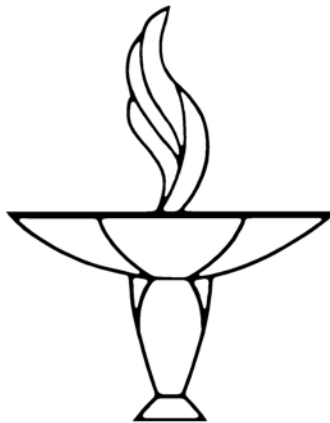


2014 – 2015  
Annual Report  
of the  
Unitarian Church of Harrisburg



1280 Clover Lane  
Harrisburg, PA 17113

1508 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17103

## **STAFF/PROGRAM REPORTS**

Board Of Trustees  
Finance  
Interim Minister  
Assistant Minister  
Pastoral Associates  
Music Ministry/Worship Arts  
Music Program Clover  
Clover Lane Coffee House  
Congregational Administrator  
Gift Card Program  
SOS  
Common Ground Café

Judy Linder  
Donna Hoskins-Helm  
Rev. Eric Posa  
Rev. Donna Renfro  
Marj Forster  
Sparkie Radcliffe  
Linda Hope  
Bart Carpenter  
Kel Kyle  
Kel Kyle & Tavia Flanagan  
John Hope  
Donna Hoskins-Helm

## **LAY LED MINISTRY REPORTS**

Adopt A Highway  
Amrit Yoga  
(Breast) Cancer Awareness  
CroneSpirit  
Green Sanctuary  
Helping People In Prison & Their Families  
Mindfulness Meditation Group  
Oliver Lagrone Scholarship  
Philosophy & Literature  
Women's Night Out  
UU Christian Fellowship

## **OTHER LAY LED GROUPS**

Crohn's and Colitis  
Clover Grove  
Humanism  
MS Walk-a-Thon  
QueenSpirit  
Rebuilding Together Greater Harrisburg  
Reproductive Justice

No Activity  
No Report  
No Activity  
No Activity  
No Report  
No Report  
No Report  
No Report

## **Board of Trustees**

*Submitted by Judy Linder, President*

*July 2014 – June 2015*

This year; my fourth as president, has been quite the journey. The following reports on both the challenges and the accomplishments of the past year.

### Challenges:

The Board began the year hopeful that by having equal staffing for music and Religious Growth and Learning at both campuses that giving would increase to adequately fund this endeavor. The budget for 2014-2015, approved by the congregation, had a deficit of about \$38,000. Unfortunately the rate of giving did not increase enough to balance the budget. At this time it looks like the church will have the budgeted deficit unless all pledges are paid in full.

Of course, the other large, but I believe not insurmountable, challenge that we are working through is the decline of the Reverends Christian and Kristin Schmidt to be the next settled senior ministers at UCH due to a vote that was not enough to allow for a successful settled ministry. They compassionately and succinctly explained their decision in a note that was shared with the congregation. Part of the note stated;

***"the conflicts that divided yesterday's vote are a poor foundation for a new ministry to take root, and are likely to significantly compromise our effectiveness. That is why the transitions office recommends ministers not accept calls with less than a 90% vote."***

I want to note that this outcome in no way diminishes the excellent work of our Search Committee. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Search Committee; Linda Hope, chairperson, Peter Adams, Karen Mallah, David Spear, Karen Sykes, Kendra Trufahnestock, and Nick Wilson. The Search Committee spent countless hours surveying the congregation to determine what qualities were most desired in a called minister. They reviewed resumes, interviewed candidates, and listened to each candidate preach. On behalf of the Board and the Congregation, I offer our gratitude for the work that you did this year.

### Accomplishments:

The Board developed and adopted a Safe Congregations Executive Limitation: The Executive shall not fail to assure a safe environment for children and adults.

The Board supported the work of the Communications Committee, led by Mary Henninger-Voss, and its monthly "Brew with the Board" sessions after services.

The Board approved a policy from the Oliver La Grone Scholarship Committee to restrict use of its funds for only the purposes of the Committee.

With input from congregational workshops, the Board adopted new Core Values, Mission Statement, and Ends.

#### Moving Forward:

Board members attend Finance Committee meetings and participate in the budget process. This participation will continue in the new year.

Board members serve on the newly formed Stewardship Committee. Additionally, with the formation of the Stewardship Committee, ably led by Jim Cavanaugh, stewardship is gaining ground at UCH. With the institution of the Committee, stewardship responsibilities were transferred from the minister to members of the congregation serving on this committee. Previously the minister coordinated the campaign. This year Jim, chairperson, Donna Hoskins-Helm, Patti Hazell, Michael Mark, Kathy Stewart, and I comprised this committee. Jim's goal was to reach out to every member and friend in the church and ask for a pledge. Using this approach, the committee was successful in increasing the number of people who pledge.

Board members will continue to work hard to engage the congregation and steer the church toward a shared vision.

I have faith that we can and will move through these challenging times coming out the other side having faced our fears and really worked through some difficult issues. I believe we can turn these challenges into opportunities. I believe in UCH and each of its members to come together and make this church work better than it ever has. I believe in us. I continue to envision a future with a healthy and thriving congregation. True, this will not happen overnight and it cannot happen without a great deal of committed, open, present, and compassionate work by every single member of the congregation. I believe we can do this. May it be so.

