
Calgary Unitarians

Annual Report 2020-2021

Minister's Report

Rev. Debra Faulk did not leave a minister's report upon her departure in May 2021

President's Report

Dear fellow members and friends of Calgary Unitarians,

It has been a long haul “getting back to normal” post COVID and I know that many of us thought that we would be fully back in our building now, operating as the type of faith community we were pre-COVID. Well, a bit more patience is required and indeed the “new normal” is most likely to be quite different from pre- Covid times.

Our tenants are gradually coming back to our building and services and events are slowly returning. Yes, we all must be double vaccinated and for now, we must all be masked. But at least we can start being together in person, safely. If you haven't yet come for a Sunday service, do consider joining us. We have spots for 42 people (pre-registration required), in total between Panabaker and Wickenden - properly distanced and masked. Come for the joy of being able to sing together again and to hear Jane Perry on our grand piano, and to hear Rev. Shelly give her sermon in person. Come for the pleasure of looking around and seeing members and friends you may not have seen in almost two years. While I so appreciate having the option of watching a service by Zoom, (thanks to our hard- working AV team), it is wonderful to be back together in person on Sunday mornings. Do come!

I know it has been tough during COVID to keep up momentum in our social justice efforts and I really applaud those Unitarians who have been actively participating in the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good. This has proven to be a great way for us to leverage our

social justice work in Calgary - all part of acting for a just and sustainable world. Check out the many Alliance interest areas you can get involved in at <https://www.calgarycommongood.org>. And if you have questions here, please give me a call.

I do hope that many of you have been attending some of our anti-racism CU Friday events and also the CUC forums on the anti-racism 8th principal proposal. There will be an important national meeting on November 27th to vote on this 8th principle. Additionally, Calgary Unitarians will have two town halls (by Zoom), on this 8th principle on November 21st and November 28th afternoons. It is time for us as a congregation to do more than lip service to anti-racism and to start being held accountable.

Part of taking action for social justice is to contribute financially to social justice causes that are in line with our priorities. We have restarted our 4 Others collection each Sunday beginning with this November and hope to feature more prominently the chosen organization and issue each month. Please be as generous as you can.

Your board will be working closely with the Transition Team and Rev. Shelly to prepare our congregation for our settled minister search. Plus, we will be recruiting for members to this key search team to find the right long- term minister for us. In addition, the board will be looking at (and sharing with the congregation) a building plan that the Moving Forward team is creating.

And board members are updating our policy manual and looking at spring bylaw changes too.

There are a number of open board positions available as of May 2021 so do please consider putting your name forward here. We are currently testing a reduced size of board - only 6 people versus the standard 8 as a means of freeing up people for other needed projects.

Submitted by Jane Ebborn, President

Finance Committee Annual Report, 2020-2021

Members: Leslie Buckle, John Collins, Eric Leavitt, Alan Waugh, Carol Waugh, Bob Willson.

Over the past year, the Finance Committee engaged in the following activities:

Financial Statement: Coordinated the preparation of the statement for the year ending July 31, 2021, recruited the reviewers, facilitated the review and helped prepare the statement package and remarks for presentation to the December Congregational Meeting.

Budget 2021-22: Developed the budget with input from and in cooperation with the Stewardship Committee and other committee chairs, and submitted a recommendation to the

Board of Trustees for presentation at the Spring Congregational Meeting, held via Zoom May 2, 2021. Planning the 2021-22 Budget prior to May 2021 was especially problematic due to the wild uncertainties of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.

Electronic Payroll System: Continued managing our contract with ADP Ltd. to provide automated payroll services for staff.

Pandemic Subsidy Program: Continued managing applications under the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. This program enables organizations to replace lost operating revenue caused by the pandemic in order to keep staff on payroll.

Rentals: Rental income was very low due to continuing pandemic-caused closure of the church building since mid March, 2020.

Roles and Responsibilities: Our bookkeeper, much of whose work is now computer-based, is able to do much work offsite - tasks including rental invoicing, payroll management, receiving online contributions and payments, and preparing online payments for authorizing by signing officers. Finance Committee members all contributed time and expertise in support of many tasks, such the CRA charity information filing, preparation of the Annual Financial Statement, monthly bank reconciliation, and weekly reviewing and posting of accounting entries.

Electronic banking: Our use of online banking services, initiated in late 2019, has been especially beneficial during the protracted COVID-19 pandemic when online giving has been encouraged during Zoom-based Sunday services and for fundraising events, such as the Co-op Gift Card program.

Church Credit Card: A credit card account for the church was initiated in late Spring 2021. This enables authorized staff and church volunteers to purchase church supplies, equipment, and services, such Zoom, without the need to put such purchases on their personal credit cards.

