook and Twitter account.
- **Content developers** - to add much needed explanation and detail to our website pages to keep them fresh and vibrant.

~ Bill Downall and Yvonne Zinicola

Community & Rental & Groups

We provided space for a minimal rental fee to six support groups providing a place place to reclaim their wholeness. Support to these groups is provided primarily from Yvonne Zinicola, the Administrator. The groups are:

- Tuesday evenings - Narcotics Anonymous (NA)
- Wednesday evenings - Self Management and Recovery Training (SMART)

- Thursday evenings - Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Al Anon (for family and friends of Alcoholics)
- Saturday mornings - Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
- **3rd Friday - Transgender Drop in Group held in the Parsonage at 6 PM.**

The following workshops were also provided space at FUUSE:

- **Mindfulness Meditation at FUUSE:** Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation led by Heather Crowley. 5 Week October Course – Finding Stillness in the Eye of the Storm, 13 total participants running Monday evenings from 5:45 – 7:15 pm in October. (Includes 10 participants that are not FUUSE members) By donation to cover printing costs, teaching hours and to support FUUSE - \$338 donated toward FUUSE rent.
- **Monthly drop in mindfulness meditation group – Sacred Pause Sangha:** Spiritual community designed to help support/encourage a personal daily at home meditation/mindfulness practice for spiritual growth and insight. Held once a month the last Sunday of the month from 3 – 4:15 in the community room. By donation to cover printing costs for handouts, teaching hours and to support FUUSE \$80 was donated to FUUSE to defray costs of space from May, 2018 through March, 2019

Administrative Office ~ submitted by Yvonne Zinicola, Administrator

Though this paragraph is short, the list of what together we achieve is long and is found often invisibly sprinkled in most of this report in the programs, Sunday services, finances, stewardship, and much more.

Our office serves as the nexus for many people, a vital web that interconnects many activities and a place where congregants and committees seek support and and resources. It's also our face for our community members who seek help, collaboration, resources or who wish to learn more about us.

Many thanks to our dedicated volunteers many, all who have worked in the office for more than three years: **Becky Beam, Karen Moyer, and Marylee Welling**

Also helping with coverage as needed has been, and both have been volunteering for more (maybe many more) than five years: **Jim Webber and Gwen Kenney**

**The dedication of employees and volunteers working together makes all things possible.
Thank you!!**





(Art by Deb Merrick)

FUUSE

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Exeter

Come into the circle of compassion, generosity, and vision. In this sanctuary, in this community, we remember that in the midst of the struggles in the world we have two things on which we can rely: our profound connection with all beings and with those things we believe deeply and bravely enough that we choose to act on them. Come into the circle where we find steadiness and presence.

~ Reverend Kendra Ford