

UUFB

# Annual Report

2024-2025 Program Year



UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
FELLOWSHIP  
*of* BOZEMAN

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# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bozeman Annual Report: 2024-2025 Program Year

## Contents

Minister’s Annual Report .....	3
Board of Directors Report.....	4
Building and Grounds Committee .....	6
Communications Committee .....	7
Finance Committee .....	8
Fundraising.....	9
Governance & Leadership Committee.....	9
Hospitality & Membership Committee.....	10
Legacy Giving.....	11
Lifespan Religious Exploration Committee .....	12
Humanist Spiritual Pluralism Group .....	13
Minister Search Committee .....	14
Social Activities .....	15
Stewardship Committee .....	17
Social Justice Action Committee .....	18
Family Promise of Gallatin Valley.....	19
Sunday Services Committee .....	20
Other .....	21
Hiking Group.....	21
Historian .....	21
Men’s Group.....	21

# Minister's Annual Report

May 2025

This third year of Interim Ministry was quite an experiment. After serving UUFB full time and living in the Bozeman community for almost two years, the ministry was shifted to a half-time, hybrid commitment. I moved back to the Puget Sound Area of Washington State at the end of June 2024 and did not travel to Bozeman in July or August of that year. From September through May, I made 7 trips to Bozeman: flying in on Saturday afternoon, working from Sunday to the following Sunday. This allowed me to be in the pulpit on Sundays 15 times and available in person for 56 days from September through the end of May. This experiment proves that part-time, hybrid ministry can be done!

Worship. The Sunday Service Committee continued to plan high quality worship services around all the times I could not be in person in Bozeman. They carried these responsibilities with innovation, competence and grace. It has been a wonderful experience to create worship with the Committee, lay leaders, and others in the UUFB community. Thank you to all the congregants who came forward to share their stories from the pulpit.

Pastoral Care. The Caring Team at UUFB is very active in touching base with people about physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Due to the hybrid and part-time nature of my ministry, I suggested and the Caring Team and Board agreed to ask Reverend Roxy Klingensmith if she would be on call for pastoral care and be our outreach for UUFB members and friends who were hospitalized, in care homes, or just needed a friendly visit or call. Reverend Roxy has agreed to continue in this capacity in the months to come.

Staff. As most of you are aware, we have incredibly competent, pleasant, caring, and hard-working staff. Megan and Laurel continue to provide high quality and deeply inspirational music. Christy worked very independently this year with her normal efficiency, care, and great sense of humor. At the end of 2024, Beth Witte stepped down from her position as the Coordinator of Children's Religious Exploration. Soon thereafter, Cameron Patterson was hired to fill that role. We were all sad to hear that Cameron would not be able to continue with UUFB past the end of May. The position is currently advertised and interviewing will begin soon.

Board. I wish to thank the Board for their general support and flexibility during this experiment with hybrid, part-time ministry.

Conclusion. What an incredible journey we have taken together. I will remember all of your faces and the contributions you make. During my time with UUFB, I completed all of my Unitarian Universalist Ministerial Formation requirements and now have Full Fellowship with the UUA – of which I am chest-puffed-out proud. And I could not have done it without you. Best wishes and blessings as you continue with your deep care for one another, the Bozeman community and our wider world.

Submitted by Rev. Margo Rinehart

# Board of Directors Report

**President:** Barbara Tylka

**Past President:** Jeane Moe

**Vice President:**

**Treasurer:** Janine Roberts

**Secretary:** Joy LaClaire

**Members-at-Large:** Barb Lantz, Rene Keating

**Ex-Officio:** Rev. Margo Reinhart

**Board Retreat:** 9/14/2024, facilitated by Summer Albayati. Discussed successes and challenges of UUFB. Set goals for the year.

## **Building and Grounds:**

1. Approved the installation of new front doors, making the building more secure and eliminating false alarms when the old doors rattled in the wind.
2. Approved the placement of a window between the nursery and CRE. This project will be funded by a directed donation.
3. An ongoing issue is the placement of a fence or some type of screen to prevent light intrusion into our neighbor's house when we are having events and services. Tonya Stevens is currently working on this issue; is in discussions with the homeowner.

**Committees:** Committees had been coming to the Board for approval of activities that were within their charges and budgets. The Board reminded them that this was not necessary. Our goal is that, by encouraging committees to accept their autonomy, there would be more interest in joining committees. Further, committees would be able to move more quickly because they did not have to wait to hear from the Board, which meets monthly. It does seem to be working. For example, the Social Activities Committee has planned and executed a number of events.