Submitted by Alan Waugh, Treasurer

CYRE (Children and Youth Religious Education)

Professional Development Completed by DRE Sheila MacMaster

- “Wellspring Sacred Arts” Oct 2020 to June 2021/Canadian Ministers and Religious Educators.
- “Dismantling Racism in Canada” November 2020

- “Exploring World Religions” September 2020 to May 2021
- Spiritual Direction October 2020 to June 2021
- LREDA Membership 2020/2021 (Liberal Religious Educators Association)

Weekly CYRE Online Classes/Events September 2020 to June 2021

- Sunday Service CYRE Happenings to keep families and the congregation connected.
- CYRE newsletter with class/event info, and themed at home activities for parents.
- Power Hour for Elementary children, Sundays at 1pm-2pm.
- Youth Class, Sundays at 2pm-3pm.
- Youth Cosmic Connections Game Night, Thursdays at 7pm with Edmonton Westwood Youth.
- Multifaith Calendar sales October to December to support Youth activities.

Young Adults: Monthly CU Friday Popcorn Theology/Game Nights (October 2020 to June 2021)

Children/Youth Classes: The curriculum for the 2020/2021 year focused on the pillars of UU values, spiritual self-care and multicultural/faith exploration, with a particular emphasis on connection.

- September
 - Pride and LGBTQ2+ inclusion
 - Exploring all the things we CAN do
 - Covenant Building
 - Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year
- October
 - Youth “HalloUUeen” Con October 2020
 - Popcorn Theology “Zootopia” exploring fears.
 - Indigenous Fall Gathering Traditions.
 - Day of the Dead: Honouring Ancestors and movie “Coco”.
- November
 - Popcorn Theology for Youth “Hotel Rwanda”.
 - Honouring Viola Desmond, Canadian inspiring change.
 - Importance of connection and sharing with our pets.
 - Diwali the Hindu Festival of Lights.
 - UU Chalica.

Children/Youth Classes: The curriculum for the 2020/2021 year focused on the pillars of UU values, spiritual self-care and multicultural/faith exploration, with a particular emphasis on connection.

- December
 - Dec 13th Winter Traditions All Ages Service “That Time of Year”

- Winter Holiday and Christmas Stories.
- Popcorn Theology for Youth: “A Wrinkle in Time”.
- Hanukkah.
- Solstice and Winter Traditions from around the world.
- January
 - Popcorn Theology “Moana”: know who you are.
 - Anti-racism and beloved community, supporting Black Lives Matter.
 - Scottish folktales.
 - Bahai faith traditions.
 - Emmas’ Revolution and songs of protest.
- February
 - Exploring risk, how to try new things and overcome obstacles.
 - Games to encourage connection and community.
 - Sustainable food solutions from our own homes to globally.
- March
 - Spring, nature in our own backyards and habitat for urbanized wildlife.
 - Proposed 8th Principle.
 - 7th Principle, interdependent web of existence in nature and friendship.
 - Sikhism and our UU faith.
- April
 - Easter Event: Egg and Flower Hunt in Minecraft for Children and Youth.
 - Poetry of protest, resistance and empowerment.
 - Special Guest Permeate, a social ecology and community gardening organization.
 - Ramadan and the Five Pillars of Islam.
- May/June
 - Youth Conference “CazUUM” May 2021.
 - Hellos and Goodbyes (preparing for Rev. Debra’s retirement).
 - Honouring Mother figures in our lives.
 - Buddha’s Birthday.
 - New Beginnings from new plants to baby animals.
 - 7 Grandfather Teachings - Indigenous.
 - The Wonder of Flowers.
 - Celebrating the start of summer.

Submitted by Sheila MacMaster, Director of Religious Education

Nominations Committee

The role of the Nominating Committee is to identify members to serve in the elected positions at UCC: on the Board of Trustees, as well as on three of the Church committees: Lay Chaplaincy Committee, Committee on Shared Ministry, and Nominating Committee. As of May 3, 2020, the Nominating Committee consisted of Liz Blackstock, Marie Collins and Randy Henderson.

The following positions were filled by the Annual General Meeting on May 3, 2020.