## **TRUSTEES**

### **Board of Trustees, 2014-2015**

#### **Officers & Term Ends**

Judy Linder, *President* June 2016

Laura Shemick, *Vice-President* June 2015

Chris Dutton, *Clerk* June 2017

**Trustees at Large** Nan Cavanaugh (June 2016), Tom Connors (June 2015), Laura Edinger (June 2015), Dave Forster (June 2016), Mary Henninger-Voss (June 2017 ), Dennis Hursh (June 2017 ), open (June 2016) ), Marilyn McHenry (June 2015), and Debbie Reihart (June 2017)

## **Finance**

*Submitted by Donna Hoskins-Helm*

*July 2014 – June 2015*

This fiscal year represents the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year where UCH has had a deficit budget. This year's budgeted deficit is \$37,000, although statements through the end of April suggest the year-end deficit could be smaller than what was budgeted.

We were extremely fortunate to avoid drawing money from the Endowment Fund at the end of last fiscal year (2013-2014) because of prudent monitoring of expenses, members who paid their pledge in full by the conclusion of the fiscal year, and members who exceeded their pledge. Additionally, we had a number of members who pre-paid their 2014-2015 pledge, which allowed us to continue to pay bills at the start of this fiscal year.

In April, the church welcomed Alicia O'Rorey as its new bookkeeper. Alicia has, and continues to serve as the Financial Administrator of the First Presbyterian Church of York, and brings valuable experience working both in a church setting and with our financial software. As we come to the end of this fiscal year we hope that once again members will pay their pledge in full (or exceed it) by June 30, and that members who can will pre-pay some or all of their 2015-2016 pledge, so that we can withdraw only a minimal amount from the Endowment Fund.

Recognizing that we will continue to have fiscal challenges in the next few years, the Finance Committee and the Board have worked diligently to produce a revised financial plan for next year that is as fiscally prudent as possible. While we regret those members we have lost, and respect those who have chosen to reduce their pledges, we also deeply appreciate those who continue to give sacrificially to keep this beacon of light in Harrisburg beaming brightly. We hope that as our future becomes clearer, our financial energy will be renewed and we will return to a robust financial position.

### Finance Committee

Don Hoskins

Donna Hoskins-Helm

Michael Mark

### Treasurer

Lois Voigt

**Rev. Eric W. Posa**

*Interim Minister*

*July 2014 – June 2015*

The Unitarian Church of Harrisburg has experienced as difficult a time in the life of a church as ever occurs. The vote of only 88% in favor of calling Revs. Christian and Kristin Schmidt – with 19 No votes out of a total vote count of 160 – surprised many. Apparently, the Revs. Schmidts' declining of that offer to call was also surprising to several of our members. I will note here something I have also shared elsewhere recently, for context: the claim that a minister should not accept a vote to call under 90%, is a claim I have heard from UU clergy, consistently, since shortly after I first became a UU in the mid-1990s, well before I even began seminary. The only ministers who disagreed with it, were those who said 90% is too **low** of a threshold, and argued instead for 95% or higher. This is because beginning a ministry with so many members already opposed to the ministry can all too easily become a setup for an unsuccessful ministry. My point being, the 90% threshold was not an arbitrary decision by the Schmidts, but rather long-standing conventional wisdom among our clergy. I am not surprised at all by their rejection of an offer with such a low vote.

There is a lot of work now to be done. Big decisions have to be made, some of them quickly, about the future ministry of this church, various aspects of its staffing structure, its budgetary needs for the upcoming year, and many other issues. As I write this brief report, just 8 days after the vote on calling the Schmidts – it seems appropriate now, to focus on this vitally important turn in the life of the church, more than on the various events that preceded it – I once again must give kudos to the Board of Trustees. I have seen this board devote incredible time, energy, and thought over the last week, thinking together through an incredibly complex set of issues, considering a wide array of church needs, and working toward a plan for the immediate future. Given that at least some people in our church are reporting that they are themselves feeling wary and mistrustful, and opinions on various needs of the church vary widely amongst us right now, it seems likely that at least some people will dislike any plan the board proposes. This is understandable, and such folk may or may not have good reasons for their disagreement with a particular proposal. But if anyone doubts the integrity, dedication, or seriousness with which the board is addressing these issues and developing such a plan, please hear that I personally have seen far too much evidence to the contrary, to possibly support such claims. This board is taking its role as leaders of this church with the highest possible commitment.

These coming weeks and months will be challenging for UCH. I hate that for you all, that these difficulties face you. Yet I can honestly say that while I, too, have concerns for your future, I am not hopeless for you. A solution can be found, people with deep differences can come back to the table with one another, and a new future can be forged. Whether these will happen will be determined over time, with work, and with a commitment that is larger than UCH as an institution. The future is unwritten; it is now yours to write together. Though my time with you has come to its end – my last day at UCH will be June 14 – please know that I leave you with hope for the best possible future for Unitarian Universalism in south-central Pennsylvania. It has been an honor to serve with you.

**Rev. Donna Renfro**

*Assistant Minister UCH*

*May 2014 – June 2015*

The two year renewable and changeable contract that set the conditions for my employment was signed in May 2014. In June I met with the Interim Senior Minister the Rev. Eric Posa to set the worship schedule for 2014-15. In July I attended a BOT training in Policy Governance and I moved to Harrisburg. I officially became employed and paid starting August 5, 2014.

The terms of my contract state that I serve in a ministerial role for the church, with primary oversight of the church's Religious Growth and Learning (RGL) program at both campuses, and campus pastor and outreach duties at the church's Market St. campus.