## **Policies:**

- We updated and combined the policies on child safety and childcare for events. (UUFB Safety Policy for Children and Youth)
- After having many chairs ruined when they were lent out, then returned soaking wet, we created a policy that states that neither chairs nor tables will be loaned out for non-UUFB events. (Rental Equipment Policy)
- We had received requests from groups—non UUFB, but consistent with our principles—to put their information in our lobby. In light of the limited space there, we created a policy that does not allow that. Tonya is looking into getting a display rack for this type of info that we could mount on the wall near the coffee service. (UUFB Advocacy and Support Policy)
- Because of recent changes in the political atmosphere of this country, we made a policy on allowable political discourse, in accordance with IRS guidelines. The reasons for the changes and how to implement them were covered in a separate letter to the fellowship. (Policy on Lobbying)
- General safety was addressed in two new policies: Weapons Policy and Objectionable Behavior Policy.

**Minister Search:** When it became apparent that we would not have a contract minister prior to Rev. Margo's departure, the Board developed a plan for covering the needs of the fellowship with Rev. Roxy continuing in pastoral care and working with the caring committee, Sandy Kindt as the interim Coordinator of Religious

Exploration, and Rev. Duffy Peet providing staff supervision, assisting with leadership development, working with the Sunday Services Committee, and being an ex officio member of UUFB committees with the committee chairs conducting the meetings.

### **OUTSTANDING ISSUES**

1. Insurance Policy for UUFB. Our current policy has an extensive list of exclusions which need to be reviewed and addressed as necessary.
2. Address the fence issue with our neighbor that was previously addressed in this report.
3. Creating an ICE response policy.
4. How we want to address emergencies during services. (For example, when the man entered the lobby a year ago and began swearing then stormed out.) Do we need training of greeters? A group of safety volunteers?
5. Continued search for a contract minister.

Submitted May 25, 2025

# Building and Grounds Committee

## Committee Members

Tonya Stevens – Coordinator                      Mike Clark – guy who knows everything about the building  
Joy LaClaire – gardener extraordinaire      Randy Babbitt – guy learning everything about the building

## Committee's Mission

We oversee and regulate the use of the building by internal and outside groups, maintain and repair the building and equipment, and keep up the grounds and flower beds.

## Activities/Accomplishments

### Grounds:

- Parking lot was cracked-filled and top-sealed in summer 2024.
- Joy LaClaire has led several gardening help events in 2024-2025, engaging both long-time members and newcomers to help with the beautiful gardens out front.
- Planted barberry bushes on the north side of the building to deter roof access by teenagers.
- Replaced hose cart and hoses for watering.
- Larry Carrucci pruned trees in spring 2025.

### Building repairs:

- Ants invaded the building again. More caulking helped. We now run a plug-in electric anti-ant sonic device in both classrooms.
- Barbara Lantz repaired the pocket door slide mechanism for the back bathroom.
- The back door once again refused to open in the cold. Randy Babbitt concocted a door warming system which seemed to help keep the door in use.

### Building use:

- Regular use by committees, chalice groups, members' drumming group, and MT Women's Chorus.
- Occasional use by both Bozeman Tenants United (BTU) and local music teachers for recitals.
- Anticipate sharing space with Temple Beth Shalom this late summer/fall as their building undergoes remodeling.

## Recommendations for Next Program Year

- Collaborate with back yard neighbors to construct a NEW fence to prevent headlights in our parking lot from shining into home.
- Install window between the two classrooms for safety.
- Replace dying aspen trees in front of building. Begin new landscaping regimen with gradual replacement of grassy areas with clover.
- Repair building wall holes caused by snow removal equipment.
- Replace several bookshelves in northside hallway.
- Train more of the congregation in the ways and means of the building.
- Review record keeping process and update to include files to Google Drive.

## Report Submitted by Tonya Stevens

# Communications Committee

## Committee Members

- Neil Schwarzwald
- Peg Wherry

## Committee's Mission

Develop and implement strategies for internal communications, to better engage members and friends, and external communications, to present UUFB to the broader community. Areas of focus include webpage design and content, social media, branding, email, newsletters, and announcements. The Team prepares or revises related policies and practices as needed. This Team is being re-formed.

## Activities/Accomplishments

We ran an Earth Day ad in the Chronicle on April 22—a chance for us to stand out for our environmental justice values. We will probably continue to have an ad in the Chronicle's "Snapshot" newcomers booklet.

