

Birmingham Unitarian Church

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John Hammer – Facilities
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Kimery Campbell & Walli Andersen – Rummage Contacts

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Senior Ministerial Search Committee – Marilyn Mast & Matt Chope

Transitions Team

Dan Boyce
Melinda Henderson
Maurice Lefford
Grace Rising
Susie Sherman-Hall
Craig Spangler

Program Staff

Interim Senior Minister: Rev. Marcel Duhamel
Director of Religious Education for Children: Eleanor McGuire
Director of Religious Education for Youth: Laura Ross
Religious Education Assistant: Kimery Campbell
Acting Director of Music: Cyndi Peltonen
Pianist: Angelina Pashmakova
Adult & Teen Choir Director: Abha Dearing
Youth & One Hour Choir Director: Pamela McAlpin

Operations Staff

Church Administrator & Newsletter Editor: Lisa Crawford
Bookkeeper: Kim Ruiz
Custodian: Jason MacDonald
Housekeeper: Kitty Ayers

Birmingham Unitarian Church 2009 Annual Report

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Interim Senior Minister

Rev. Marcel P. Duhamel



It is, I readily confess, a tad awkward for me to be writing an annual report. I've only been among you now for three months which is but a fraction of a year and I am your *interim* minister. I can tell you with no hesitation that you are a wonderful church, indeed a remarkable one. You have found a place of very warm affection in my heart. You are lovable and I've come to love you despite being on guard against that happening. Knowing that the terms of our agreement specify that I must leave come June I did not want to become so fond of you that I would feel a real reluctance to leave though I must.

The elected leadership of BUC is deeply committed to this particular institution and to our salvific way of being religious in the world. They are hard working, diligent, capable volunteers who work tirelessly in service to BUC and to Unitarian Universalism. And what a staff you have! Lisa Crawford is a benediction to this Beloved Community and to me personally. She is exceptionally bright, creative, cooperative, devoted and a joy to be with. I add, parenthetically, that she is a worthy cribbage opponent. We play at lunchtime and she has been known to actually occasionally beat me. The rest of your staff, the RE team of Eleanor, Laura and Kimery transcend competence and provide a very high quality program of Religious Education for your young. The music is outstanding only because of the rare talents of the entire music staff who work well together. Music of the quality consistently produced at BUC does not "just happen". It happens only because of the contributions of gifted people working in close harmony (pun intended). And the physical plant is beautiful. It sparkles in no small measure because of the tireless work of Jason. You could not find a more capable, competent or knowledgeable "keeper of the premises". You have hired the best possible people to do the complex work that this experiment in liberal religion demands.

Soon now, relatively speaking, you will examine the candidate for settled ministry recommended by your Search Committee. They too are working diligently to assure a joyous match. I have only this to add to this intricate process. Your by-laws require that a minister can only be elected by a two-thirds majority. Most candidates have set their own bar which is significantly higher. For example, I would never accept a call to a congregation where the vote was anything below 90% and that is because it would be hard to serve in a setting where I knew that more than 10% of the congregation was opposed to my being there even before I arrived. So a no vote or anything short of an enthusiastic yes could only be perceived by your Search Committee as a repudiation of their work and they would likely resign en masse. And you would be back to square one. You would have to begin the whole transition process again. I want to stress that I am not encouraging a cavalier examination of the recommended candidate --- ask the hard

questions and settle for nothing short of the excellence to which you are entitled --- but be aware of the consequences of a “no” vote.

I am experiencing you as a truly wonderful church and whoever serves as your next minister will be truly blessed.

Amitiés and love,
Marcel

President’s Report for 2009

Carol Ann Arvan, Board and Congregation President



As I write this letter, the words of an old Grateful Dead song keep ringing in my ears: What a long strange trip it’s been. Well, maybe not so long, but it has been unusual. Here are my lessons learned (or relearned) in 2009: remain committed, stay flexible, help where you can, and be open and accessible.

BUC started 2009 with some trepidation. The full impact of the global financial tsunami that struck in autumn 2008 was just sinking in. We knew BUC’s financial health could be at risk. We were just getting to know Rev. Janet Newman, our first Interim Senior Minister in many years, following the retirement of Senior Minister Doug Gallager and the resignation of Associate Minister Mark Evens in the summer of 2008.