Board of Trustees		
Position	Name	Term
President	*Jane Ebborn	2020-2021
Vice-President	Conrad Ayasse	2020-2021
Secretary	Pam Rickey	2020-2021
Treasurer	*Alan Waugh	2020-2021
One Year Trustee	Position not filled	2020-2021
*Board Trustee	Leslie Robinson	2020-2023
*Board Trustee	*Alex Schumacher	2018-2021
*Board Trustee	Position Not Filled	2019-2022
Lay Chaplaincy Committee		Term
*Joan Riches		2017-2020
*Meredith Simon - Chair		2018-2021
*Margaret McRae		2019-2022
Committee on Shared Ministry		Term
*Judy Osborne		2019-2022
*Jim Washbrook (Chosen by COSM Committee)		2018-2021
Tamara Ryan (Elected)		2020-2023
Open		
Mary-Anna Louise Kovar (Chosen by Minister)		2020-2023
*Kathryn Burwash (Chosen by Minister)		2019-2022
Nominating Committee		
Liz Blackstock		
Marie Collins		
Position not filled		
Randy Henderson*		
*Continuing position		

You will note that on this slate, there are positions that remain unfilled. The Board, in consultation with the Nominating Committee wished to try to streamline the Board and Committee Membership in order to put less pressure on the membership to serve on committees, with the hope that people would be freed up and better able to take leadership roles on special projects and events.

The Nominating Committee wishes to express our appreciation to all who entertained our requests to fill these roles, to those who were honest about how and what they could commit to, and to those who happily accepted new challenges.

Respectfully submitted by Conrad Ayasse for the Nominating Committee,

Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM)

The mandate of the Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM) is to strengthen the quality of shared ministry within the congregation. CoSM ensures that the church and our minister are serving the Purpose of the Unitarian Church of Calgary, facilitates problem-solving in conflict situations, and supports the minister.

During the 2020 – 2021 church year, CoSM:

- Researched and prepared a bylaw change proposal to present to the congregation at the annual general meeting. The change was needed to support the approved Disruptive Behaviour Policy. Approval of the change was given by congregational vote May 2, 2021.
- Completed the process of creating a Right Relations Covenant which was presented in its final draft at the Dec 6, 2020 Congregational Meeting. Commitment to the Right relations Covenant was approved by congregational vote Dec 6, 2020.
- Managed occurrences of disruptive behaviour in the congregation
- Continued Covid restrictions and the decision to continue the closure of our building until Jan 2021 meant a continued heavy burden, in terms of time commitment, for worship preparation and for pastoral care. CoSM was actively involved in monitoring and supporting staff and congregational activities. This included supporting free time, compensation recommendations, and support for pastoral care activities for the minister. Support for caring activities and providing technology and internet access for members of the congregation. Addressed concerns expressed in the congregational survey of 2019-2020
- Worked with the minister on a vacation/sabbatical plan.
- Following the announcement of the retirement of Rev Debra effective at the end of the current church year, CoSM was heavily involved in retirement planning including: completed assessment of vacation/sabbatical/time in lieu status of ministerial contract; preparing for time without a minister; proposal to the Board to grant Minister Emerita status; and co-ordinating the creation of a Zoom retirement party by the congregation.
- Over the summer months that completed the church year CoSM considered what changes in the roles and activities of the committee would best support the needs of the interim transition.

Thank you to the committee members who stepped down from their positions during the 2019-20 year-

Tamara Ryan and Judy Osborne. We truly appreciated your contributions to our work.

Thank you to Jim Washbrook, who completed his term but continued on to complete Judy's term. Current members of the Committee on Shared Ministry are Jim Washbrook, Kathryn Burwash, Mary-Anna Louise Kovar and Ned Leavitt. Chair and Secretarial duties are shared by all members in rotation.

Submitted by Mary-Anna Louise Kovar for CoSM.

Green Sanctuary

Like many of the other committees, Green Sanctuary's program was limited by the pandemic. The environmental film series and local food supper, both co-sponsored by the Permaculture Guild, were cancelled this year, and the horticultural therapy program facilitated by Janet Melrose was relocated to meeting on Zoom. Three films were shown on the internal Zoom network as part of the regular Friday night programs, with discussion after. Average attendance was about 15. In May the committee sponsored a Zoom presentation on regenerative farming by Kim Ross, attended by about 30.

The community garden continued to operate successfully during the pandemic, albeit with some restrictions. Sheila Ward stepped down as garden coordinator in June. At a subsequent meeting of the garden participants, it was decided to have separate coordinators for the community garden and the front garden. Janet Melrose, Liz Blackstock, and Wendy Mitchell agreed to serve as coordinators. A big thanks to Sheila for her many years of service in that position.

As noted above, the horticultural therapy program operated on Zoom this year with a client base of 6-10 persons. It was funded by a grant from the TD Friends of the Environment. A condition of the grant was the provision of a series of public outreach events. To this end, Janet Melrose organized six Zoom presentations on aspects of horticulture, which averaged attendance of about 35 participants.