We reviewed and drafted changes to all parts of our website except the Member/Friends section, which will require a separate (thorough) effort. New content for visitors and improved navigation should make us more welcoming.

UUFB had a table at Catapalooza in August and at the Pride event on May 31.

## Recommendations for Next Program Year

Get a full committee! Volunteers are especially needed to beef up our use of social media.

Develop a comprehensive promotion strategy –to add social media to print to gain recognition. Participation in social justice activities might involve "branding" of UUFB and requires little terms of funding.

Add short videos ("reels") describing the Fellowship to prospective visitors to the website. –Such videos on social media linked to our website, featuring members and friends, could describe our Fellowship and tell prospective visitors who we are. A UU consultant may be a useful source on the topic.

Revision to the UUFB Email Policy – A draft was prepared which included a separate email group list to facilitate communications not now allowed on the listserv under the current policy (personal sales, non-UUFB charities and events, advertising member businesses or events in which a member has a direct monetary interest). This draft was not submitted for Board approval. Further discussion is needed to determine what changes may be needed to the current policy.

## Report Submitted by Peg Wherry and Neil Schwarzwald

# Finance Committee

## Committee Members

- Bruce DePriester – Chair
- Janine Roberts
- Peg Wherry
- David Andes
- David Rockafellow

## Finance Committee Mission

The UUFB Finance Committee assists the UUFB Board in managing the financial resources of the Fellowship and overseeing the general financial health of the congregation. The Finance Committee works with the Office Administrator in the preparation and review of monthly financial reports, the annual Budget and reviewing UUFB's financial health with the Board at least twice annually. The committee also makes recommendations to the UUFB Board on key financial issues and policies including internal controls.

## Activities/Accomplishments

1. The Finance Committee has solidified UUFB's financial position with prudent monitoring of expenditures, and managing resources to enable establishment of significant reserves set aside for future needs.
2. The Finance Committee works with the UUFB Investment Committee in managing the Fellowship's assets and investments.
3. The Finance Committee meets monthly if necessary but at a minimum meets quarterly to ensure sufficient oversight for UUFB's financial assets.
4. The Finance Committee continued to manage UUFB's cash position and recommend purchase of Certificate of Deposits to the UUFB board to earn interest on its excess cash. The interest earned adds revenue to UUFB.

## 2025/26 Plans

1. Continue to monitor monthly financials and to assist in the preparation of the annual budget.
2. Conduct a review of UUFB's financial processes and accounts to ensure that the books and records accurately reflect its financial position.
3. Continue to search for additional committee members.

## Report Submitted by Bruce DePriester

July 28, 2024

## Fundraising

Committee Members: Leona Poritz – serves as contact person

In Dec 2024, with a big assist by the Social Activities Comm, we held a Treasure Sale with great success. Leona P & Cami A served as co-chairs. The Used Bookstore continues to yield a modest, passive income. We have lost one of our most active committee members within the last year and that gap has not been filled. There is hope of a Services Auction in 2026 and there are two members interested in co-chairing.

The mission of this committee has been twofold: to raise additional funds for the Fellowship and to create engaging activities and opportunities for members to interact and develop a sense of community and learn about common interests.

As recommended last year, this committee needs a complete rebuild.

Submitted by Leona Poritz

## Governance & Leadership Committee

### **Committee Member**

Tonya Stevens – co-chair

### **Committee's Mission**

Identify and recruit potential leaders for committee Chairs and vacant Board positions. Provide leadership training for Board, Committee, and other volunteers as needed or requested.

### **Activities/Accomplishments**

Committee members moved off the committee during this past year to serve UUFb in other ways. Then in August of 2024, we lost an incredibly productive and dear co-chair Janet Lewis to cancer. The single remaining member of the committee was aided by the UUFb Board of Trustees who made repeated announcements for members to step up to fill positions, and members complied! Thus, every position that was to be vacated had a candidate for that slot before the May Annual Meeting election: Vice President, President (co-chairs this coming year), and one Member-At-Large were all on the ballot and voted in.

### **Recommendations for next program year**

- Recruit new members to the committee.
- Provide leadership training for both the Board and congregation.
- Look for guidance and/or workshops on how to recruit volunteers.
- Begin the process of filling positions for the Board in July.
- Create and maintain database of leadership roles and asks.