When the Board set goals for 2009, we decided to keep it simple and focus on immediate needs: hire a new Interim Minister when Rev. Newman would leave in August, and support the Settled Senior Minister Search Committee when their tasks would intensify in 2009 to enable us to call a Settled Senior Minister in spring 2010.

As a congregation we decided to remain hopeful and generous in an environment where some UU churches were implementing program furloughs, summer shutdowns and layoffs. In the first quarter we successfully raised \$30,000 to fund an anticipated budget gap. Many thanks to Ron Fredrick who led this effort and for all the generous donors who made this happen.

We started to hold Town Hall Meetings in the Pavilion on the first Sunday of each month so congregants could learn more about the Board and its actions and could raise questions and concerns in an informal setting. And in the first quarter our pledge commitments for the year finally matched our 2009 budget for pledge income. Our plan was to distribute 50% of our plate collection to causes outside BUC, and to be able to fund 50% of our fair share payments to the UUA and the Heartland District.

That was the plan. If someone told me last year that I'd use my prior experience as a business turnaround and workout consultant as President of my congregation, I would have laughed. But sometimes truth is stranger than fiction.

By late July it became clear BUC would end the year with significantly more expense than income. Many congregants were experiencing financial hardship, and some had to reduce or cancel their pledge commitments for 2009. While BUC had enough unrestricted cash reserves coupled with continuing cash flow to keep the bills paid, we knew this pattern could not continue. With input provided by the Budget and Finance Committee, your Board decided BUC needed to cut non-core expenses in order to reduce our projected deficit. In August we eliminated the Executive Director position and said good-bye to Jill Warren after two years of service. We also reduced pension payments for all staff, froze many expense items, ended BUC's efforts to run the Learning Center which had been a tenant, reduced plate distributions to average 35% for the year and reduced BUC's UUA and Heartland District payments to average 25% of fair share for the year.

During the August transition, Board Members Tom Cranston, Julia Gragg, Pauline Mengebier and I took turns as volunteer staff supervisor and jack-of-all-trades as needed to handle and reassign the former Executive Director responsibilities. We had conversations with all staff and Board Committee leaders, and we reviewed BUC's vendor service agreements, personnel records, financial records and UUA documents to assure BUC was complying with our constitution, our personnel policies and UUA guidelines while being fiscally prudent.

Special thanks to the following Board Committee chairs and leaders for working closely and cooperatively with the Board during this transition and throughout the year: John Hammer (Facilities), Craig Stroup (Budget & Finance), Dick Schwing (Endowment), Walli Andersen and Kimery Campbell (Rummage) and Mary Jo Ebert (Stewardship). Thanks also to the members who served with me on BUC's Compensation Committee – Matt Choep, Julia Gragg, Ed Sharples and Kym Worth – to advise the Board on matters related to our Settled Senior Minister Search.

In the midst of these changes, BUC was blessed with the arrival of our second Interim Senior Minister Marcel Duhamel and his lovely wife Ellie. Rev. Duhamel is a source of calm, inspiration, support, humor, generosity and clear thinking. I proudly served with the dedicated members of the Interim Minister Search Committee in 2009: Donna Cunningham, Bill Fox, Maurice Lefford, Bill Pratt, Susie Sherman Hall and Sydney Lentz as Chair. BUC is grateful for your service and your successful engagement of Rev. Duhamel as our Interim Minister through August 2010.

We are also grateful to the following BUC members who have agreed to serve on Rev. Duhamel's transition team - Dan Boyce, Melinda Henderson, Maurice Lefford, Grace Rising, Susie Sherman Hall, Craig Spangler – as well as those who served on Rev.

Newman's transition team – Frank Arvan, Bill Fox, Maurice Lefford, Bill Pratt, Grace Rising, Susie Sherman Hall and Sydney Lentz as Chair.

2009 also marked another major change for BUC – the retirement of Barbara Woolf, our gifted longtime Pianist and Music Director. We formed two search committees who identified our new Pianist Angelina Pashmakova and Acting Music Director Cyndi Peltonen. Our thanks to Barbara Woolf, who chaired the Pianist Search, and Mary Jo Larson, who chaired the Acting Music Director search, together with Louise Angermeier, Frank Arvan, Sue Boyce and Eric Sargent who served on both search committees.

