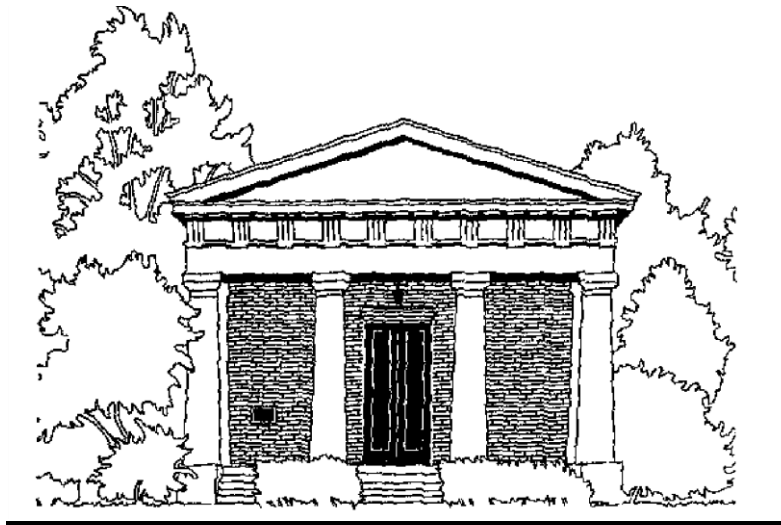


UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF MEADVILLE 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



“An idea is salvation by imagination”- Frank Lloyd Wright

UNISON AFFIRMATION OF COVENANT AND MISSION

Our **COVENANT** is to be a loving, joyful community that nurtures spiritual growth, promotes compassion, social responsibility, and service in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Our **MISSION** is to be a faith community devoted to love and respect, reason and justice.

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Call to Meeting and Agenda

Agenda Annual Meeting of Unitarian Universalist Church of Meadville

December 3, 2017

Approval of Minutes 2016 Annual Meeting

Minister's Report

President's Report

Mission Report

Outreach Report

Stewardship Report

Treasurers Report

Proposed By-Law Change

Current By-Laws, Section 7 reads:

Coordinator of Mission and Outreach

The **Coordinator of Mission and Outreach** serves as liaison to the Board for those areas of the Church that put faith into action: Membership, Religious Education, Worship, Fellowship, and Social Action.

Stewardship Chair

The **Stewardship Chair** serves as liaison to the Board for the functions of the Church that grow, nurture, promote, and build the gifts and resources of the Church: Annual Budget Drive, Fund-Raising, and Planned Giving.

Member-at-Large

The **Member-at-Large** carries out tasks as assigned by the Board.

Proposed change:

Coordinator of Mission Teams

The coordinator of the Mission Team serves as liaison to the Board in areas of the church that put forward the church's mission including but not limited to: Worship, Religious Education, and Social Action Teams.

Coordinator of Outreach Teams

The coordinator of Outreach Teams serves as liaison to the Board in the areas of that put forward the church's outreach to the community including but not limited to: Membership, Fellowship, Community Connections and Caring Teams.

Language concerning the Stewardship Chair and other Board positions will remain the same, Member at Large position eliminated.

Election of Officers:

President - David Anderson

Vice President – Robert Ackerman

Treasurer - John Stewart

Mission Chair – Dan Hunter

Election of Trustee

Accepting Nominations from the floor

Election of Finance Team

Motion to elect to serve on Team:

Corrine Chafey, Rick Holmgren, Karen Mason-Schreiber, Mike Thompson,

Stu Rothman, Tom Ritchey and Bill Smith

Proposed 2018 Budget

See page 11

2016 Annual Meeting Minutes

UUCM Annual Meeting Minutes December 4, 2016

Quorum = 23, quorum reached

Deb called the meeting to order at 11:35am.

Reports:

Amelia made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2015 Annual Meeting, Stu seconded, and the minutes were approved.

Rev. Robin thanked the congregation for being welcoming and said she was feeling hopeful. Emmy moved to accept the Minister's Report, Joyce seconded, and the motion passed.

Election of Officers for a 2 year term (1/17-12/18):

Mission and Outreach - Carlin Almes

Clerk - Ariel Denman

Treasurer - John Stewart (to complete term begun by Mike Wilcox to end 12/31/17)

The above officers were elected with unanimous approval.

Trustee:

Dave explained that the trustee is in charge of the actual building and that the current trustees are Jane, Cynthia, and Sue. Joan nominated Gladys for the position, Gladys accepted, nominations were closed. The congregation voted unanimously in favor of electing Gladys a new trustee.

Bylaws:

Deb explained the proposed bylaw changes would reduce the current 17 committees to 9 task oriented teams with a committee structure. These teams would still report to the board and all of the previous committee functions would still be present, just consolidated. The Search Committee, being an as needed committee, is not included in this change. Proposed Teams - RE, Worship, Membership, Fellowship, Social Action, Short Term Finances, Long Term Finances, Properties, and Personnel

A brief discussion of the reason for the proposed changes followed until Lisbet moved to accept the proposal, Corinne seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Budget:

Dave explained that we were on our second year in a row where no money was withdrawn from the endowment. With the existing cushion in the budget, we shouldn't need to rely on the endowment again. John went into detail about the where the budget stands and Peggy rejoiced that the pledges for next year were at \$101K. After a short discussion about dues, Rick moved to use up to \$3500 to pay all of our dues for 2016, Joyce seconded, and the motion carried. Joyce then moved to add the \$3500 for dues as a line item in the budget for next year, Rick seconded, and the motion carried. Amelia made a motion to approve the amended budget and Barb seconded, the motion passed.