Submitted by Tonya Stevens

# Hospitality & Membership Committee

## Committee Members

Tonya Stevens– Contact  
Carolyn Boyd  
Jeanie Badenoch

Darla Timmons  
Rachel Rockafellow  
Honorable Mention: Kim Hoffman, Jennifer Fehr

## Committee's Mission

We welcome visitors, members, and friends each Sunday morning at service and are responsible for opening and closing the building as necessary. We follow up with visitors and offer Orientation sessions and other events to help newcomers get to know us. We interact with guests and potential new members, guiding them to events/groups of interest to them. We coordinate with the Office Administrator to keep the membership list/directory up to date.

## Activities/Accomplishments

- H&M held 2 Orientation sessions this program year, in October and March. We also introduced **Newcomers Breakfasts**, to have an informal space in which to meet frequent guests at UUFB. We held 3 of those this program year with great success.
- We spent a several months collecting and taking photos of members and friends to be in our new photo directory, available online through permission from the committee or the Office Administrator, and in print for a price.

## Recommendations for Next Program Year

We have had two willing former members of H&M join us and really added zip to our committee. We could use about 3 more people.

We will be referring to Soul Matters "Starting Point" guide for ways to help folks on a truly UU journey.

## Relevant numbers:

- We carried out 2 Welcoming Ceremonies (November and June) for 11 new members; in addition, 3 others have since become members (to be feted this fall). So, 14 people were added to our membership this program year.
- ATTENDANCE has increased, almost recovering from the pandemic. Most of the year, 55-65 people attended in-person, but several Sunday programs garnered 80 people or more, numbers similar to the pre-Covid average of 85 per service.

Of note, Rev. Roxy Klingensmith of the Bozeman St. James Episcopal Church has attended the Welcome Breakfasts serving as the pastoral counsel in Rev. Margo's stead and has been a big help with orienting newcomers to our Fellowship.

## Report Submitted by Tonya Stevens

## Legacy Giving

### Committee Members

- Pam Poon
- Peg Wherry
- David Rockafellow

### Committee's Mission

The Planned Giving Mission was defined as: "A Planned Giving Program for UUFB will facilitate the planned gifts of Fellowship members which will help ensure the continued existence of UUFB's liberal religious mission."

### Activities/Accomplishments

The Committee stewarded and secured 14 legacy donation commitments during the fellowship year. These individuals are now members of UUFB's Legacy Circle. Also, all members of the LG Committee have filed a donor intent form.

The Committee planned and held an inaugural Legacy Circle event to celebrate our donors--a soup and salad luncheon at the Fellowship Social Hall on June 21, 2025. Approximately 20 members attended.

The Committee held its second general information session at the Fellowship Social Hall following the service on April 27, 2025, as envisioned in our plans. Only two interested people who have not made plans attended, along with a few already committed donors. All said they had learned a lot.

We are reflecting on how best to inform the Fellowship at large of Legacy Giving opportunities. In addition to the general information session, we provided a couple of items for UUFB's monthly newsletter and also sent some reminders out via the listserv.

### Recommendations for Next Program Year

1. As a part of the committee's plan to develop a tiered communication program for keeping in touch with 1) the general Fellowship, 2) potential donors, and 3) donors with filed intent forms. The committee still needs to develop a web presence and complete regularly scheduled outreach to the three different audiences.
2. The committee will meet with the Legacy Circle to talk about
  - Special activities for LG donors
  - How to memorialize realized gifts
3. The committee still needs to develop a "gift realization" process which begins when the Fellowship receives notice of the death of a donor with a planned gift, and
4. Plan and execute an estate planning workshop for the fellowship

**Report Prepared by Pamela G. Poon**

## Lifespan Religious Exploration Committee

**Mission:** The Lifespan Religious Exploration Committee is dedicated to providing learning opportunities for all ages, both structured and unstructured, within an inquiring religious community. These opportunities are designed to foster spiritual growth while developing and strengthening healthy values in a safe, nurturing environment.

created 2/27/17 - revised 10/3/18

### Committee Members

- Sara Howard -Co-Chair
- Warren Knipfer – Co-Chair
- Cami Armijo-Grover - Secretary
- Cameron Paterson - ex officio – CRE, Staff
- Rev. Margo Rinehart ex officio - Minister

### 2024-2025 Activities and Accomplishments

**LRE - Children’s Programming:** Over the past year, LRE experienced steady engagement from 5-6 families, along with regular visits from several new families. Our RE classes on Sundays had a consistent rotation of three staff members and were geared toward youth 3-8 years old. We also have had two babies who have visited with their parents. This has generated a need for the Nursery to be upgraded with a window to allow supervision from the LRE Classroom. This project is in progress. Additionally, we continued hosting a family event once a month following our services. And, we successfully organized our first Gallatin Valley Interfaith Collaboration event in November of 2024.