In January we started with Julie Fream serving as Vice President and Julia Gragg serving as Secretary. Due to job demands, Julie resigned from the Board and Julia agreed to complete the year as Vice President. At the same time, Keith Ensroth joined the Board and agreed to serve the remainder of the year as Secretary. Sydney Lentz will leave the board this year after many years of gifted and tireless service. Alex Adah, Tom Cranston, Julia Gragg, Pauline Mengebier (Treasurer), Boris Silberberg and Peggy Woehrlen are slated to return for another year of Board service in 2010. My personal thanks to all these committed Board members, past and present, for their heartfelt and thoughtful service, always in an effort to advance the best interests of BUC and its mission. Walter Dean is slated to join the Board in 2010. I look forward to working with you all.

As we enter 2010, we know hurdles and disappointments are sure to come our way, but we also know BUC is a congregation that's proud of all we've accomplished, confident in our ability to not only survive but to thrive, and ready for change. To paraphrase Dickens, it's the best of times, it's the worst of times, it's BUC's time.

Thank you to all the volunteers, staff, members and congregants who share your talent, time and treasure with BUC and allow us to remain an active participant in this accepting, questioning, evolving, amazing religion we call Unitarian Universalism. I look forward to traveling the next twelve months with you as your President. Onward!

With you in service to BUC,
Carol Ann

Church Administrator

Lisa J. Crawford



My second year as Church Administrator involved big shifts in personnel. Our Music Director and Pianist, Barbara Woolf, retired after more than 30 years, our Senior Interim Minister, Rev. Janet Newman, moved on, Jill Warren's position as the Executive Director ended, Rev. Marcel Duhamel began his year of interim ministry. The various committees interviewed

candidates and hired a new Acting Director of Music, Cyndi Peltonen, and new Pianist, Angelina Pashmakova. During this transition, I had the opportunity to work closely with our Congregation and Board President, Carol Ann Arvan; Vice President, Julia Gragg; and Board Trustee, Tom Cranston. Their presence, hard work, and incredible attitudes made a tricky year, comparatively smooth. Their dedication to BUC was an encouragement and challenged me to do more.

My job description has morphed a bit this year, changing to include more communications and congregational development activities. I have created a Facebook fan page for BUC which is up and active, and am experimenting with a Youtube channel that is still in the developing stage. Our Webmaster, Gloria Boddy has begun my introduction to FrontPage the program she used to build our website. John Hammer, chair of the Facilities Committee, is tutoring and advising me on managing the facility repairs and maintenance. Pat Schwing is busy compiling a schedule for office volunteers. I must say the commitment and volunteerism here at BUC always makes me want to dig deep and put forth the maximum effort.

The monthly newsletter is flowing along. Problems with folks being unable to open attachments or opening them to see strange formatting issues seem to be resolving, and the new copy machine makes producing the newsletter a breeze. I began sending out the “This Week @ BUC” in September and am continuing to get positive feedback about the new layout.

Rental income at the church took a hit in June as the daycare center consolidated to one location in Royal Oak. This was the beginning of looking at rentals to see where we can increase revenue, while retaining the flexibility we need for our usage. I have been impressed with the various groups that rent from us on a regular basis. We have a very large AA group which meets weekday mornings and noon times. They have repeatedly expressed gratitude to this congregation for renting them rooms in which to hold their meetings. Our regular renters include Carol Yamasaki’s Tai Chi Class, the Great Lakes Heritage Quilters, the Oakland Choral Society, Raksha Dave’s Indian Dance Class, the United Church of God, the Hindu temple community – Arya Samaj, W & D Productions Antique Jewelry and Apparel Show, Winter Wonders Glass Show, the Mankind Project, NA, OA, the Courtesy Driving School, four Bridge Clubs, Music Together, and the Art of Living.

I feel fortunate to be working with Jason MacDonald, our custodian for over 19 years. He has been flexible and willing to pitch in, helping in whatever ways I have asked in this past year. His understanding of the extra demands placed on him as we struggled to bring in extra rentals to compensate for the projected shortfall, exceeded expectations. This is an exciting time to be part of the amazing team at BUC. I am grateful for the opportunity.