**RGL**

In July I began working with the RGL , Wendy Colby at Market and Jessica Chuckalovcak at Clover to set the curriculum to be used in classes 2014-2015 and to get children and youth registration forms completed. In August we finalized class groupings and the coordinators begin getting class lists, class notebooks, leader paperwork together in preparation for Leader "Teacher" Trainings at each campus later in August.

This was the first year to intentionally have all classes except youth group at both sites. Rev. Posa had convened a meeting of the youth and parents before I arrived, and allowed the youth to decide where they wanted to meet. At Market Street there were three class groupings. K-2 had 9 children registered, and averaged 5 children attended, taught by 9 different adults. Third to Fifth graders had twelve children registered, averaged 6 children attending, led by 8 different adults. Coming of Age, 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> graders, had 12 youth registered, averaged 8, led by 4 adults. One youth came for youth group, one youth came for services, and 4 youth regularly sang in the choir. Clover Lane started with 4 class groupings, and added a fifth. Pre-K and K became its own class, with 8 children registered and 4 attending regularly, led by 7 adults. 1st and 2nd Grade had 13 children registered and 6-7 attending regularly, with 8 adult leaders. Third to Fifth Grade had 10 children registered, with 5 attending regularly, led by 6 adults. Coming of Age had 5 youth registered with 3 attending regularly, led by 5 adults. Youth group had 13 registered, with 5 attending regularly, led by 3 adults regularly. There were approximately 15 visitors at Market Street throughout the classes during the year, and 12 visitors at Clover. Recapping totals, 38 registered at Market, 20 regular attendees; at Clover, 49 registered, 24 attending regularly.

The RGL program could not have happened this year without the tremendous help of Wendy Colby and Jessica Chuckalovcak. The initial job posting for Assistant Minister had them staying no later than December 31, and they knew that date to be October. I moved Sara Palmer, who had been managing the nursery, into the position at Clover Lane in November, and that change was relatively smooth. I had more difficulty at Market Street, and Kimber Dudley moved into the position in December, although she continued to also be a regular nursery worker. RGL has not been as smooth as it was with a full-time, 16 year, beloved DRE. It was the most challenging

part of my ministry this year, with having to be in the pulpit 3-4 times each month. I interacted with the children in All Ages services almost once a month at both Clover and Market St., and still did not get to know the children and parents as much as I would have liked.

The curriculum for the year for all groupings was World Religions. I chose not to change much about how RGL happened in the classrooms, with the type of curriculum and the RGL leaders timing commitments. I did add what we called Project Day, which allowed all ages to be together, building multi-age community, working on different projects. This was one of the highlights for both the children and adults – building community together. The Christmas Pageant was also a very special time for the children, parents, and those receiving this worship service.

### **Market Street Minister, Pastor**

This was my first year as the minister of a church, and the most I had led worship services. I worked very closely with Sparkie Radcliffe, director of Worship Arts at Market Street. Her understanding of worship in general and Market Street particularly allowed us to regularly create worship that fit those in attendance, and I felt very affirmed in my ministry there. Having the majority of what had been the Unisingers choose to be at Market St. added so much to worship services. Sparkie also managed all the lay-led services and Lay Liturgists, which allowed me to concentrate on the services I led.

The All Ages services are something I am glad to have brought to both campuses, to begin to have the children and youth understand this important part of life in a church. I appreciated the support for movement in the worship services, and that dance that happened throughout the year, and not quite as often as I hoped.

The worship services I led at Clover Lane had a different feel than Market Street. Working less in general at Clover and especially with the music directors there did not regularly allow the synergy than can happen in worship. This is something we will evaluate in planning how worship happens in the coming year. For the most part I felt those worship services were also meaningful to the congregants there.

### **Market Street Outreach**

This was the biggest learning curve for me during this year, having never worked in a neighborhood with such high levels of poverty, mental illness, addictions, and persons at varying levels in our (in?)justice systems. I had done a lot of anti-racism, anti-oppression and multi-cultural learning, and understanding the needs of that neighborhood was huge. Having Shared Ministry end their almost 40 year ministry there, and look at what UCH could do, led to the 501c3 being fully realized. Deciding which of the many clergy and community groups to put my attention was a great learning as well. Again, without those who have been doing this work for UCH, I could not have done as much as I have. I began to understand our neighbors who regularly attend our programs as our weekday members, and totally understood myself as pastor. It is a blessing that more of these weekday members began attending worship on Sunday, and several have joined the church.



### **Ministerial Growth and Learning**

As I am in Preliminary Fellowship with the UUA, I have certain things that are a part of my growth. Ordination is one of the major ones, and I am so thankful that UCH chose to ordain me, recognize me as a minister in our denomination, and allow me to have the title of Reverend. What a wonderful way to begin our ministry together! There was so much joy, effort, collaboration, gifts of service by so many congregants – I still get choked up thinking what it means to me, what a gift you gave and how grateful I am still and will always be.

Throughout the year I have attended various trainings that have helped me grow as a minister, and I am so appreciative of being able to take that time and have professional expense allowance to do so. I attended the LREDA, Liberal Religious Educators conference in the fall, and three ministerial trainings throughout the year. I have been acutely aware of our budget issues, and have cut costs where I thought we could. I continue to serve on the Steering Committee of the Allies for Racial Equity, as my main service to the denomination, and have participated in PA clergy gatherings throughout the year.

I have learned much from working with Rev. Eric Posa and the staff of UCH, as it has changed, decreased and expanded through this year of trying different ways of doing church here at UCH. I truly hope that the running of the church can be smoother as a result of lessons learned this year, and also frankly, by having more congregants participate in various ways. I am grateful for all the help and grace I have received in living into the new position created this year that I have been hired to do.