### LRE - Adult Programming:

**OWL/Bridgercare:** We have been working with Bridgercare on planning programs for the 2025-2026 school year. The plan is to offer a high school program in the fall and a middle school program in the spring. Bridgercare will use staff time, covered by a grant to reach new audiences in Gallatin Valley, to help us get these programs started. They have started reviewing curriculum and calendaring potential dates.

Month	Special Activities	RE Attendance for month
June 2024	‘Things that Fly’ @ Bozeman Pond (Rained Out)	14
July 2024	‘Teach Me’ activities @ Bozeman Pond	14
August 2024	Ice Cream making @ Bozeman Pond	10
September 2024	Water Ceremony and Activities, Bumblewood Thicket Ice Cream bars after touring the Thicket	15
October 2024	Pumpkin Painting Event	42
November 2024	(Caroling for a Cause) Could not get scheduled	0
December 2024	Treasure sale (Children buy for Parent)	22
January 2025	No activity	

<b>February 2025</b>	Sledding, Light Parade and Lantern Making	<b>25 Sledding/ 20 lantern</b>
<b>March 2025</b>	Books & Bingo Family Event, Easter Activities	<b>36</b>
<b>April 2025</b>	Bowling	<b>35</b>
<b>May 2025</b>	Flower Service	<b>JUNE 1</b>

### **Recommendations for Next Program Year**

The LREC committee has its eyes on the following goals for new year:

- Keep families engaged during Sunday services once a month with special programming
- Experiment with new ways to engage youth/families outside of Sunday services
- Work on a staffing/volunteer plan for the changing demographics in RE

### **Report Submitted by Warren Knipfer, Co-Chair**

#### **Humanist Spiritual Pluralism Group**

##### **Activities/Accomplishments**

The Humanist Group of approximately 12 people meets every 2 weeks. Our discussion topics range from the origin of humanist thought to artificial intelligence and everything in between. We often discuss current events from a humanist perspective. We usually use books, book chapters or magazine articles as our sources for our lively discussions.

In 2025 the Humanist Group presented a Sunday program to UUFB. Our presentation explored E.O. Wilson’s Atlantic magazine article entitled “The Biological Basis of Morality”

**Report submitted by Sara Williams.**

# Minister Search Committee

## Committee Members

Amanda Cater (Chair)  
Jeanie Badenoch  
Lisa Baker  
Kaylin Greene  
Anna Jacobs  
Laura Mentch

## Mission:

Our committee was charged with the task of searching for a new minister through the Unitarian Universalist Association's online application portal.

## Activities and Accomplishments

In the fall of 2025, we met as a team quite frequently. Through reviewing UUA resources as well as meeting with members of the UUA Transitions Office, our team determined that we would search for a 3-year contract-to-call minister. Our team worked diligently to create our congregational profile so that ministers in search could get acquainted with our fellowship and learn about the surrounding community. We also compiled our documents packet and formed a negotiating team to determine the salary and benefits that we could offer a potential minister. We held a focus group with new members to understand their reasons for coming to our fellowship and what qualities they desired in a minister. In addition, we prepared interview and reference check questions for potential candidates. In the spring of 2026, we decided to broaden our search to include ministers interested in "hybrid" (i.e., in-person and remote) positions.

Although our search was not successful, our cohesive team worked well together, and we remain hopeful that we will find a minister for our fellowship in the near future.

Submitted by Kaylin Greene

## Social Activities

### Committee Members

- Diane Knipfer – Chair
- Bonnie Andes
- Char Appelwick (Winter only)
- Sarah Howard (added in Spring 2025)
- Laura Mentch (resigned in Fall 2024)
- Leona Poritz

### Committee's Mission

The Social Activities Committee encourages and provides opportunities for social interaction among the members and friends of the UUFB Fellowship.

1. In a typical year, the Social Activities Committee will plan, coordinate, publicize and present a wide variety of events such as holiday celebrations, home-hosted movie and game nights, family oriented and other events to provide meaningful and enjoyable social interaction within our Fellowship.
2. Assists the UUFB Board, Minister and other UUFB committees with the planning of other Fellowship activities such as food for funerals or memorial services, retreats, the annual spring auction, and the stewardship event.
3. The SAC does not assist member families with the planning, preparation, or delivery of personal parties such as weddings, graduation, or family reunions.