Warmly,

Committees of the Board

Endowment Committee - 2009 Report to the Congregation

The Endowment Committee reports to the Board of Trustees and is charged with supervision and promotion of BUC Endowment funds and activities. It consists of five members who serve for five-year terms. Meetings are held monthly, except in summer.

In summary, as of November 16, 2009, the endowment funds include:

BUC General Endowment Fund – market value \$308,600

Memorial Glen Endowment Fund – market value \$48,718

Music Endowment Fund – market value \$33,081

The General Endowment Fund has two parts, a diversified equity component \$193,600 and a fixed allocation component of \$115,000. The diversified equity is made up of T Rowe Price and Vanguard no load mutual funds under the supervision of Dan Boyce and Matt Chope. The 12-month return ending November 16th 2009 was a positive 38.7%, reflecting the strong rebound in stock prices. The fixed allocation portion is invested in a loan to BUC (for facilities) guaranteed at 5% interest. Overall, the portfolio 12-month return for the General Endowment was a positive 22.4%.

The Endowment Committee also conducts a yearly campaign during December for additional funds for the BUC Fund held by the Community Foundation for South East Michigan (CFSEM). The fund yields an annual payout to BUC in perpetuity. The market value, as of September 2009, was \$267,000 with a projected payout* for 2010 to BUC of \$13,500. In addition the CFSEM makes available an annuity program, which includes a monthly payout to the annuity holder as well as matching funds transferred to the BUC account. The principal and accrued interest transfers to BUC upon account termination.

Every spring the Endowment Committee conducts a drive to increase Hallock Heritage Society (HHS) membership with the purpose of encouraging the inclusion of BUC in wills and estate planning documents. Currently there are 69 members of HHS.

The 2009 Endowment Committee includes Dick Schwing (chair), Nancy Jones, John Lake, Ron Fredrick, and Marilyn Mast. Betty Blair will replace Marilyn Mast whose term expires in 2010. We also have benefited from the inestimable experience of investment consultants Matt Chope and Dan Boyce. Our aim is to enlarge the

endowment funds to ensure continuity of the UU message for current and future generations.

*Estimate based on a 12 quarter moving average replacing an 8 quarter moving average per discussion with David Contorer of the CFSEM

rca 11/18/09

Stewardship Generosity Kindles the Flame

At BUC, we practice stewardship by giving generously of our time, our talents, and our treasure. On October 4, we kicked off the annual pledge process, whereby congregants were asked to make their financial commitments for 2010. A heartfelt “Thank you!” goes out to the many congregants who have responded by submitting their pledge for 2010.

When we began the planning for this year’s pledge drive, we wondered what the outcome would be, considering the economic uncertainty in Michigan and the fact that our church is continuing its ministerial transition. We are happy to report that, with 244 pledges received to-date, over 100 households increased their pledge for 2010 or made a first-time pledge. This is remarkable! As anticipated, there are also households who had to decrease their pledge for 2010 to adapt to a modified or uncertain financial situation. Collectively, we have pledged \$404,000 for 2010 to date.

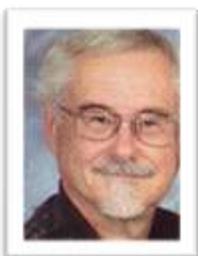
There are still a good number of households who have not submitted their financial commitment for 2010. Closure of this gap could make a significant impact in the budget and program plans for 2010. If you are one of those households, please take a few minutes to communicate your pledge for 2010 and commit your financial support for our church’s mission to grow in spirit and give to the world.

Together in generosity,

The BUC Stewardship Committee

Facilities & Grounds Committee

John Hammer, Chair



This report is a two-year update for Facilities, as there was not a report last year.

We’re happy to announce that we now have two more new members: Dave Bredenberg and Inta Davis. They join committee members Keith Brown, Jim Clark, Nancy Duffy, Fred Straky, Ann Throop and Marilyn Webster. Board member Julia Gragg is now attending our meetings as Board liaison, adding

welcome insight to our meetings.