This was my first time to go through a ministerial search as a congregant or religious professional. I am saddened by the outcome of the search for a settled senior minister, and especially the hurt that has been expressed occasionally in ways that do not contribute to the health of the whole congregation. I look forward next year to working on healing some of these hurts, and working together to choose how this church wants to move forward into its future, as uncertain as it appears now. I have come to know and love you this year, and have great confidence in your ability to choose love and health for the future of UCH.

## **Pastoral Care Associates**

*Submitted by Marj Forster, Pastoral Care Coordinator*

*July 2014 – June 2015*

Pastoral Care Associates have now been in formation for 4 years. There are now a total of 7 volunteer Associates. Associates are Jim Cavanaugh, Kathleen Daugherty, Marj Forster, Nancy Hall, Joyce Hoskins, Kathy Stewart and Karen Sykes. Paul Showalter also served until March 2015. Our purpose is to provide one-on-one ministry through non-judgmental listening and supportive presence to UCH members. Associates can be present for short term need of high intensity or longer term need of low intensity.

### **Pastoral Care Activity**

- Face-to-face conversations with 16 members - **22**
- Face-to-face visits to 5 members - **8**
- Visits to 4 members in hospital, long term care facilities or homebound - **7**
- E-mail contacts to or on behalf of 19 members - **20**
- Phone conversations with or on behalf of 24 members - **33**
- Get well cards sent to 15 members - **15**
- Bereavement cards to families of 17 members - **17**
- Pet bereavement cards to 2 members - **2**
- One year anniversary of bereavement cards sent to 15 members - **15**
- Associates attended **5** member memorial services and assisted with **3** receptions
- Birth congratulations card sent to 1 member household - **1**

### **Chalice Hands Activity**

- Meals to 4 members - **8**
- Arranged emergency transportation for 1 member - **1**
- Provided information on transportation resources for 1 “community member” - **1**
- Rides provided for member - **2**

### **Organizational Activity**

- Convened 3 meetings of Associates
- 2 Associates assisted with the remembrance service at Clover Lane
- Participated in the SOS fair of lay led ministries at both campuses
- Presented on Pastoral Care Associates at a new member class at Market Street Campus
- Met With interim minister Rev. Eric Posa
- 3 Associates attended a luncheon held by Associate Karen Sykes with the ministerial candidates

## **Music Ministry and Worship Arts, Market Street**

*Submitted by Sparkie Radcliffe, Director*

*July 2014 – June 2015*

This was the first year that there were separate music programs at both churches. The Music Ministry at Market Street seeks to engage heart and mind in a spiritual connection through music. It encourages growth through creative expression and enables persons to participate in church in a different way. The Music Ministry at Market Street provides music that builds community, promotes healing, facilitates outreach, creates sacred space and enhances worship.

2014-2015 highlights:

### **Unisingers**

- Directed by Sparkie Radcliffe, accompanied by Julie Slaybaugh
- 25 -30 people regularly participated
- Provided special music 3 Sundays per month
- Sang for memorial services
- Sang for a Shared Ministry's Closing Service
- Sang with the Clover Lane Choir for Donna Renfro's ordination
- Presented Music for the Soul in April

### **Worship Band**

- Provided music for worship approximately twice monthly

### **Other musical opportunities**

- Ensemble musicians
- Small group singing
- Soloists
- Liturgical dance

### **Professional Activities**

- Served on the Shared Ministry/UCH Partnership team until 11/2014
- Served as a District Liaison for the UU Musicians Network.
- Received Facilitator Certification from the International Getting Ahead Program

## **Music Program at Clover Lane**

*Submitted by Linda Hope, Interim Choir Director*

*July 2014 – June 2015*

Music is vital to worship. It lifts up our values as UU's and as human beings. John Rutter, renowned choral director and composer, has said that "All of those people are pouring out their hearts and souls in perfect harmony which is kind of an emblem for what we need in this world when so much of the world is at odds with itself. That just to express in symbolic terms what it's like when human beings are in harmony, that's a lesson for our time and for all time..." He goes on to say that "a church or school without a choir is like a body without a soul."

With the move to two separate services this year, Clover Lane began with a new Music Director, Ann Hossler. For personal reasons, she had to leave in November and we now have an Interim, Linda Hope. Newly formed choirs do not have repertoires; so much of this year has been devoted to developing ours. Singing together is a spiritual practice and the choir has been singing almost every Sunday even if just a simple Introit. One of our goals is to develop congregational singing and that has happened this year. Along with the choir, smaller ensembles have shared their gifts when appropriate and one moving bagpipe solo helped us remember those who have passed this year. There are many talented musicians among us and hopefully this coming year we can integrate even more of these folks into our worship.

Our newly formed choir has 12-15 members who participate regularly. The group is dedicated to bringing music in which all may participate and enlarge our worship experience. We all feel it is our ministry to the congregation. We proudly wear our new choir stoles woven for us by member Wendy Colby.

## **Clover Lane Coffee House**

*Submitted by Bart Carpenter*

*July 2014 – June 2015*

The year 2014-15 marked the 12th year for Clover Lane Coffee House, its eighth year under the direction of Bart Carpenter and Dale Dourte. The coffee house is a family-friendly, smoke-free venue for local and visiting artists, and we have gained a loyal following in the community for providing high-quality music at a very modest price. Tickets are \$10 (\$45 for season pass to all nine concerts).