### Activities/Accomplishments

- We kicked off the church year with a visit to Random Acts of Silliness's Bumblewood Thicket Fairy Village in September. All church members were invited to stroll through the Village and view all the fairy cottages. We then gathered just outside the Thicket for ice cream treats. Approximately 20 people joined us for this event.
- In October and November 2024, a round of Circle Suppers was held. We had 7 hosts and 40 guests. Suppers were held in the hosts private homes.
- In October, we helped with the reception for Janet Lewis's memorial service.
- October 27<sup>th</sup>, a Soup and Bread luncheon was held after church. There were approximately 70-75 people who attended. The food was great and we had good help with set-up and clean-up. Feedback from participants was very positive.
- Working with the Stewardship Committee, we held a Bountiful Breakfast - Kick-off for UUFB Pledge Drive on Nov. 3rd. Set up was done on the Friday before. We used recyclable plates and plastic flatware to make clean-up fast. Approximately 40-45 people attended. Discussions were held at each table, notes were taken and given to those working on the Pledge drive.
- A communal Thanksgiving Dinner was held at UUFB on Thanksgiving Day. We had approximately 50 people participating.
- In December, the Social Activities Committee arranged for volunteers to bring in cookies for the Christmas Eve Service.
- In January, the Committee provided light snacks before the UUFB Annual Meeting.

- Beginning in February, we got the UUFB Women's Group going again. The Women's Group has now met once a month for February, March, April, and May. Attendance has been between 20 and 35 women each time. It's been good to have this going again.
- Also, in February and working with the Religious Education Committee, a Family Sledding event was held at the Gallatin Regional Park. Several of our families sledded on the hill at the park and afterwards gathered in the park for hot mulled cider and treats. We had a beautiful day for this and everyone had a great time.
- On the evening of Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Random Acts of Silliness held a Lantern Parade at the Gallatin Regional Park. UUFB participated in the Parade. A number of lanterns were made after church prior to the event. Then, those with lanterns marched in the parade and gathered afterwards in the park for hot mulled cider. We served cider to the UUFB folks and also to several members of the Interfaith Youth Group (of which UUFB is a member).
- On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, we had a Sandwich Bar luncheon after the Sunday Service and played some rousing games of Bingo with prizes from the UUFB Book Sale shelves. Rachel Rockafellow is a great Bingo caller.
- In April and May of 2025, another round of Circle Suppers was held. This round we had 9 hosts and approx. 75 guests. One of these suppers was a Family Supper and was held at UUFB. This one had at least 25 guests and included several activities like Laughter Yoga (led by Rachel Rockafellow) and a taco bar for supper. The other suppers were held in the hosts' homes.
- On Easter Sunday, in conjunction with the RE Committee, we had an Easter Ham Dinner and a fun UU craft where the kids collected colored bead after talking with adults about the UU Principles and then building bracelets with the beads. We had at least 50 people participating in the meal and the craft.
- June 1<sup>st</sup>, the Social Activities Committee is organizing the after-service celebration honoring Rev. Margo who is leaving us after 3 great years. We will be providing decorated cakes and presenting an original art work by our own Rose Toth to Rev. Margo.

#### **Recommendations for Next Program Year**

- The Social Activities Committee plans to help plan and carry out events in conjunction with Sunday Services for the weeks this summer where services will be held at the Bozeman Ponds Park.
- We should continue to offer and plan Circle Suppers in the next year.
- At the moment, we think that Women's Group may take the summer off; but it should be started up again in the fall.
- Communal meals of any sort appear to be very well received. We should continue to offer them in the next year.
- We need to continue to partner with other UUFB committees to provide a wide variety of social activities so that there are opportunities for all.

#### **Relevant numbers: number of volunteers participating, number of events/activities held, individuals served, etc.—whatever is relevant to this committee**

See the list of activities above.

**Report Submitted by** Diane Knipfer, Social Activities Committee Chair.

# Stewardship Committee

## Committee Members

- Peg Wherry, chair
- Rachel Rockafellow
- Paula Milano

## Committee's Mission

The Stewardship Committee

1. Develops a strategy for every member canvass.
2. Sets a calendar and timetable.
3. Recruits, trains and manages canvassers and the canvass.
4. Plans and conducts canvass gatherings, kickoff campaigns, training and post-campaign celebrations.