GSC sponsored two internal presentations on climate modelling by Martha Toy in February. The committee has not initiated any environmental activities in the larger community but has maintained connection with the Calgary Association for the Common Good, with Geraldine Hysert serving as liaison person. We are also in communication with the Social Justice committee regarding possible action on the climate front.

Many thanks to fellow committee members Susan Stratton, Doug Engh, O. J. Zawalsky, and Janet Melrose, and to Sheila Ward and Liz Blackstock, who have since stepped down from the

committee. We are always open to new members and invite you to join us and bring your ideas with you.

Submitted by Carl Svoboda, Chair.

Caring Committee

The purpose of the Caring Committee is to promote caring relationships within our Beloved Community. We do this through a variety of activities which respond to the concerns, joys or milestones in the life of congregants. These are communicated to us verbally or through our email address: caring@calgaryunitarians.ca. The Pandemic has curtailed many of our usual methods of connection, but some of our Phone Tree volunteers are still keeping in touch! We still send cards - thanks to Judy Osborne and have started the Food Connections Program for those who could use help with groceries - run by Pierrette Lavallee-Hoch. Although Kathryn Burwash has stepped back from some of our activities, she is still a very active part-time member! The current members are Pierrette Lavallee Hoch and Donna Ontario. We welcome new members and ideas. We want to thank the Staff and AV crew who do so much to keep us all connected virtually!!

Submitted by Donna Ontario

Membership Committee

Members of the Committee: Barbara Lane (until Feb/21), Mary Jane Hussey, Margaret McCrae, Duff Bond, Rev. Debra Faulk (until April/21)

Six people became members during the church year, and one joined as a friend. There were three deaths among our members and eleven resignations, five of them due to moving away. Additionally, four lapsed members were removed by the Membership Review Committee. At the end of the church year on July 31, 2021, there were 152 members of record.

During this year of pandemic, the congregation has been locked out of our building, so have done all of our services and other activities on Zoom. Several of our regular Membership Team activities turned out not to be feasible during the pandemic, such as the Introduction to Unitarian Universalism workshop, staffing of the Welcome Table on Sunday mornings, support for the Minister's Young Adult Dinner in September, and Operation Cookie in December.

To replace the function of the UUism Introduction workshops, we tried new ways to offer introductory sessions to newcomers. Debra and a Membership team member would offer "UUCurious" chat sessions on Zoom after a service, once a month. Several people took us up on this, one or two at a time.

While we have been holding Sunday services via Zoom instead of meeting in person, Barbara Lane, then Duff has been recording the number and names of new visitors who log on to the Sunday services and sending them welcome messages.

Additional regular activities include reviewing membership applications and recommending board affirmation, annual membership review, maintaining member and friend application forms and brochures, and ordering brochures for display.

Number of members

2015 – 160

2016 – 160

2017 – 166

2018 – 165

2019 - 165

2020 – 164

2021 - 152

Submitted by Duff Bond

History and Archives Committee

Members: Pamela Rickey (Chair), Neil Morton, Marcia Epstein.

Board Liaison: Pamela Rickey

NOTE: The committee is seeking additional members.

Mandate:

The History and Archives Committee serves to ensure that a continuing record of the history of the Unitarian Church of Calgary is maintained. Historical information is used to guide the work of church committees, to provide an interesting record of past events and activities, to promote awareness of our church and congregational history, and to provide a record for possible future study by historians.

Activities:

The committee was dormant over the past year, due to the Covid 19 pandemic and competing needs for attention. There were no requests for historical information during this year.

Goals for the coming year:

- Find a new chairperson for this committee and attract new members
- Catch up on archiving & historical recording
- Continue to respond to requests for historical information.

Submitted by Pamela Rickey, Chair.

Physical Plant Committee

Due to the pandemic the use of our building during the past year was much reduced. However, we did take the opportunity to undertake some major painting and a flooring upgrade as described below. This work will continue into the coming church year.

Building Improvements

A major building improvement was the installation of new lifts. As of the end of the year the new lifts awaited inspection by AEDARSA. This inspection is scheduled for the last week of October.

With the help of volunteers, significant work has been done in Wickenden Hall. This included repainting the hallway and the landing area, and the walls in classroom One. It has included laying new flooring on the landing by the door and in the hallway downstairs. This latter work was completed in September.

Basement Flooding Update

This year only one water leak occurred in our basement. This was due to a plugged gutter.

Routine maintenance includes

Replacing furnace filters, annual inspection of fire extinguishers and replacement as necessary, testing emergency lighting, routine repairs and painting, clearing snow off sidewalks, cleaning gutters, etc.

The southeast Panabaker exit door was repaired and repainted.

These activities keep the PPC busy.