The season featured a diverse group of artists. In collaboration with Susquehanna Folk Music Society, we offered a Middle East-focused concert (Texas-based Circa Paleo) and a Japanese folk fusion (New York-based Hirosha Tsukamot). We intercepted Monica McIntyre (New Orleans), Hungry Town (Vermont), and Amy Black (Boston) on tour and scheduled three local artists: Womack & Lowery, Vulcans, and Steve Rudolph Jazz Trio. Total attendance for the season was 411, with an average attendance of 46.

We have also scheduled an “off season” coffee house for June 19, 2015.

Many thanks to UCH members and friends for their attendance. Special thanks to all who have hosted visiting artists and/or assisted with refreshments and logistics over the past year. If you have artist recommendations or ideas for 2015-16, please pass them along.

**Kel Kyle**  
*Congregational Administrator*  
*July 2014 – June 2015*

A new design and name for the weekly email blast aka "News You Can UU's" continues to be emailed to members, friends, and guests weekly. Approximately 220 congregants open these weekly emails. This is an increase of 25% since last fiscal year.

Monthly mailings of The Reporter and Touchstones are done for those without email access or who are unable to attend regularly. Both publications are also available on our new website.

Began developing the new UCH website which includes but is not limited to: general UCH info/FAQ's, programs we offer, upcoming events, online forms for News You Can UU's submissions, Room Reservations and contact forms for staff and board. Added audio files from both ministers and guest speakers to the website. Created an official UCH Facebook page and Twitter account which are updated regularly. The website development will remain an ongoing project during the next fiscal year.

Ongoing data collection for the preparation of the winter 2015 deadline to submit UUA Certification information.

Converted existing bookkeeping system to ACS General Ledger.

Monitored status of financial accounts with weekly/daily reporting to Sr. Minister and Treasurer as needed/requested.

Hired and supervises our office assistant, Tavia Flanagan.

Administrative:

- Prepared and processed accounts payable weekly; reconciled account and assisted in preparing monthly finance board reports; prepare miscellaneous finance reports as requested. Trained bookkeeper to take over the majority of these responsibilities.
- Entered pledges into the ACS database
- Managed human resource responsibilities for staff.
- Coordinated and/or supervised the gift card program.
- Processed new member information (entry in database and contact list, add to UU World mailing, etc.).
- Prepared service materials as needed and recorded attendance.
- Purchased office, janitorial, worship and other supplies and equipment as needed.
- Prepared general correspondence; prepared and arrange for reproduction and delivery of printed or duplicated materials.
- Rental agent for church properties including scheduling, contract preparation, collection of rental fee and security deposit, dispensing and retrieving keys.

#### Communications and Scheduling:

- Answer phones and assist callers, monitor voicemail.
- Created an online calendaring system displayed on the new website.
- Streamlined process for room reservations.
- Maintains membership database; update member list annually for submission to UUA for certification.

#### Building and Grounds:

- Maintained office equipment; arranged for repair and servicing of office equipment as needed.
- Identified appropriate contractors and arranged for needed repairs at both campuses including but not limited to: downstairs doors, new thermostats when existing system failed and new compressor for refrigerator at Clover Lane. Replacing or repairing alarm system monitors and coordinated removal of oil from Market Street former heating system. Secured a credit toward future heating/cooling services.
- First contact for alarm system at Market Street in the event the alarm is activated.

## **Gift Card Program**

*Submitted by Kel Kyle, Congregational Administrator  
with input from Tavia Flanagan, Gift Card Coordinator  
July 2014 – June 2015*

We continue to provide a mail-order grocery Gift Card Program that currently supports the annual operating budget of the Church. Purchasing these gift cards allows participants to make an additional contribution to the church without spending additional money beyond what they would spend on their groceries or other purchases, such as gas through three participating vendors. Members and friends are welcome to purchase \$50 or \$100 grocery gift cards from Giant, Weis, and Karns. The Church receives 10% of the face value of cards sold for Giant and 5% for Weis and Karns cards. Cards are mailed for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

We sold cards during coffee hour one to two times per month in the late summer and early fall of 2014 at both campuses. During this time we did see some new faces as well as regulars who increased their orders a bit, but found we needed to streamline our internal procedures, organize and train a team of volunteers to continue this practice. We expect to start this part of the program up again during the next fiscal year. Once everything is in place, steady advertising in the weekly News You Can UU's and The Reporter will commence. Special thanks to Laura Shemick for her assistance in the Sunday sales as she was a cornerstone to its success and a regular volunteer.

In February of 2015, Tavia Flanagan, our office assistant completed her training on the gift card program and is now the coordinator with Kel supervising the program.

Kel is in the process of writing up information about the gift card program and will be including sign-up forms, frequently asked questions, payment information, etc. which will be posted on the new church website by the end of the fiscal year.

As of this writing, approximately 70 people participate monthly in the program with about 25 more on an occasional basis.



## **SOS (Share Our Service/Strengthen Our Spirit)**

*Submitted by John Hope*

*July 2014 – June 2015*

SOS (Share Our Service/Strengthen Our Spirit) was formed by Rev. Eric Posa in the fall of 2013 to promote volunteerism within UCH and to promote spiritual development through service. Its first activity was development of the Discovery of Gifts form that more than 60 church members and friends filled out. The results are to be entered into a computerized database that can be queried to provide lists of potential volunteers for specific functions. Manual searches were conducted at the request of Beautify UCH for those interested in working on the grounds at our two campuses, at the request of those planning the ordination of Rev. Renfro to work on building clean-up, food preparation and service, and other tasks, and the Auction Committee.