New business:

After a very short discussion of the proposed resolution to take 5% from the endowment in 2017 for capital projects, it was decided to withdraw the resolution and postpone the discussion.

The Meeting was then adjourned.

Ariel Denman, Clerk

2017 Minister's Annual Report

Recently, a newcomer to our church shared that she had been wondering about us and then she saw our new banner facing the Diamond proclaiming, "A beacon for Freethinkers since 1825." The visitor told me: "That drew me in and I thought that this might be a place for me." I begin my report with this incident because it underscores how valuable it has been to get our light out from under a bushel and proudly let people know who we are. In 2017, we welcomed 8 new members. Perhaps with the more visible signage, we will welcome even more in 2018.

As your Interim Minister, an aspect of my role is to assess how various part of church life are functioning, share observations, collaborate with congregants and leaders to launch or re-launch projects, teams, and efforts, and encourage everyone in the areas where there has been resistance to change or lingering dismay over past failures.

One of the areas I observed was a discomfort with liberal evangelism (spreading the news about our beliefs and such). Yet, over time, the benefits were clear and now we have clear and beautiful signage that reflects our ethos and principles, an engaging website, and a more functional Facebook page with more and more engagement each month. The use of social media is important to our success with millennials and we are building an audience in the area. I have also had my column published several times in the Meadville Tribune which further places our message in the public arena in an inviting way.

Our reach into the community has been extended further by the enthusiastic leadership of Dan Hunter and Shayna Morrison (among others) who have connected us to First Friday, Second Saturday and other local events. This is exciting and positions us as a "meetinghouse" for the community where gatherings from dances to support groups can feel welcomed and affirmed. The meetinghouse goal represents our values in a tangible way. Whoever you are and whomever you love, you are welcome here.

This also includes the local youth who are refurbishing the basement with George Stabile and others, and Creative Landscapes who have worked with us to turn the upstairs classrooms into a gorgeous and bright space for their new daycare program. Go take a look at this appealing space. I'm proud of us for opening ourselves to both of these groups, along with all the others who find their ways here for AA, LGBTQ support and other activities.

In this past year, I've worked with leaders and congregants to charge up the Social action team, adult faith development, new curricula for the Sunday School, and the Caring Connections team. I am very proud of those who are devoting themselves to these efforts, and send a special thanks to Anne Jones, Fran Smith, and Jane Anderson for stepping up to serve in leadership roles.

Speaking of Caring Connections, we have a wonderful team of people ready and able to provide friendly visiting and pastoral care. Just ring Fran Smith or myself, and stop by the Caring Connections table to sign a card for someone who would be cheered by our kind outreach.

An excellent Transition team, led by Rick Holmgren and Laurie Parendes, completed their work with a recommendation to seek a half-time minister for September 2019. The next step is for a partnership team to consider developing a relationship with another church in 2017-18 to be in the position to offer a fuller package to a minister who might come to this area and serve multiple congregations.

The Worship Team as gone from strength to strength, providing excellent leadership with the schedule and a variety of quality speakers and music offerings. It has been a real pleasure to work with this team and with Aimee and Mary Lynne.

In the Spring, I attended a captivating workshop on the "Worship Design Studio" with Mary Spicer, and we are exploring the benefits of creating multi-sensory worship with additional visuals and music. The purchase of a screen and projector is under consideration. I also ran a training for pulpit assistants this fall and the 12 participants really shone brightly. I enjoy my collaborations with them when I am in the pulpit.

We entered 2017 with a fully funded budget and great momentum thanks to the work of Peggy Bell and her team and the optimistic abundance attitude of the congregation. As a result, we were able to fund various projects and initiatives and make some improvements to our buildings.

Peggy ran a well-organized, focused and compelling stewardship campaign with the help of the marvelous Michele Baker and others. A challenge this team has faced in the 2018 campaign (20/20 visions) is a decline in membership the absence of several larger pledges due to deaths and moves; and a decrease. I encourage anyone who can stretch their pledge to do so in order for us to keep growing and thriving.

I can not say enough about the superb work of our Board of Trustees, led by the unsinkable Deb Lehman. Every member of this Board has stepped up, cared deeply about the institution, and put in many hours of work to have our church run well. I have found them to be collaborative, creative, skilled, grounded, and open to my observations and input as the Interim Minister.

Rachel Meerson finished her tenure as CRE with great appreciation from the congregation. Kristina Brink has taken up the position with great warmth and zeal. A special shout out to our Administrator Jodi Sipos, who has really shone this year in her role. Jodi took on additional responsibilities this year, especially around finance and stewardship, and has increased her skill set with trainings. She has also been the main programmer of our new website and I am proud of her and proud to work with her.

The challenges I see for us as we move forward are not new They include getting more folks through our doors and woven into our community, and developed various entry points for them (such as the dances, alternative worship, social action, children's RE, and adult learning programs and groups. I perceive a need to be conscious about burnout among leaders and developing new leaders such as Dan Hunter.

I'd like to see more regular attendance by current members and friends, to build up and sustain the energy of our Sunday morning gathering. We're also facing the dilemma of adequate pledge income to sustain even a modest operating budget. But with abundance thinking blended with practicality, we can face these challenges.

I love being your minister and feel so nourished by my deepening relationship with you. A challenge for me as your part time Interim is the fact that I live 100 miles away and cannot be as connected to you as I would like. Although I have found ways to do this within the scope of the structure of my position (café hours, lunch groups, etc), I'm looking at ways to be in town on some Saturdays to improve that situation. I've recommended a different paradigm for a longer-term minister to the Transition team – one in which the minister lives nearby and can be more integral into your community.