Committee Members and Staff

The PPC was aided by two contract staff positions. The Sexton, Robert MacDonald, performs a nightly check of the building, clears snow, and puts out the garbage cans. The Maintenance Support Person, Arno Buruma, did maintenance as requested, lowering the workload for the committee. Arno has had to step back from this position so we will be looking for a new Maintenance Support person during the new church year.

Committee members, Eric Leavitt (Chair), Jeff Gruttz, Alex Schumacher, Dick Wilson, and Larry Singleton.

Submitted by Eric Leavitt, Chair.

Audio Visual and Technology Team

The Audio Visual and Technology team is responsible for computer and network support for the staff and volunteers who use the computers in the church. Jim Washbrook, Christopher Fietz and Mich Michell are the primary support people for this area. There are three computers in the office, one in the AV control room, and three laptops being used by staff, and we have a Synology server for central storage of our data. It's likely the server will need replacement next year.

Most of the support required during the pandemic involved ensuring that staff and worship participants could take part in Zoom sessions effectively. We also helped people who needed to record segments for Sunday services, memorial services, and music events. And Jim Washbrook helped a couple of congregants set up computers or tablets so they could participate in online services and other functions.

The team provided online audio and video support using the Zoom platform for all Sunday services for the whole year. We became quite proficient in the process and were happy to be an integral part of the Sunday service production team.

We also supported the memorial service for Randi Lind, which over 125 people attended, and we supported the World Interfaith Harmony Week opening ceremony on Zoom.

Online operators were Ned Leavitt, Hendrik Schaink, Christopher Fietz, Paul Dorotich, Daria Skibington-Roffel, Jim Washbrook, and Mich Michell, while Bob Barnim posted polished recordings to the Calgary Unitarians' YouTube channel.

We are looking forward to supporting hybrid church services when in-person services are again possible.

We mourn the passing of Barry Wilkinson whose expertise in audio equipment resulted in a top-quality sound system in the sanctuary.

Submitted by Mich Michell, team lead

Lay Chaplaincy Committee

The Calgary Unitarians have 2 lay chaplains, Lynn Nugent and Mary-Anna Louise Kovar. As the COVID-19 pandemic ebbed and flowed through the year, very few ceremonies were officiated by our lay chaplains. Since the last report of November 2020, Lynn Nugent officiated a Celebration of Life in December 2020 and two Celebration of Life in September

2021. Lynn also completed a CUC lay chaplain training for end- of- life ceremonies and a CUC session on self-care. Both sessions were conducted using Zoom.

Mary-Anna Louise Kovar has been active on the CUC national committee. She has participated as a presenter in Zoom Basic Training and is now the coordinator for the lay chaplain application process.

Report submitted by Lynn Nugent, Lay Chaplain.

Moving Forward Team

The pandemic has continued to disrupt planning for our future. We are hopeful that we will again be able to engage with the congregation as we consider our future and possible scenarios for a new or renewed church home.

During the past year the Moving Forward Team has continued to monitor progress on the redevelopment of the lots east of the church. It appears that there will be a housing/commercial building eventually on those lots. The impact on our operations is uncertain but will probably impact on parking during the day.

We are continuing to monitor what is happening with the Green Line. Currently it appears that construction of the Green Line as far north as 16th Avenue along Centre Street will proceed with construction to begin sometime in 2022 or 2023. According to the City of Calgary website Stage 1 will run from 16th Avenue and Centre Street to Shepard. The projected completion date for Stage 1 is 2027.

The North Hill Communities plan continues to develop. When implemented the changes will permit greater density and building height in our immediate neighborhood including of course to the east of our building.

We will also be finalizing a project document for presentation to the congregation in early spring as well as looking for potential partners to share a new or renewed church home.

If you have any questions you can ask team members or contact us at movingforward@calgaryunitarians.ca.

Moving Forward Team Members include Eric Leavitt, Liz Blackstock, Marcia Epstein, Penny Clipperton, Michael Leboldus, Lillias Cowper, and Alex Schumacher.

Submitted by Eric Leavitt, Team Leader.

Refugee Sponsorship Committee

We did not have any committee meetings during this reporting period due to the pandemic, but the work of the committee proceeded via email and telephone.

Our applications to sponsor the single Iranian man persecuted for his atheism, the young Syrian couple and their baby who have relatives in Calgary, and the Eritrean family who also have relatives in Calgary have all been submitted and approved, but progress since that point has been slow due to the pandemic. All the required funds have been raised, but with the escalation of the cost of living since the time applications were submitted, some additional funds may be needed. The Syrian family had an initial interview at the Canadian embassy in Beirut, and the Iranian man, who is presently in Turkey, has also had an interview. All of them have received medical examinations and COVID vaccinations and are awaiting further word regarding visas and travel plans. There has been no further word regarding the Eritrean family, who are now in Israel.