We hope to ask people to update their online church profiles, including the Discovery of Gifts form, each year and to ensure that the forms are made available to all new members so they can be added to the database.

Other lay-led ministries and administrative/operational teams have been advised of the availability of the information if they have needs, but so far none have asked for assistance. SOS also sponsored the SOS Fair at each campus at the end of January, 2015 at which more than 25 church organizations had displays to recruit new members. Many people attended each fair and commented positively on the experience. Several of the participating groups did receive additional members and were urged to contact them and integrate them into their activities.

Committee members met with the candidates for senior co-minister during their candidating week to talk about the work SOS has done to date and their experience in recruiting volunteers in other churches they have served.

One of the things we hope to be able to do in the short-term is to establish an online job posting for one-time and time-limited jobs. The posting would include a brief job description and estimated time commitment so that people would know the extent of what they are volunteering for.

## **Common Ground Café**

*Submitted by Donna Hoskins-Helm, committee chair*

*July 2014 – June 2015*

The Common Ground Cafe community breakfasts are held on the second and last Saturdays of every month from 9-11am at the Market Street campus (1508 Market Street). The breakfasts offer a restaurant-style venue in which hundreds of UCH neighbors and friends from the Allison Hill community gather to enjoy each other over a good meal.

Volunteers are encouraged to serve the community while learning a little about themselves in the process. The breakfasts have consistently been one of the largest gatherings of community members in the Allison Hill neighborhood. UCH members have partnered with a number of area churches, universities, hospitals, and community organizations to provide support (both financial and staffing) for the breakfast, and many community members now consistently volunteer in helping the breakfast be a consistent success. Each breakfast is hosted by 25-30 volunteers who sign up based on their availability. Anyone interested in volunteering should email [commongroundbreakfast@gmail.com](mailto:commongroundbreakfast@gmail.com).

The family craft area is always well attended, as both the young and the young-at-heart gather to participate in crafts and reading activities. Be sure to admire the newly decorated coffee mugs that are the result of a recent breakfast craft activity.

Effective January 1, 2015 the Common Ground Cafe is now part of the newly formed 501(c)(3) Gather The Spirit for Justice (GTS). This will enable us to increase our funding sources by applying for grants and other funding sources not available to strictly religious entities. More information on GTS can be found at [gatherthespirit.webs.com](http://gatherthespirit.webs.com).

## **Lay Led Ministries**

### **Adopt a Highway**

*Submitted by John Hargreaves*

The Adopt a Highway cadre insures that two miles of Lindle Road near the church is policed 3 times a year. We don our orange vests spring, summer and fall, collecting about twenty bags of trash over the course of two hours.

We achieved our goal of at least 13 bags of trash during each clean up this year. Periodically this meant bringing our own trash as our outreach efforts to the drivers on Lindle Road has proven effective and their contributions have diminished. We proved up to the challenge. We welcome younger (under age 70) volunteers as the creakiness of the joints of this geriatric crowd has slowed us down, particularly in regard to hurdling the guardrails. Lee took a heck of a face plant when, during his sixth high jump of the morning, his toe hooked the metal. No teeth were lost.

### **Amrit Yoga**

*Submitted by Ed Sykes, facilitator*

Amrit Yoga sessions are held on Monday nights at 6:30 PM and are a time for self-reflection and spiritual awareness. Sessions are free and last about an hour and fifteen minutes. The group follows the instruction of Amrit Desai through the use of a CD. The positions are intended to provide a complete sequence to improve flexibility and physical well being through the release of stress. The goal is to become more spiritually aware of the body and its signals in order to lead a more productive life. The sessions do not require any prior experience and everyone works at their own level. You are encouraged to wear loose fitting clothes and bring a yoga mat. We would welcome any that wish to come and to see for themselves. This year beginning in July 2014 to this week the group has had an average attendance of 5 people per session and a total attendance of over 200.

### **(Breast) Cancer Awareness**

*Submitted by Jim Cavanaugh with help from Debbie Reihart and Nej Meflah*

We fielded eleven participants for the annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer (MSABC) walk on October 18, supporting both Yvonne Hursh and Kate Carpenter. Both participated along with many family and friends. In addition to our intrepid walkers and supportive cheerleaders, we had many wonderful supporters who pledged their support for the walkers. We raised a lot of money, had a good time getting lots of fresh air, and look forward to a larger

team this coming October. Being with thousands of women and men in a million shades of pink is an uplifting experience, and seeing the number of survivors is truly inspiring.

We provide informative literature in the pamphlet rack in the Clover Lane Common Room about breast cancer support, advocacy and research.

Thanks to Debbie Reihart's creative ability we had a presence at the Share Our Services fairs at Clover Lane and Market Street and attracted several supporters.

## **CroneSpirit**

*Submitted by Joan Hellman*

The new lay-led ministry, CroneSpirit, meets on the third Tuesday from 10 am - 12 noon in Fuller Chapel at the Clover Lane campus. We are:

- A discussion group for women over 65, both UCH members and non-members
- Honoring a crone tradition of conscious female aging and self-power
- For personal enrichment, such as through intellect, knowledge, comfort or companionship, anticipating a maximum of 10 women
- Sharing, listening and learning, without gossip or speaking disrespectfully to or about each other

During the past year our topics, led by our members, have included: End of Life Decisions, Sexuality, Housing Arrangements As We Age, Soul Collage, Joy (What Is Meaningful in Your Life), Caregiving, Responding to Changes, Books Found Useful in the Aging Process, Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays: How They Have Changed for You, Personal Expertise: Massage, Maintaining Health, Decades Life Review, and Dressing After 65.