In 2008, we presented to the Board a list of major BUC building repairs and upgrades our Committee considered urgent and/or overdue: replacing the original single-pane window glass in the “old” parts of our campus (the Pavilion, the Blue, Red and Green Door Classrooms) with double-pane (insulated) glass; insulating the walls of these same buildings (we’ve operated for over 40 years with no insulation!); repairing our deteriorating asphalt parking lot; pruning all 14 locust trees in the parking lot; repairing persistent roof leaks in the Commons; and replacing the original Social Hall furnace with a geothermal unit, which will eliminate gas usage for that unit. (Note: the Social Hall is being heated and cooled by the rooftop unit that was added with the recent Social Hall Addition.) The BUC Endowment Committee, and, subsequently, the Board, approved a \$120,000 loan to fund this work. All the preparatory work for the furnace has been finished, but purchase of the furnace itself has been deferred, as its cost exceeds the unspent balance of the loan. All of this work has been completed with the exception of the geothermal furnace, which greatly improves our energy consumption, both for heating and cooling, and represents major steps toward fulfilling Green Sanctuary goals.

In addition, all the white wooden fasciae running around BUC roof edges have been clad in aluminum trim, eliminating the need for periodic paint maintenance. Also, we had the elevator pit waterproofed, eliminating recurrent leaks that were threatening the safety of the elevator operating equipment. We also had a full-load elevator testing done; this is required every three years. These were all fairly major expenses.

You have no doubt noticed we replaced the aging BUC sign on Lone Pine Road.

Nancy Duffy has continued to head up the Green Care Givers program, though with fewer volunteer response than earlier. If you are interested in helping in this area, please do contact Nancy.

The Capek Woods Group, headed up by Stephanie Patil, and including Pat Hammer, Fred Straky, have continued to move forward in implementing a master plan for the Woods, and our Woodward Ave. “front yard” pond. They have planted more than two dozen trees, replacing lost ash trees, removed invasive buckthorn and garlic mustard, an ongoing task, planted a sedge meadow, an upland meadow and a butterfly garden. Their landscaping design consultant, Leslie Jakobs, prepared the master plan and has contributed many hours of volunteer labor as well, especially during special Capek Woods Work Days, which also attracted many other church volunteers.

The most recent major effort was a three day work project to begin pond restoration. The pond edge has been partially re-graded, seeded with native plants, and the stream has been dredged out and stabilized with native plants as well. Many thanks to all those who helped out during this strenuous three days! More work ahead!

We continue to hope to eventually be able to establish a Facilities Reserve Fund that will provide funds for the large capital expenditures we continually face nearly every year for routine replacement of roofs, furnaces, paving and the like. These items repeatedly create funding crises for BUC; we want BUC to be able put them on a business-like basis as does any well-run corporation. Current economic conditions, and BUC finances, continue to push this idea into the future.

We recently submitted a new list of items our committee considers high-priority that we hope BUC can fund in the coming year or two, including:

- Re-establish a facilities reserve to handle future major projects i.e. Commons roof, leaking foyer skylight, Marshall Courtyard concrete and railing rebuilding etc.
- Obtain five personal computers to replace outdated equipment. This will improve office productivity and morale (est. \$2,500).
- Install automatic doors at the Sanctuary entrance to improve handicap access (est. \$5,000).
- Obtain technical support equipment to improve the ability to communicate within the church and increase rental income opportunities.
- Webcasting capability in Sanctuary (est. \$300)
- CD/DVD recording in the Sanctuary (est. \$150)
- Screen and projector for multimedia presentations (est. \$1,600)

The Facilities and Grounds Committee cluster includes the Art Committee, Memorials and Tributes, Interiors, Christmas Décor, and the Memorial Glen Committee.

As always, we've had a busy year. I again want to thank everyone on the committee very much for contributing the time, effort, talent and spirit necessary to our efforts to keep things running and make the improvements we all need and enjoy.

Interiors Sub Committee

The Interiors Committee (a subcommittee under Facilities) monitors the upkeep, decorating, and repair of the inside spaces at BUC to make the church welcoming and attractive. We organize Sunday morning flowers for the sanctuary, decorate the Coffee Hour table with seasonal arrangements and colorful tablecloths, set silk arrangements and live plants around the church and decorate the church for the holidays. We inventory rooms, organize the kitchen, and make recommendations to Facilities about needed repairs, cleaning, and purchases. If you have thoughts about projects and improvements, call Cathie Breidenbach to pass along your ideas and to be included in our next meeting. Thank you to the hardworking members of the committee this past

year: Rose Marie Adah, Keith Brown, Cathie Breidenbach, Drieka DeGraff, Grace Rising, Ann Throop, Marilyn Webster, and Carole Wiseman.