Some members of the committee remain in contact with the two families we sponsored previously, both of which are progressing nicely.

Many thanks to the members of the committee for their continuing dedication to this cause! They include John Backhouse, Wendy Benson, Linda Brown, Penny Clipperton, Barbara Lane, Mary Jane Hussey, Jocelyn Keith-Asante, Pierrette Lavalley-Hoch, Michael Leboldus, Margaret McCrae, Claire McMordie, Tom Mirhady, Sue Norman, Carolyn Preston, Gillian Weaver-Dunlop, Norma Wood, Cathy Welburn, Dave Werklund, Karen Wyllie, and Ev Dewar. We mourn the loss of Sophia Lang and Jamie Davison, who contributed greatly during their time with us.

Submitted by Marsha Haug, Chairperson, Refugee Sponsorship Committee

Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee, consisting of Brandis Purcell, Carol Waugh, Duff Bond, Mich Michell, and Meredith Simon, met weekly from mid November through April to plan and execute the annual stewardship campaign. We designed the brochure, recruited a number of members as canvassers to write personal notes on each brochure to all members and friends, and invited several members to give a short talk during the service about the importance of the congregation in their lives. Our theme this year was Coming Back Strong.

This year was complicated by the ongoing Covid pandemic which meant all services were online. We mailed to each member and friend a packet containing the personalized brochure, a pledge form, and recipes for chili they could make and eat during our annual Commitment Sunday which was on March 21. On March 28 a draw for a gift basket was held that included all names of pledgers up to that time.

The pledge campaign drew 92 pledges for a total of \$175,200 which fell short of our goal of \$205,000, but we had 15 fewer pledging units than we had last year due to various circumstances.

A special thanks to our dozen volunteer canvassers and our four folks who spoke during the services approaching Commitment Sunday.

Respectfully submitted, Meredith Simon, Chair.

Co-op Gift Card Fundraising Program

The Calgary Co-op gift card program at Calgary Unitarians is a fundraiser for the church. Folks who shop and get gasoline at the Co-op stores support the church at no extra cost to themselves.

The Co-op gift card team take orders periodically for grocery/gas cards and liquor cards, and the church receives a percentage back from Calgary Co-op on a sliding scale, based on the value of the order. For orders less than \$5,000 the church receives 4% back; for \$5,000 to \$9,999 – 6%, and orders over \$10,000 provide a 9% contribution.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the program the past year. For the period of Aug '20-Jul '21, we processed 6 orders for a contribution to the church of \$6,651. This was slightly more than last year's revenue of \$6,621.

Receiving orders and payments online has been successful. We have moved from a pre-covid monthly order process to a 6-7-week schedule; the reduced frequency is currently being offset by larger orders. Distribution of cards was held safely outside, which was also successful, although it presented some challenges during those sub-zero winter days!

We've lost 3 volunteers on the committee over the past 2 years but your remaining team of Ev Dewar and Sheila Ward have recruited Trish Robbins and we look forward to the continued support for this program.

Submitted by Ev Dewar and Sheila Ward

Music Report

Prelude

There is nothing quite like a fresh challenge to stimulate creativity, foster learning, and build a sense of team! My warm congratulations and heartfelt thanks to every singer, volunteer, guest musician, and audience member who embraced the pandemic-related

challenge and helped us to create one of the most innovative music seasons in the history of Calgary Unitarians. A special orchestra-sized gold medal goes to volunteer AV producer Ev Dewar. Through her good cheer, curiosity, creativity, and incredible work ethic, Ev helped us to put an entire season's worth of choral events online, inspiring our singers and giving us all something to cheer about. Hats off to Ev and the whole team of music-makers!

Sunday-morning music

For the 2020-2021 church year, I continued to provide Sunday song leadership and instrumental music from my living room, with my digital keyboard, a stepladder to hold my laptop, and eventually a professional-quality microphone. Thanks to Mich Michell and Hendrik Schaink for helping me perfect my set-up.

Sunday-morning soloists and instrumentalists include members of UUphonia and TriUU, whose self-recorded singing videos were then combined with my piano backing tracks by Ev Dewar into short music videos. Cellist Tom Mirhady contributed self-produced Four Tom and Eight Tom music videos for some services using an iPad app.

Vespers

Rev. Debra Faulk and I began a new tradition with the launch of Tuesday-evening Vespers on Zoom. This was an evening of readings (poetry or reflective prose), music, and silent contemplation, followed by social time. Vespers built a dedicated following of ten participants, with others who joined from time to time. When it was time for staff to take the annual summer break, the participants opted to continue through the summer on their own. Thanks to volunteer Vespers leaders Jennifer Jessop, Brandis Purcell, and Marcia Epstein.