## Activities/Accomplishments

The format for the pledge drive this year was a combination cottage meeting and a "main event," "Breakfast Bounty," held on November 3 before the Sunday service. The Social Activities Committee provided the breakfast, which was greatly appreciated. Facilitators at each table guided discussion about what keeps us involved with UUFB and our hopes for it. About 35 people attended.

## Recommendations for Next Program Year

Get another person or two for the committee. As always, start earlier. Set an ambitious goal! We have exceeded our goal in the past two years, which suggests the goals are not ambitious enough. This Fellowship is deeply committed to its future.

## Relevant numbers:

Amount pledged: \$237,974

Number of pledge units: 90 (a unit is an individual or a household)

Goal: \$23,000

Average pledge: \$2621

Median pledge: \$1250

## Report Submitted by Peg Wherry

## Social Justice Action Committee

### Committee Members:

Randy Babbitt, Lisa Baker, Larry Carucci, Dennis Dempsey, Kitty Donich, Norm Eggert, Robyn Lauster, Andrea Manship, Katie Udd, and Peg Wherry

### Mission and Activities

During the 2024–2025 fellowship year, the UUFB Social Justice Action Committee (SJAC) continued its mission of promoting compassion, equity, and action through education, service, and financial support. The committee met monthly via Zoom, maintaining strong engagement and thoughtful collaboration. Through the 2nd and 5th Sunday offering program, SJAC coordinated donations to a wide range of local, national, and international organizations. Beneficiaries included the HRDC Warming Center, Bozeman School District's Homeless Assistance Fund, Family Promise, Gallatin River Task Force, Toward Right Relations, Transforming Hearts Collective, Modern Day Warrior Movement (Fort Peck Reservation), Bienvenidos of Gallatin Valley, and others. These offerings reflected the committee's ongoing commitment to addressing homelessness, LGBTQ+ inclusion, Indigenous rights, environmental stewardship, and humanitarian aid.

The committee also led and supported several educational and advocacy initiatives. A highlight of the year was UUFB's continued participation in the UUA's Welcoming Congregation Renewal program. The Fellowship successfully completed its 2024 renewal and began its second year in 2025. As part of this effort, SJAC organized a discussion of the book *Before We Were Trans* and promoted the Transforming Hearts Collective's new video series, *Responding to the Anti-Trans Movement*, to deepen the congregation's understanding and advocacy for LGBTQ+ justice. These programs helped ensure that UUFB continues to model inclusion and allyship, particularly in a time when transgender and queer communities face heightened challenges in Montana and beyond.

In addition to educational work, SJAC hosted and supported community events that foster connection and action. The committee sponsored a film night featuring *The Singing Revolution* which explored nonviolent resistance through culture. SJAC again staffed a booth at Bozeman Pride's "Pride-a-Palooza" in Lindley Park, providing outreach materials and a welcoming presence that celebrated UUFB's values. Members also strengthened ties with local organizations such as Family Promise, the Gallatin Valley Food Bank, and Fork & Spoon, engaging both financially and through volunteer service.

Throughout the year, the committee also reviewed its governance practices and continued to refine its collaboration with the UUFB Board on public advocacy. Work continued on a proposed Rapid Response policy to clarify how and when the Fellowship can publicly represent its social justice commitments. As SJAC looks ahead to 2025–2026, it remains committed to deepening community partnerships, strengthening the Fellowship's voice for justice, and nurturing the spirit of love in action that animates Unitarian Universalist faith.

Submitted by: Lisa Baker

## Family Promise of Gallatin Valley

Family Promise is one of UUFB's long-time social justice projects, dating back to 2005. In the early years families stayed in churches and moved each week to a new church. During that time, we provided meals, served dinners, and stayed overnight with the families who stayed at the Episcopal Church's rectory.

In 2020 Family Promise adopted a static shelter model, making it possible for families to stay in one place. Some families stayed at St. James, some in what had been the Family Promise Day Center and some at the Rodeway Inn. In 2023 Family Promise purchased the A Journey Home campus. This campus has spaces for emergency shelter, transitional apartments and workforce housing. With these Family Promise changes, UUFB's role changed as families now have safe places to stay and can cook for themselves. Although we no longer have direct contact with the families, we have continued to help.