Here's to the possibilities in 2018 and beyond. We are a strong community and the center will hold.

As ever, I am yours, in faith,

Rev. Robin Landerman Zucker

Interim Minister

2017 Board President's Annual Report

2017 has been marked by growth and community outreach, the congregation is no longer content to be the best kept secret in Meadville! We began the year by opening our doors to the community at Winterfest, hosting other community partners as well as providing an interactive craft activity for kids based on our UU principles, many thanks to Michele Baker for facilitating the activity. We continued the tradition of hosting the Blarney Breakfast, participating in the annual St Patrick's Day events.

In March, we also hosted a UU regional event focused on the changing situation of many UU congregations and the need to build partnerships within our region. In June, the Board received the report of the transition team who recommended forming a partnership team to work toward this end. We are currently in the process of forming the team.

Creating Landscapes for Families, our long time community partner, approached the Board about re-visioning the unused space on second floor of the Parish house as a day care space. CLF has the long range goal of establishing a pre-K counts program. The Board agreed this would be a good way to use our building to further serve the community. I invite you to tour the upstairs and see the remarkable changes in the space.

The Board also accepted with regret the resignation of RE coordinator, Rachel Meerson. Kristina Brink was hired to fill the position, she brings new energy and ideas to the program.

The Social Action Team has been rejuvenated, we formed relationships with other community groups whose work reflect our UU principles. They include: Showing Up for Racial Justice, Film for Thought, Crawford LGBT + and Meadville Time Trade. They have created new traditions such as the Angel Tree and other service projects.

The Community Connections team was formed, taking our message of a free and open search for truth and meaning to community venues like Second Saturday and the Pumpkin Derby. The team launched the First Friday dance party which was a rousing success and garnered front page coverage in the Tribune. The UU congregation is letting our light shine!! Many thanks to Dan Hunter for creating these opportunities.

We have improved our signage and made the UU Principles visible to the public. In the current uncertain political climate, I believe it is important to lift up our Principles in the community. It's important for people to know there is a place they can go and be accepted as they are.

The congregation has increased its level of support to the point where we can afford a part time minister and operate without withdrawing funds from the endowment for normal operating expenses. This allows the congregation to use endowment funds to maintain and improve our historic properties. This year we were able to paint the Sanctuary. We also had enough surplus in the operating budget to retro fit the Parish house with LED lighting improving the ambiance of the space and increasing the buildings energy efficiency. We look forward to more projects in the future.

As I reflect on the past 4 years I have served as president, I am encouraged by the progress we have made as a congregation. It has been an honor and pleasure to serve the congregation. We have more work to do together as we live into being a beacon for free thinkers.

Deb Lehman, Board President

2017 Treasurer's Annual Report

In 2017 the church had sufficient cash flow to meet our obligations in spite of paid pledges lagging behind last year. As of 11/27/17 total pledges paid were approximately \$25,000 less than the \$98,000 budgeted. Our 2016 year end checking account balance of approximately \$20,000 provided a cash cushion. Fundraising and Non-pledge receipts were greater than budgeted and Committee spending of \$3,447.93 was below the \$9,250 budgeted. However this may be an indication that many of the committees were either over budgeted or not as active as hoped. Based on our current situation I am projecting that the ending cash balance for 2017 will be less than \$10,000.

The Endowment has been doing very well with a balance of \$356,871.64. Investment returns for 2017 YTD totaled \$37,917.17. After the funds were moved to Vanguard in early 2016 the total investment returns total \$70,241.24. In the last three years the only withdrawal was \$15,000 to pay for the exterior painting and tree trimming needed for the painters to access the building, so after the withdrawal \$55,241.24 of the gain since 2016 remains. A withdrawal of 5% of the yearend balance is included in the 2018 budget.

The conversion to QuickBooks will be complete by the end of the year. Special thanks to Mike Baker, Jodi Sipos and Ted Mallick who made this happen.

The church is going to pay church staff by direct deposit beginning with the December 15th payroll. This will give employees easier access to their money and help to further streamline the payroll process.

I have set up an electronic payment service with VANCO payment solutions. VANCO is used by many UU churches and provides the service at a relatively low cost with contributions deposited into our bank account on the next business day. Donations can be made using your checking account, credit card or debit card. The donor promptly receives an email confirming the transaction. It is also possible to set up recurring donations on a weekly or monthly basis. Special thanks to Shannon Lynes for the graphic design work he did to "make it pretty"!

It was discovered that since 2011 the churches natural gas supplier was PAG&E which was charging significantly higher rates than our gas distributor National Fuel Gas. Between November 2016 and October 2017 the church was charged \$1,716.33 more than National Fuel Gas would have. NFG is now our distributor and supplier.

2017 was a challenging but very rewarding year for me as your treasurer. I think we have set the stage for a more efficient and accurate accounting system. Many thanks to the board, congregation and church staff for your continued support this past year.