Choirs

- **UUphonia Online** launched on Thurs Sept 3, 2020, on Zoom, with social time from 7:15 pm and singing from 7:30 to 8:30 pm. The format was a singalong with songs for reflection and inspiration, as selected by me. Average weekly attendance = 31 singers.
- **Coffee Choir Online.** We transformed the Coffee Choir from an occasional in-person sing-along to a weekly online session. The new initiative began on Tues Sept 8, 2020, with social time from 1:30 pm and singing from 2:00 to 3:00 pm each week. The format was a singalong of mostly fun songs, where the weekly theme and song suggestions came from the singers themselves. Average weekly attendance = 22 singers, which eclipsed the previous in-person average attendance.
- **Online choir membership.** Though most singers in both choirs were from our Calgary church community, we also attracted and retained friends and family

members of current choristers as new singers. For UUphonia Online, our new singers were mostly from Calgary and environs. For Coffee Choir Online, we attracted singers from Edmonton to Albuquerque and from Victoria to Kingston. Both choirs felt lucky to welcome a UU from Whitefish, Montana who found us online when her local Unitarian church shuttered its activities... and Heidi continues to sing with us on Zoom to this day! All in all, our online choirs have been effective vehicles for pandemic-era outreach and community-building.

- **Chor Vida** created a couple of virtual-choir videos (produced by Ev Dewar) in support of our annual Remembrance Day service and Cabaret, and with zero rehearsals. I created practice recordings for each part, sent them to the singers, and they each practiced at home before self-recording their video submissions.

Online concert events

- **Concert Production Team** nimbly made the jump to production of virtual events, with guest performers who were content to embrace the new digital venue. A giant “huzzah!” to Charlene Hoepfner (team lead), Martha Toy, Lynne Palmer, Donna Antonio, and Ned Leavitt for travelling this road with me, and for all the laughter and brainstorming at our Zoom meetings.
- **Graphic design** continued to happen in-house, with Lynne designing posters to accompany our email blasts and Charlene creating graphics for use on Facebook and the church website.
- **Online advertising** included our usual channels (email blasts, E-News, and the church website) plus press releases to media organizations (thanks, Donna!) and better use of the church’s Facebook page.
- **Ticket sales** were entirely online --- no more sales table at Sunday coffee hour! As we had many times in the past, we employed Brown Paper Tickets for the November concert. We were disappointed when the company went into bankruptcy shortly after that show and did not remit our ticket earnings to us, though they promise that they will honour the amount owing. (We continue to wait.) We moved to Eventbrite for the April chamber music concert and received our ticket earnings promptly. Thanks to Martha for all the research, consultation, and patience on this file!
- **Concert-night livestreaming** was handled with style and grace by Ned, using YouTube as our digital concert platform.
- **Events**
 - **Fri Nov 27, 2020, at 7:00 pm: Jazz on the Side.** After performing live concerts at Calgary Unitarians every second year, JOTS made the leap to the digital concert stage. The original plan had been for the quartet to perform live in Panabaker Hall as a live-streamed concert to the folks at home, but Alberta Health Services imposed new restrictions that meant our singer (Michelle Dias) could not be in the same room as the rest of us (bassist Cora Castle, drummer Sarah Nielsen, and myself at the piano.) Plan B was a new challenge for everyone. We enlisted Ned Leavitt and Hendrik Schaink to video-record the instrumentalists, one song at a time, in Panabaker Hall. We

then sent the instrumental recordings to Michelle Dias, who self-recorded her vocals at home while listening to the tracks. Then, we sent the whole ball of wax to One Voice Chorus volunteer and Radio-Canada video producer Evelyne Asselin. Evelyne volunteered a huge amount of time to produce each song video and then stitch the videos into an hour-long concert film. Because it was an online event, we increased our audience reach, with people attending from all over Canada and into the U.S. We sold e-tickets online through Brown Paper Tickets; people bought a ticket and then received the event-night concert link by email. Big learning curve, and a highly successful concert evening.