## **Green Sanctuary**

*Submitted by Rachel Mark*

In 2014, Green Sanctuary has been focused on education about and response to climate change. Film discussions were offered, including Wisdom to Survive, Do the Math, Groundswell Rising, and Years of Living Dangerously.

In March 2014, UCH members and friends of Jitokeze hosted an event to help fund an ongoing environmental justice project in Kenya. Philipine (Pini) Kidulah shared a slide presentation and talked to us about successes and challenges of growing food and peace-keeping in the drought-stricken region of West Pokot, Kenya. Pini founded Jitokeze Wamama Wafrika, which teaches primarily women and girls survival skills in worsening conditions caused by climate change.

In March 2014, Green Sanctuary also hosted Mark Lichty, who presented his film, Groundswell Rising. The film captures the harms of fracking. This outreach event was attended by 70 participants.

In July 2014, a fundraising event was held for Pennsylvania Environmental Defense Fund. Panelists John Childe, lead attorney for PEDF, John Quigley, former Secretary of Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and Richard Martin, Director of PA Forest Coalition, discussed the strategies and function of PEDF. \$3000 was raised and donated to PEDF.

On 10/22/14, in collaboration with PA-Interfaith Power & Light, Green Sanctuary invited and hosted Michael Dowd, who spoke about the intersection of faith, ecology, and climate change.

In 2014, Green Sanctuary members participated in many direct action events, including Stop Cove Point in Baltimore on 2/20/14, Stop Cove Point rally in Washington DC on 7/13/14, and the large climate rally in NYC on 9/21/14.

## **Helping People in Prison and their Families (HPIPF)**

*Submitted by Jim Cavanaugh with help from Margaret Carrow, John Hargreaves, Chris Dutton and Lisa Acri*

Since beginning in December 2001, this lay led ministry has helped women and men in prison and their families in lots of ways. We continue to partner with the PROGRAM –It's about change, and the PA Prison Society. We support both the Prison Action Committee of Christian Churches United and also Decarcerate PA, a group working to halt construction of new state prisons.

Our highest-involvement project is the weekly contribution of Sunday's Patriot-News classified want ads. How is it high-involvement? Because so many UCH people bring them to the Sunday morning service at either Clover Lane or Market Street. Volunteer couriers take them to the PROGRAM's Community Center (at 1515 Derry Street) where women from work release and clients from the neighborhood, many without computer skills, use them to seek jobs. THANK YOU! Please keep them coming!

We help the women at the Dauphin County's Work Release Center. Our activities there include:

- Jim Cavanaugh's service as chaplain to the women at Work Release through twice-weekly visits (plus occasional delivery of flowers from the Sunday church services and leading a Chapel Talk inside the prison most Thursdays), and
- The creative writing workshop led by Lisa Acri, Mary Henninger-Voss and their friend Niurka Reyes- Garcia has continued, in its 8<sup>th</sup> year! When the group started, it was difficult at first to secure consistent attendance because the women's work schedules vary so widely, but with staff support, a few more women attend and liked it. Those

who attend get a lot out of it, they tell us. The books of poetry they have produced are displayed on our bulletin board in the Common Room, Clover Lane.

We continue to support the Prison Action Committee of Christian Churches United by:

- Providing drivers to transport women from Promise Place to the monthly Community Connections Reentry Breakfast,
- Sponsoring the breakfast each year at Market Street (Please save this coming September 19<sup>th</sup> on your calendar for our next one), and
- Helping the annual Concert of Hope succeed in raising funds to support CCU's Prison Ministry. Many do not realize that the Associate Chaplain at Dauphin County Prison is supported by CCU. The Concert's fundraising is important to help support that cost for Christian Churches United

And we educate ourselves by reading a book together each spring. This year we read, and later discussed, ***Random Family: Love, Drugs, Trouble, and Coming of Age in the Bronx***, by Adrian Nicole LeBlanc, a National Book Critics Circle Award finalist.

## **Mindfulness Meditation Group**

*Submitted by Chuck Daley*

*"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever." -- Mahatma Gandhi*

Mindfulness is an acquired skill, practiced while meditating but vital in our everyday lives. Mindfulness is helpful in reducing stress, managing pain, focusing attention, and overcoming habitual negative behavior. Mindfulness can also point the way to spiritual practice, calming the mind and developing awareness and insight. The ability to be mindful is strengthened through consistent practice. Mindfulness Meditation Group provides a space for us to practice together in support of one another.

- Everyone is welcome. Affiliation with any organization is neither promoted nor discouraged.
- Engaging in safe, respectful and welcoming conduct is the only expectation.
- Participation is entirely voluntary.
- Format: Two 25 minute periods of meditation with a short reading, discussion and rest between. Stay for one sitting or both.
- Bring your own seating or use our cushions, benches, and chairs.
- Every Tuesday, 7:00 pm, Fuller Chapel, upper level, Clover Lane.

## **Oliver LaGrone Scholarship Committee**

*Submitted by Margaret Carrow*

The mission of the Oliver LaGrone Scholarship Committee is to generate, broaden and nurture postsecondary aspirations of Harrisburg School District students by providing personal support and advocacy; providing financial assistance for post-secondary education; involving Unitarian Church of Harrisburg (UCH) members in action toward this purpose; and maintaining the legacy of Oliver LaGrone as the inspiration for the Scholarship.