John A. Stewart, Treasurer

2017 Proposed Budget

INCOME:	2017 Budget	10/31/17 YTD	2018 Budget
Fundraising	4,000.00	5,172.99	6,000.00
Endowment Receipts	15,000.00	11,890.41	18,000.00
Non Pledge Receipts	3,000.00	10,728.42	8,000.00
Other Income	0.00	137.03	150.00
Pledges-Budgeted	98,000.00	68,409.31	70,400.00
Next Yr. PPD Pledge	0.00	0.00	
Rent Receipts	4,000.00	3,875.00	10,000.00
Restricted Gifts	0.00	4,533.11	0.00
Projected 1/1/17 cash balance	6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00
TOTAL INCOME	130,000.00	110,746.27	112,550.00
Amount needed to balance			1,748.93
			114,298.93
EXPENSE:			
Minister Gross	30,931.68	25,556.08	31,550.27
Minister Benefits	282.53	679.47	1,161.60
Minister Discretionary	2,199.03	542.35	
Ministers Pension	2,825.00	2,446.20	2,881.50
Minister Prof Expense	2,825.00	2,528.25	2,881.50
TOTAL MINISTER	39,063.24	31,752.35	38,474.87
Keyboardist + FICA	3,392.00	2,401.97	4,015.42
Music Dir.+ FICA	5,433.00	4,391.98	5,704.65
Music Director Prof. Exp.	200.00		310.00
Music Special	600.00	128.75	600.00
TOTAL MUSIC	9,625.00	6,922.70	10,630.07
RE Director +FICA	8,066.00	5,665.57	8,227.32
DRE Pros. Exp.	300.00	0.00	
Total DRE	8,366.00	5,665.57	8,227.32
Office Administrator +FICA	14,695.00	14,064.31	17,085.67
Pension	1,365.00	1,379.04	1,581.00
Total Office Admin	16,060.00	15,443.35	18,666.67
Custodian + FICA	3,617.25	2,921.09	3,220.73
Child Care	1,000.00	433.20	600.00
Total Employee Expense	77,731.49	63,138.26	76,598.93
Committees Total	9,350.00	2,777.93	6,050.00
Annual Program Fund	3,500.00	2,846.00	3,500.00
Utilities	9,923.00	6,921.87	10,000.00

Proprieties Exp.	5,200.00	6,391.72	6,000.00
Insurance	7,200.00	3,468.00	7,200.00
Office Expense	3,000.00	5,824.57	3,000.00
Other Expense	0.00	1,279.95	1,200.00
Search Committee	750.00	0.00	750.00
Painting		11,500.00	
Other Expense Total	<u>38,923.00</u>	<u>41,010.04</u>	<u>37,700.00</u>
Total Expense	<u>116,654.49</u>	<u>104,148.30</u>	<u>114,298.93</u>
Net Margin	<u>13,345.51</u>	<u>6,597.97</u>	<u>1,748.93</u>

2018 Committee Budgets

New Teams:	Chair(s)	
	Jane	
Religious Education	Anderson	750.00
	Shayna Morrison & Dan	
Community Connections	Hunter	300.00
Board Expense	Board	0.00
Fellowship	Carlin Almes and Leigh Lynes	350.00
Leadership Development		300.00
Membership		300.00
Stewardship	Peggy Bell & Michael Baker	500.00
Publicity	Robin Zucker	200.00
	Corinne Chafey & Karen	
Worship	Schreiber	2500.00
Denominational Affairs	Robin Zucker	500.00
Finance Team	John Stewart & Mike Baker	0.00
Pastoral Care	Fran Smith	100.00
Social Justice	Deb Lehman	250.00
	Total	<u>6,050.00</u>



Unitarian Universalist Church of Meadville **20/20 Visions: Focusing on What Matters**

Thanks to the ongoing work of stewardship team members, Michele and Mike Baker and Shayna Morrison whose creative ideas flow much faster than I can assimilate them, there is more fluidity and movement to this somewhat conventional aspect of church governance. Mike and Michele came to stewardship innocently by volunteering to host our annual garage sale at their perfect location and with all your excellent donations to it, we raised about \$4,000. Items that were out of season or better suited to a different venue were marketed online and thanks to Michele, who is a savvy seller, we have raised an additional \$1,100.

The pledge drive is a way to give the Board a framework budget for each upcoming year and we try to make it as strain-free as possible. We will continue to rethink ways to fundraise year-round. We are now set up to accept online payments via our webpage or an app on your phone; and we will have a format for bequests coming too.

One of my “ah-ha” moments this year revolved around cancelling a pre-pledge event for sustaining givers; which has worked beautifully for years as a way to kick off the main pledge drive, but I didn’t ask for help and couldn’t pull it together myself this year, so I canceled it. In spite of that, the pledge drive has increased slowly but steadily, but my hindsight about canceling that event is a lesson learned. (Note to self, “if it isn’t broken, don’t try to fix it”.)

The stewardship team will continue to also devote our work toward the goal of supporting those aspects of church life that feed the spirit and encourage personal well-being and community well-being. From my perspective, this church does a beautiful job of Sunday services, RE and adult CE, caring connections and social outreach but only as we find meaningful points of contact with each other, such as teamwork for the annual garage sale or a covenant group, or inviting someone to share a movie or a meal, will we strengthen our base, and THAT will prepare us for a momentous future. I encourage you to share your vision and your voice in focusing on what matters with me or the rest of the stewardship team; we are all here because we believe the value of the seven principles, but our continued visioning of ourselves in this Meadville church plan will strengthen and solidify our creation of it. Let’s do everything in our power to create the future we want.

Even with fewer people attending church; even with social insecurities regarding healthcare and drug costs; we remain a vibrant proactive group. I am grateful to everyone who remembers that there is no free lunch in a free church and that we create our abundance in this world by how and where we spend our dollars. Here at UUCM we remain faithful in ourselves!

I am grateful for the opportunity to continue as stewardship chair for another year and will serve to the best of my ability for the greater good of us all.

Respectfully,

Peggy Bell, Stewardship Chair

2017 Worship Team's Annual Report

As it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community to create and sustain worship services for our UU family. Weekly 7 to 15 people are involved in our Sunday services, including pulpit speakers, pulpit assistants, musicians, choir director, choir members, ushers, sound team, flower providers, additional organization and backup provided during each week by our Office Administrator Jodi Sipos, and ongoing planning and follow up offered by the Worship Team, which meets monthly with Rev. Robin.