This spring the lower floor of one of the buildings on the Journey Home campus is being remodeled to provide eight more emergency shelter spaces. The eight families will share four kitchens and UUFB gathered items needed for the kitchens. Between items donated by members and cash donations we were able to gather the 72 items needed to stock the four kitchens.

Our other help is financial. This year our Second Sunday offering in May was donated to Family Promise's Rising Stars preschool and daycare. The money will go to provide scholarships for students who cannot pay or whose families cannot pay the full amount of tuition. Rising Stars serves 96 children. Figuring two children per family, that means about 45 families have safe, quality care for their children so that they can work. UUFB was able to donate almost \$1,000 to the scholarship program.

Because we no longer interact directly with Family Promise families one of my goals is to try to keep UUFB aware of Family Promise's successes and needs. through a monthly newsletter article and periodic list-serve reports which encourage people to volunteer and to attend Family Promise events.

Carolyn Boyd, UUFB Family Promise Liaison

## Sunday Services Committee

Rather than a designated chairperson, this committee continues to rotate both the chair and minutes taker each month.

- Carolyn Widman
- Jan Young
- Bruce Swarny
- Neil Schwarzwald
- Sara Howard
- Orlanda Worthington
- Lisa Trankley

Rev. Duffy, as our temporary part-time minister, is also supporting the Committee. We are very grateful for his help and look forward to having our next settled minister on the committee.

### **Committee's Mission**

The committee's mission is to support our Minister in presenting services every Sunday for the entire fellowship that are consistent with UUFB's Vision and Mission, welcoming to the public and consistent with the UUA's designated monthly theme. On Sundays when our Minister is not presenting, the SSC is responsible for arranging outside guest speakers and/or members of the Fellowship to speak at those services.

### **Activities/Accomplishments**

Beginning with the Summer of 2024, the SSC organized and facilitated three more outdoor services at Bozeman Pond. The SSC has the responsibility for the technical equipment at these services.

Because Rev. Margo was only speaking twice a month the Committee had to find speakers for half the year's Sundays. Many people from the Fellowship stepped up to share their stories and perspectives and we enjoyed hearing from our own. Megan Makeever conducted a music service (in addition to her other musical contributions). We also had various clergy speak, including Rabbi Ed, Rev. Duffy Peet, Rev. Katie Michaels, Ven. Roxy Klingensmith, and Karen DeCotis. Bruce Gourley and Jelani Mehari, both from Bozeman, spoke, and we even included a Ted Talk.

The SSC also updated and edited the service script and lay leader instructions, conducted lay leader training, and brought in some new lay leaders.

The Committee continued to discuss and evaluate important components of the service, such as the Land Acknowledgement, Announcements, Joys & Concerns, special offerings, the Story For All Ages, and the length of the services.

### **Recommendations for the Next Program Year**

Because we do not have a settled minister the SSC will be responsible for planning 100% of the services. We are seeking additional committee members, as well as ideas for and participants in services. This past year the Board in particular and the Fellowship in general have stepped up to support the SSC. We will need - and look forward to - that continued support in this next program year.

We currently have 7 members on our committee. People's comfort levels vary in the amount of responsibility they are willing to take on.

## Other

### Hiking Group

#### Members

- Dick Corbin, Convener

Hikes are scheduled weekly during the summer months on Wednesday or Thursday mornings and people may sign up to be added to the hiking group listserv.

### Historian

#### Members

- Chair, Susan Backer

Susan Backer has continued the “Highlights of the UUFB” notebook which monthly briefly summarizes the activities of the fellowship and the board from the monthly newsletters. She has kept up the notebook with clippings from the Bozeman Chronicle of Letters to the Editor from members and friends of the congregation (with the exception of political endorsements of candidates), and articles about or by members and friends. Christy H. (Office Admin) has started organizing UUFB event photos in the Photos app on the Office iMac and prints out photo collages to put on the bulletin board. Old photo collages are stored and archived in a binder. Rev. Margo put up papers to extend the UUFB timeline.

#### Recommendations:

There is a need for more members to organize and file historical records like newsletters, and to become familiar with UUFB’s history. I am asked regularly to present the history at Membership Orientations, and others can learn to do this as well. I will work on recruitment! A personal goal is to write up and publish the history of the altar panels and other items of historical significance in the UUFB building.

### Men’s Group

#### Members

- Warren Knipfer, Convener

Men’s Group meets once a month at UUFB usually on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. but takes a break in the summer. Anyone interested in joining can sign up for the Men’s Group listserv.