Mr. LaGrone was a nationally noted poet, sculptor, philosopher, and humanitarian. He was also a member of UCH while he lived in Harrisburg in the 1970's. This year, the OLS Committee awards a \$1,500 scholarship, renewable for up to four years (a total of \$6,000), for post-secondary education to a Harrisburg School District graduate. Also, a mentor is identified from the UCH congregation with expertise in the scholar's area of study. This mentor offers advice and guidance to the scholar throughout his or her education and sometimes beyond. A representative of the OLS Committee participates in the annual Harrisburg High School Awards Ceremony usually held in May at the school's auditorium. At this ceremony, high school seniors are recognized by the faculty and community at-large for their achievements. At this ceremony, the representative of the OLS Committee recognizes the scholar and the nature of the program are presented to all in attendance.

A Selection Panel was assembled from members of the UCH Congregation and the community at large, to review applications, interview finalists, and choose the scholarship recipient. This year, Charlotte Henninger-Voss represented the youth of our congregation. Wendy Colby represented the UCH congregation. Shamaine Daniels of the Harrisburg City Council represented the Harrisburg community. Out of this process, a new scholar was selected in April; Mark Crespo, a senior at John Harris High School in the Harrisburg School District. Mark will be a freshman at Penn State, Harrisburg Campus in the fall, where he plans to major in criminal justice or pre-law. John Hargreaves will be his mentor.

### **Continuing scholars are:**

2011 - Durrell Burns - Millersville University - Secondary Education – History

2012 - Stanley Lumpkin, Jr. - Shippensburg University - Sports Management

2013 - Dauoda Kassimou – Penn State University, Harrisburg Campus – electrical engineering

2014 – Merced Ramirez – Messiah College – International Business

The highlights of 2014 – 2015 annual coffee houses and the LaGrone Artist Collective fall sales; the amazing fundraiser conceived by and carried out by many artists in the congregation. The Collective beautiful works of art have blessed the congregation and the Oliver LaGrone Scholarship Fund, bringing in over \$2000.00 for the Fund!

**OLIVER COLLECTIVE:**

*Opening Learning Integrating Visioning Experiencing Reflecting*

**What**

- A group of contributors of personal art work as premium gifts for contributions to the Oliver LaGrone Scholarship Fund
- The members of which support each other in personal artistic growth

**Who**

- Friends of the Oliver LaGrone Scholarship Fund
- Members and friends of the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg

**Why**

- To support social action through the Scholarship
- To strengthen the financial base of the LaGrone Scholarship Fund
- To establish an environment of safety and reflection for those wishing to co-explore their artistic capacity and their work's quality

The OLIVER COLLECTIVE: \$19,200 for the Oliver LaGrone Scholarship Fund; 12 shows, Spring 2009 thru Fall 2014!

This year to help with the yearly requirements of the Oliver LaGrone Committee, many volunteers have been recruited to assist. This group of over fifteen volunteers has aptly been named the LaGrone Groupies. The standing Scholarship Committee members are – Cordell, Lee, Jessica, Amy and Margaret. With the help of the Groupies, the Scholarship Committee plans to keep our momentum going! Additionally, the OLS scholarship was available on online saving printing cost for the applications, posters and fast facts sheets. We sponsored a spring LaGrone Benefit Author Reading and a Collective Sales at Celebration Sunday at Ahmadeyya Mosque. Contact Chairperson for Oliver LaGrone: Margaret Carrow at 260 – 9449 for more information about the groupies or the committee.

Join us at the LaGrone Award festivities May 31st 2015 (either campus). The formal LaGrone Award Service is during the 11:00 am service at Market St and a reception is on the lower level fellowship hall following the 11:00 am service at Market St to welcome the new scholar. The OLSC award booklet will be at Clover Lane for scholar update and a cake will be served following that service, also. In FY 2016, OLSC plans to raise the amount of scholarship to \$6,500.00 and to generate visibility and goodwill throughout the congregation.



## **Philosophy and Literature Discussion Group**

*Submitted by Don Brown*

This group this year continued the format it has been following for over 30 years. The purpose of this group is to find, read together, and discuss books of fiction and non-fiction of excellence. We believe reading great books helps us better understand ourselves, our culture, people who are different from us from other cultures, and the important issues of our time. We have learned over the years that discussing good books also provides an opportunity for members in our group to share at a deeper level how they are experiencing and understanding their own lives. Each year we select 11 books, one for each month while one session in December is devoted to selecting next year's books. We usually meet on the second Sunday of the month in the evening either at Clover Lane or at one of our members homes. For information about this group, contact Don Brown at [dabrown57@gmail.com](mailto:dabrown57@gmail.com).

## **UU Christian Fellowship**

*Submitted by Jim Cavanaugh*

We affiliate with the national UU Christian Fellowship (UUCF, [www.uuchristian.org](http://www.uuchristian.org)) and gather periodically during the church year. We have had an organized Christian presence at the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg since October 2013. At first we were led by Linda and John Hope, whose efforts kept us going the following spring.

In this church year, we had communion services on September 28, November 23, and April 26. The first two were led by Jim Cavanaugh and the April service by Rev. Richard Gordon.

Thanks to Laurie Brown's creative talents, we had a presence at the Share Our Services fairs at Clover Lane and Market Street, and signed up a number of interested UUs.

Future UU Christian communion services are planned, dates to be announced.

## **Women's Night Out (formerly Craft Group)**

*Submitted by Linda Brown*

Women's Night Out is a lay-led ministry of the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg. We focus on the friendship and support of our members and in giving back to our local community by contributing each month to the Ecumenical Food Pantry. We meet for dinner at local restaurants on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm, alternating monthly between the East and West Shores.