Currently the Worship Team includes Cynthia Burton, Rob Brugnoli, Corinne Chafey, Mary Lynne Peters, Mary Spicer and Karen Schreiber Mason. The Committee meets monthly with Rev. Robin.

In April Rev. Robin and Mary Spicer attended a workshop on bringing multimedia into the worship experience. We are exploring the inclusion of these new ideas and resources for future services.

A pulpit assistant training was held by Rev. Robin in October which was well attended. Our goal in 2018 is to create a revolving core of trained pulpit assistants.

We continue to learn how to provide year-round weekly worship services with a part-time minister, and with our own congregants, friends of our church, musicians and other speakers, with generous helpings of collaboration, coordination and communication.

As in most UU churches, we offer a diversity of speakers and topics, and this year we offered a diversity of types of services, including circle services, service projects, congregational sharing and reflections and all-music services. In addition, we continue to offer interactive hands-on services during the summer months in the Parish House.

All of this is only possible with the generous offerings of time and talent by many people.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Schreiber Mason, Worship Team Chair

2017 Member-at-Large Annual Report

This report covers the functions of RE and Mission & Outreach (Fellowship/Membership) as chaired by Jane Anderson, (with Kristina Brink) and Carlin Almes, respectively.

MISSION AND OUTREACH: One of the primary duties is scheduling coffee hour hosts. Additional activities have included: (1) Coordinating: Easter potluck lunch following 3/16 service; reception for Emmy Boughton following 5/6 memorial service; annual church picnic at Roche Park on 8/20; potluck lunch following Water Communion service on 9/10. (2) Providing: light lunch for congregation, especially the volunteer grounds workers, following Flower Communion service on 5/21; lunch for UU101 classes on 3/26 and 4/2; lunch for Pulpit Assistant training class on 10/22. (3) Helping with: Winterfest on 2/18; Blarney Breakfast on 3/18; cleaning of parish House cupboards in collaboration with Creating Landscapes on 9/6. (4) Participating in: hanging of the Greens on 11/2; the church garage sale 6/14-6/17. (5) Planning the reception following Christmas Eve service on 12/14. (6) Planning/coordinating the Thanksgiving potluck lunch for the 11/19 church service. (7) Assisting Peggy Bell in the Stewardship Dinners of 10/7.

What a productive year for Carlin and her crew!

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Of perhaps the greatest significance, we regretfully accepted the resignation this spring of Rachel Meerson as Coordinator of Religious Education, and the recognition of her outstanding service at the end of May, followed by the hiring of Kristina Brink as our new wonderful CRE. RE continues to have a small but eager group of children, and members of the congregation have offered activities for the children at recent First Friday and Second Saturday events downtown, creating some awareness of our UU program in the community.

RE will be promoting our new curriculum as of January 2018...Horton hears a UU, which explores life lessons via Dr. Seuss rhymes.

If you haven't already, come on upstairs to see the transformation of the RE space, as the Creating Landscapes Learning Center prepares to open a day care on the 2nd floor. Room dividers have been taken down to open up the space, and fresh paint, clean floors, etc., have done wonders!

Kristina Brink brings much energy and enthusiasm to her position and reports that as fall curriculum comes to an end (theme—"Windows & Mirrors"), we focused on what we have to offer the community. We started by participating in Crawford County Rocks, where the children decorated and hid "UU ROCKS" throughout Diamond Park, and are going to begin service projects focusing on giving back to those in need in the holiday season. We have worked on activities that increase awareness of self-esteem and encouraging others, as well as exploring ways to stand up for social justice and environmental justice.

Exciting times for our RE program!

Respectfully submitted

Stuart Rothman, Member-at-Large

2017 Proposed Changes in Bylaws

Current By-Laws, Section 7 reads:

Coordinator of Mission and Outreach

The **Coordinator of Mission and Outreach** serves as liaison to the Board for those areas of the Church that put faith into action: Membership, Religious Education, Worship, Fellowship, and Social Action.

Stewardship Chair

The **Stewardship Chair** serves as liaison to the Board for the functions of the Church that grow, nurture, promote, and build the gifts and resources of the Church: Annual Budget Drive, Fund-Raising, and Planned Giving.

Member-at-Large

The **Member-at-Large** carries out tasks as assigned by the Board.

Proposed change:

Coordinator of Mission Teams

The coordinator of the Mission Team serves as liaison to the Board in areas of the church that put forward the church's mission including but not limited to: Worship, Religious Education, and Social Action Teams.

Coordinator of Outreach Teams

The coordinator of Outreach Teams serves as liaison to the Board in the areas of that put forward the church's outreach to the community including but not limited to: Membership, Fellowship, Community Connections and Caring Teams.

Language concerning the Stewardship Chair and other Board positions will remain the same, Member at Large position eliminated.

Bylaws

Article 1. Name and Affiliation:

The name of this congregation is the Unitarian Universalist Church of Meadville, Pennsylvania. In the deed to the church, its name is the Independent Congregational Church.

This congregation (church) is independent in polity and organization; it is affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), its Ohio Meadville District (OMD), and other organizations as the membership shall decide, in order to provide services that this congregation cannot provide for itself and to strengthen and grow.

Article 2. Purpose:

This is a congregation which celebrates diversity and welcomes all. We share values that allow this congregation to come together as a nurturing, caring community committed to a democratic and liberal outlook, spiritual and educational growth, fellowship and community outreach.

The purpose of these Bylaws is to establish the over-arching rules of governance for the church. All documents in the church must abide by and be in compliance with these Bylaws.