- **Fri Dec 11 2020 at 7:00 pm: Winter Holiday Epic Online Sing-Along.** Because public-health circumstances were such that we could not hold our usual annual in-person choir concert with a live audience, we moved the show online. Members of UUphonia and other congregational musicians submitted individual holiday-song videos and ensemble videos to Ev Dewar for transmogrification into complete music videos, many including Ev's lyric slides so that folks at home could sing along. Lisa Hurrle and Ruby Gaudet even created an original mother-daughter how-to-holiday-during-a-pandemic video in "COVID Bells!" Ev sent the completed individual videos to Bob Barnim, who stitched them into a complete concert film. Kudos to our Concert Production Team publicist Donna Ontario, who got us a mention in the Calgary Herald as one of the "Top 10 Things to Do in Calgary Dec 10-16"! We offered the concert as a free online event, with an invitation to viewers to donate to Calgary Unitarians.
- **Fri April 30 2021 at 7:00 pm: An Evening of Chamber Music.** Normally, the Springbank Trio (violinist Laurie Syer, pianist Jamie Syer, and cellist Tom Mirhady) perform their annual classical-music concert live in Panabaker Hall on a Sunday afternoon. Once again, public-health circumstances were such that we had to move the event online. After some discussion, the trio volunteered to self-produce the entire concert film themselves, with Jamie as the lead AV technician. For this event, we sold e-tickets through Eventbrite and had audience members from all over Canada, the U.S., and even Europe. Thanks to the Springbank Trio for digital heroism in the line of chamber-music duty!
- **Cabaret 2021** went digital this year, with a livestream concert of our Cabaret video on **Friday, March 26 at 7:00 pm.** Our theme "Homemade Music: Country, Folk, Roots, and Blues" was the show we never got to perform in spring 2020, when COVID shut us down. Unofficially, the show became known as "Roots, Boots, and Cahoots!" after a cheerful declaration by our wonderful Cabaret emcee Sheila Ward. We offered this virtual concert as a free public event, designed to lift spirits and bring in donations. Thanks to Ev for video production, to Ev plus Sandra Vida and Charlene for graphic design, to Bob Barnim for putting it all together into a concert

film, to Ned for concert-night livestreaming on YouTube, to emcee Sheila Ward for braving the rigours of at-home recording of song introductions and for her amazing costume changes, and to the cheerful singers of UUphonia, Chor Vida, and TriUU for the tremendous music-video contributions.

- **Online services with major music-video components.** Huge thanks to Ev Dewar for backstopping video production, and to our indefatigable AV Team, captained by Mich Michell, for helping these multi-video live-streaming events to run so seamlessly.
 - **Thurs Dec 24 2020 at 7:00 pm: Unitarian Lessons and Carols.** In support of this service, we were lucky to receive the gift of virtual-choir videos from three of our resident choirs: One Voice Chorus, the BarberEllas, and Calgary Renaissance Singers & Players. We also created a video of our traditional CU “Twelve Days of Christmas” featuring congregation members, as well as a “Wexford Carol” video with my Toronto-based teenage niece playing cello and me at the piano in Calgary. The video was screened the same night at online Christmas Eve services at St. John’s Anglican Church in Toronto.
 - **Sun May 8 2021 at 6:00 pm: Retirement Celebration for Rev. Debra Faulk.** For this service, we created two music videos. The first was a performance by TriUU plus me of Rev. Debra’s original song “Where We All Are As One.” The second was a video of “Precious Blessings”, a song I commissioned from UU singer-songwriter Tony Turner in honour of Rev. Debra’s retirement. Sandra Vida and Ev Dewar selected the images for the video, and Ev combined Tony’s audio recording with the images to make a complete music video.
 - **Sun June 20 2021 at 10:30 am: Good Old-Fashioned Hymn-Sing.** This is the second year that Brandis Purcell and I have captained this event online. For a second year, we solicited song videos from congregational singers, with thanks to them all for their submissions. We also included videos from well-known Canadian Unitarian musicians Eleuthera Diconca-Lippert (Montreal) and Tony Turner (Nanaimo). Our Offertory music was a video from congregational teenage pianist Ruby Gaudet.
- **CU Fridays** was a new programme element this year, designed to give our congregation another opportunity for online connection during the pandemic. I coordinated the programme, which ran every Friday evening from October 2020 through the end of May 2021, with a couple of weeks off in late December. Thanks to my capable CU Fridays presenters for providing engaging content: Jocelyn Keith-Asante, Pam Rickey, and Rev. Debra Faulk (CU Anti-Racism Team), Carl Svoboda with AV technician Hendrik Schaink (Green Sanctuary Film Nights), DRE Sheila MacMaster (Movie Nights and Young Adult Game Nights), and everyone who helped me create the various Singing the Journey Sing-Alongs and music-event evenings on the fourth Friday.

- **Special mention to TriUU** (Leslie Buckle, Ev Dewar, and Brandis Purcell) who were the first at CU to plunge into the virtual-choir-video universe, paving the way for us all.

Respectfully submitted by Music Director Jane Perry on November 2, 2021