Article 3. Membership:

Any person 16 years of age or older who is in sympathy with the spirit and purpose of this church, and can demonstrate an understanding of the responsibilities of membership, may become a voting member of this congregation by signing the membership book in the presence of the Minister or a member of the Parish Board. An annual financial contribution of record is a requirement of membership in the church. A person under the age of 16 may become a member upon obtaining the recommendation of the membership chair and consent of the Parish Board. No subscription to creed or ceremonial participation is required for membership. Any person who so desires may be listed as a friend of the congregation in the church records.

Members may hold office and vote on church business. To vote as a member for any purpose, a person must be a member for 30 days preceding the date of the ballot or signature. All members shall have the right to reasonable expression of their respective views, including the right to request and receive hearing at meetings of the church organization. Any interested person who is not a member may serve on committees or participate in the activities of the church other than holding office and voting on church business.

Withdrawal of membership may be made by written request to the Minister or the Secretary of the congregation. Such a notice will be transmitted to the Board and noted in the Membership Book (the official record of membership) and other records of the church. At least annually, the board, on the recommendation of the Membership Committee, will delete from membership those individuals who have died within the year. Reasonable attempts will be made to contact those individuals who have ceased contact with the church or who have not made an annual financial contribution of record. They will be asked to positively reaffirm their interest in remaining members of the congregation. The board, with input from the Minister, may remove from membership those who do not respond.

Article 4. Fiscal Year:

The church's fiscal and administrative year runs from January 1 to December 31.

Article 5. Congregational Meetings:

The Annual Meeting of the congregation will be held during the first week of December at a time determined by the Parish Board. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to elect officers, the Leadership Development Committee, the Investment Committee, and Trustees for the upcoming fiscal year, to receive reports of the current year's activities from the Board, Minister, Director of Religious Education, and committee chairs, to adopt a budget for the upcoming year, and to discuss such other business as may come before it.

The President of the Parish Board will prepare and submit an agenda to the Parish Board far enough in advance so that the agenda can be discussed, approved and published in the newsletter at least two weeks before the meeting. Any five members may request that an item be placed on the agenda for the Annual Meeting by requesting it in writing of the President in sufficient time to meet the above congregation notification schedule.

Special congregational meetings may be called by the President, by the Parish Board, or by written request to the president signed by 10 lay members of the congregation. Only such business as indicated in the call for the meeting may be transacted at any special congregational meeting. At least seven days' notice of all special congregational meetings must be given to the membership by mail, e-mail, or other electronic notice; and all meetings will be announced at regular worship services, on the website, and in the *Oracle*, whenever possible, prior to the meeting.

A quorum for congregational meetings described above is constituted by 25% of the membership. When a quorum is present, the congregation at its meeting may conduct business by majority vote. Members must be present to vote.

Article 6. Parish Board

The Parish Board manages the affairs of the church between Annual Meetings. The Parish Board shall meet monthly whenever possible, with no fewer than six meetings per year. These meetings shall be open to any member who wishes to attend. It is expected that the Parish Board shall delegate many day-to-day activities to committees as defined in Article 8. Other duties that the Parish Board is expected to accomplish include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Develop and present an annual budget to the congregation for a vote at the Annual Meeting.
2. Oversee the finances of the church to ensure appropriate fiduciary responsibilities.
3. Appoint committee chairs
4. Establish and implement policies and practices that support the programs of the church.
5. Develop a long-range plan for the church.

The UU Parish Board will consist of seven officers of the Church: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Coordinator of Mission and Outreach, Stewardship Chair, and Member-at-Large. Each of these must be bonded for at least \$5,000. The Board requires a quorum of four officers to do business, and affirmative votes by a majority of those present are required to carry a motion in the Board.

The Minister will also serve as a non-voting ex officio member of the Board. Officers will be elected by the Congregation at its Annual Meeting for two-year terms, beginning January 1st. The terms of the Church officers should attempt to ensure both continuity and new blood among Board members. No two Church officers may be members of the same household. An individual may serve no more than four years of any six consecutive years as a member of the Board.

Article 7. Officers

President

The **President** conducts all business meetings of the congregation and Parish Board. The President schedules all meetings of the congregation and the Parish Board. The President is a member ex officio of all committees of the church. The President implements and administers the policies of the Parish Board. No person may be nominated to serve as President without having served at least one year on the Parish Board, preferably the year immediately previous. The President's term of office is for 2 years and begins on January 1st. The President serves as liaison to the Personnel Committee, the UUA and Ohio-Meadville District, and to any Search Committees. The President is authorized to sign checks in the absence of the Treasurer.

Vice President

The **Vice-President** serves as liaison to the Board for the administrative functions of the Church, including Properties, Public Relations, Information Technology, and Leadership Development. The Vice-President assumes the duties of the President in the President's absence. The Vice-President oversees the conduct of the annual audit of the church's books.

Secretary

The **Secretary** is responsible for keeping a record of all church and Parish Board meetings and ensuring that topics discussed at board meetings are communicated to the congregation. The Secretary maintains the permanent records and documents of the Church as well as being the primary correspondent on behalf of the

Congregation and the Parish Board. The Secretary will also maintain the list of all committees, their membership, and a description of their functions and normal procedures; The Secretary is responsible for keeping the Bylaws up to date and serves as liaison to the Bylaws Committee.

Treasurer

The **Treasurer** oversees the funds of the church to ensure that the annual cash flow is sufficient to meet the operating needs of the church. The Treasurer prepares accurate financial reports, advises on expenditures and financial policy that assist the Parish Board and congregation in decision-making, and signs the checks for the day-to-day operations of the church including payroll and tax obligations. The Treasurer may supervise the activities of a church bookkeeper and accountant. The Treasurer will serve as liaison to the Investment Committee. The Treasurer will serve as a non-voting ex officio member of any committee relating to the stewardship of the church, as needed.

Coordinator of Mission and Outreach

The **Coordinator of Mission and Outreach** serves as liaison to the Board for those areas of the Church that put faith into action: Membership, Religious Education, Worship, Fellowship, and Social Action.

Stewardship Chair

The **Stewardship Chair** serves as liaison to the Board for the functions of the Church that grow, nurture, promote, and build the gifts and resources of the Church: Annual Budget Drive, Fund-Raising, and Planned Giving.

Member-at-Large

The **Member-at-Large** carries out tasks as assigned by the Board.

Article 8. Committees

Many Church functions are carried out by committees whose chairs are appointed by the Board, usually at the first meeting of the year, and whose activities are monitored by the Board. A list of all committees, their membership, and a description of their functions and normal procedures, will be maintained by the Secretary, made available in the Church Office, and published in the Oracle. Each chair is responsible for recruiting individuals from the congregation to serve on the committee, except for the Investment Committee and the Leadership Development Committee, the members of which are elected by the congregation. A committee is responsible for managing its resources, requesting annually a budgeted amount from the Parish Board, and reporting regularly to its Board Liaison on the activities and concerns of that committee. Additionally, each committee will submit a report on its year's activities at the Annual Meeting. Committee chairs are required to meet as a group with their Board Liaisons at least twice a year for purposes of coordination and long-range planning.

The President is an ex-officio non-voting member of all committees of the Parish Board. Board members are ex-officio non-voting members of all committees for which they serve as liaison. An individual may serve no more than five of any seven consecutive years as chair of the same committee.

The following committees are an integral part of the Church and should be considered standing committees:

1. Religious Education
2. Worship

3. Membership
4. Fellowship
5. Social Action/Public Relations
6. Short-term financial issues (annual fund drive, fund-raising). This incorporates the current role of Stewardship.
7. Long-term financial issues (planned giving, investments)
8. Properties (focus is the monitoring everyday needs of property management---financial planning re: properties would be the responsibility of the short-term and long-term function/chairperson)
9. Personnel. This committee will meet as need to review salaries and job descriptions.

In addition:

- A. The audit will be conducted once a year, and is the responsibility of the Vice President of the Board. The individual actually doing the audit will be other than the Treasurer, to avoid any potential conflict of interest.
- B. Chairpersons of each of the above nine functions will assist the Treasurer in preparing the following year's budget, through budget requests.
- C. "Information technology" is not needed to be stated as a separate function.
- D. There is a "Caring Committee" which is functioning, but does not need to be named in the bylaws. The distinctive aspect of this committee is the confidential nature of its work.
- E. There is not a need for a "Bylaws Committee." The revision of the bylaws, every five years at the most, is a function of the Member-at-Large, who can gather others to review and recommend and present to the Board and Membership.
- F. It is proposed that the bylaws remove the phrase "a mix of growth and income funds", while retaining the phrase "moderate amount of risk", in order to provide the investment chair with greater flexibility.
- G. "Leadership Development" is an ongoing Board responsibility, and the Board can appoint someone to head the search for developing new leadership capacities within the membership. The phrase "Leadership Development" would be eliminated from the bylaws. Leaders are to be selected from members who are currently active, (but not from among first year members.
- H. With the proposed structure above, temporary chairs/coordinators would be appointed by the Board.
- I. There are two areas with a priority need for detail in the Procedure Manual. These are: procedures to train new members for leadership roles; Properties - there is a need for a list of routine tasks to be done and when they need to be done.

Article 9. The Leadership Development Committee:

The Leadership Development Committee is comprised of the Vice President of the Parish Board and two other members of the church. Each year at the Annual Meeting, one member of the congregation shall be elected to serve on the Leadership Development Committee for a two-year term. The Leadership Development Committee will meet as soon as is reasonably possible after a new committee is formed to select a chair from among its members. It shall make nominations at the Annual Meeting to fill elected positions according to these Bylaws (appropriate officers, trustees, members of the Investment Committee, and a member of the Leadership Development Committee). Except for the Vice President, Leadership Development Committee members may not succeed themselves.

The Leadership Development Committee shall solicit recommendations from each current officer and committee chair for persons to fill each position. In addition, the committee shall seek recommendations from the congregation at large through the newsletter and at Sunday services well before it makes a final decision.

The Leadership Development Committee must publicize its selection of candidates one month preceding the Annual Meeting. The committee may present to the congregation more than one candidate for any of the above described positions. The names of anyone else wishing to stand for an elected position are to be announced at the same time as the Leadership Development Committee selections. The committee will make every effort to assure that each of its nominees is clearly aware of the duties of the position for which nominated. Nominations may be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting with a second. In all cases, those nominated must consent to stand for election, and written consent must be provided if those nominated from the floor are not present.

Article 10. Vacancies:

If an elected position becomes vacant, the Parish Board, with the concurrence of the Leadership Development Committee, shall appoint a member of the church to serve in the position until the next Annual Meeting.

Article 11. Auditors:

The Vice President will select an Audit Committee to examine the financial records of the church as soon after the close of the yearly books as practicable and submit a report to the congregation. The Audit Committee should consist of three members of the congregation, if practical, or an outside accounting firm.

Article 12. Trustees:

Five members of the congregation serve as trustees who are entrusted with the responsibility of signing all documents relating to the sale, transfer and alienation of all church real estate. The trustees are elected at the Annual Meeting for staggered five-year terms. A trustee may be re-nominated at the end of his/her term. If a vacancy occurs, the Parish Board, with the concurrence of the Leadership Development Committee, shall appoint an interim trustee to fill the vacancy until the next Annual Meeting, at which time a trustee is elected to complete the term.

Article 13. The Minister:

The Minister shall be responsible for the conduct of worship within the congregation and the congregation's spiritual interests and affairs. The Minister keeps records of namings, weddings and deaths. The Minister provides spiritual guidance and practical counsel to those in distress. Our Minister will maintain and exemplify the church's faith in the free and respectful sharing of ideas. The Minister shall have freedom of the pulpit as well as freedom to express his or her opinion outside the pulpit.

The Minister shall be an ex-officio member of the Parish Board and of all committees except the Leadership Development Committee. The Minister is also chief of staff of the church. As such, the Minister—acting within the framework of the budget, and with the advice and consent of the Personnel Committee—manages the administrative affairs of the church; may hire, train, evaluate and terminate staff; and recommend salary actions and recommend policy changes.

The Minister will report matters of church life and operations to the board on a regular basis and to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

The Minister represents this church in the community at large.

In the event of a ministerial vacancy, the Parish Board and the Worship Committee will provide for temporary ministerial services. At the direction of the congregation, a Ministerial Search Committee may be created, consisting of four members selected by the congregation and three members selected by the Parish Board. As far as possible, the search committee is to follow UUA search and selection guidelines.

A Minister shall be called to serve upon recommendation of the Ministerial Search Committee by an 80% majority of qualified members of the congregation present at any congregational meeting legally called for the purpose. A quorum for such a meeting is to be constituted by 40% of the voting membership, rather than the 25% of the voting members, as called for in Article 5, Congregational Meetings.

The Minister may be dismissed by a majority vote of the qualified members of the church present at any congregational meeting legally called for the purpose, the quorum for such a meeting to be constituted by 40% of the voting members rather than 25% of the voting members as called for in Article 5, Congregational Meetings.

Article 14. Financial Matters

The Parish Board shall administer and manage the business of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Meadville.

At each annual business meeting, the Parish Board shall submit an operating budget for the coming fiscal year. The budgeted expenses may not exceed the anticipated income. A budget is adopted by a simple majority vote of the voting members present at the meeting. Once a budget is approved, the Board may authorize and expend the funds as budgeted. Committee chairs and Staff are empowered to spend amounts as budgeted annually. Although each committee normally administers the funds budgeted to it, the Board may set an amount above which a committee may not spend without prior approval of the Parish Board. The Board may reallocate budgeted funds, as long as the reallocation does not exceed five percent (5%) of the approved budget. No committee of the church or the Parish Board may enter into a contract involving an expenditure of more than \$5,000 except for approved budget items. The membership must approve any expenditure or obligation for indebtedness that exceeds \$5,000.00. The membership must also approve the purchase, sale, or mortgage of real property.

The right or authority to make contracts or binding promises for monetary outlay on behalf of the Church, whether oral or written, rests with the Parish Board, or its designated representatives. Checks and other orders on the funds or credit of the church, and all contracts and instruments in writing by the church, shall be valid and binding upon the church only when executed by such officers or other representatives as shall be designated and authorized by the Board.

Article 15. Endowment and Investment Funds

Oversight and management of endowment funds is vested with the Investment Committee of the church. At least five church members will act as investment managers for endowment funds: the Investment Committee Chair and at least four other members elected by the congregation who are knowledgeable of finance and investments. All decisions and recommendations of this committee require the approval of at least a majority of the entire committee.

The endowment is invested in a mix of growth and income fund(s) which carry a moderate amount of risk; these terms being generally accepted definitions in the banking business. The details of management shall rest with the Investment Committee, which acts in consultation with and with advice from professionals of the investment company. The yearly withdrawal from the endowment may not exceed 5% of the amount at the end of the previous year.

The endowment also should provide a financial cushion which enables the church to pay for unexpected emergency capital expenditures prior to mounting a specific fundraising campaign. If an emergency arises where time is of the essence to protect the health of the congregation and/or the value of the church's real property; at least four members

of the Parish Board, on the recommendation of the properties chair, may approve spending an amount up to 5% of endowment principle. This action must be immediately announced and explained to the congregation and plans put in action to repay the endowment over a reasonable time frame.

Article 16. Bylaws Review and Amendment:

These bylaws, so far as allowed by law, may be amended or replaced at any Congregational Meeting (as described in article 5) by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting. In years divisible by 5, and more often if needed, the President will appoint a special committee to review these bylaws and recommend changes to be approved and presented by the Parish Board to the congregation.

Once the Board has approved the proposed changes, the members of the church should be given an opportunity to review them and present additional suggestions for the Board's consideration. A full copy of all proposed changes shall be contained in the call to meeting. Only amendments as proposed in the call to meeting may be adopted at any given Congregational Meeting. No changes (other than corrections of grammar or spelling that do not affect the meaning of the document) may be made to the proposed amendments prior to a vote.

Article 17. Dissolution:

In the case of dissolution of the congregation, all of its property, real and personal, after paying all just claim upon it, shall be conveyed to and vested in the Unitarian Universalist Association or its legal successor, and the trustees of the congregation shall perform all action necessary to effectuate such conveyance.

Other unexpected expenditures must be brought before a special meeting of the congregation as defined in Article 5, Congregational Meetings, and approved by a vote of two-thirds of the members present. These funds generally should be no more than 20% of the principle amount of the endowment and treated as though they, too, are loans from the endowment to the congregation. An amortization plan also must be presented and approved at the special meeting.

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