Flower Donors for Sunday Morning Services

During the 2008-09 church year Marissa Hancock coordinated the flower donations. During the 2009-10 church year, Grace Rising is the coordinator.

The following members and friends provided flowers to enhance the sanctuary during the Sunday morning services during the 2009 calendar year.

They either brought their own arrangement or contributed funds so that our contract florist Just Add Water could provide an arrangement. Due to the change in coordinators, I apologize if your name is not listed here and invite you to contact me to let me know.

The contributions are a testament to a life, an occasion or event of meaning. They are also a form of offering---adding to the atmosphere of harmony and reflection in our services.

Betty Blair
Carol Breidenbach
Cathie and Hal Breidenbach
Ed Brouhard and Yvonne Verschueren
Catherine Connelly
Darrell Ebbing
Nancy Jones
Marilyn Kelly
Grace Kachaturoff
Carol Lee
Sydney Lentz
Marilyn and Tim Mast
Marie and Paul Miller
Andy and Sonia Molnar
Elaine Morse
Dick and Nancy Norling
Dick and Pat Schwing
Viola Newman
Ron Fredrick
Sylvia Sesostris and Nash Boutros
Ed Sharples
Elson and Helen Spangler
Ann Throop

Marissa Hancock and Grace Rising coordinators

Memorials and Tributes Fund Committee

BUC has a Memorials and Tributes Fund. This special fund is used to provide permanent enhancements, excluding maintenance or repairs, to the church interiors and grounds.

In the past, such gifts have helped to establish the Japanese garden between the Social Hall and the Pavilion, and have provided lighting, plantings, and furnishing throughout the church and grounds. The sanctuary harpsichord and arm chairs, as well as the teak benches in front of the church entrance are all due to gifts made to the fund. We are grateful for the memorials and tributes made to the fund in 2009.

Information on donors and honored persons is contained in several books which are maintained by the church. These are displayed on Memorial Day Sunday.

BUC members and friends are urged to consider a gift to this special fund. It is a fine way to remember family members and friends while helping to make improvements to our church.

Ann Throop, chair, J. B. Bernard, Teresa Honnold, Carol Lee, Elaine Morse, Dorothy Prier, Marilyn Webster

Memorial Glen

The Memorial Glen is at the end of many paths that wind through the Capek Woods. It is designed as a quiet meditative place, a sacred space, secluded and protected, a special destination at the end of a spiritual path, a place of remembrance and memorialization.

The Memorial Glen Committee was established in 1998 by the BUC Board of Trustees to administer its use and oversee the perpetual care and maintenance of the Glen and the approaches to it.

In 2009 the committee oversaw continuing maintenance projects. The automatic sprinkler system was permanently capped off. Thanks to Bruce Lipka for all his efforts in laying sod on the handicap accessible path, spreading wood chips and other hands-on maintenance, and purchasing annuals for the Memorial Day service.

Following the advice of Leslie Jakobs, our hired landscape architect, the committee assisted in planting numerous trees and shrubs to increase the Glen's sense of seclusion, removed some undesirable plantings, and planted flowers, sedges, ferns, and trees in the surrounding area. They approved detailed plans for the next phase of planting, along with a budget of \$1500 for its implementation.

At the 2009 Memorial Day Glen service eight BUC members were memorialized: Art Blair, Mary Jane C. Connelly, Alexander Gilbert Dalrymple, Marilyn Freedman, Nancy W. Hickey, Alfred J. Lewis, Diane E. Sharples, and Anne Rumsey Weston.

Committee members at the start of 2009 were: Don Johnson, Chair, Nancy Johnson, Carol Lee, Bruce Lipka and Ann Throop. Don and Nancy resigned from the committee in mid year. We are extremely grateful for the time and energy they devoted to this committee. Thanks to their efforts we have established better financial guidelines and developed a better working relationship with the Capek Woods and Facilities Committees.

Submitted by Carol Lee

Art Committee

The original concept by the architect Minoru Yamasaki of the outdoor central Marshall Courtyard was to create a quiet serene gathering space protected from the outside busy world, entered through an open sky lighted archway into the Courtyard, on the path to a future Sanctuary.

When the Sanctuary was added 37 years later, the Gallery was created as an interior pathway, visually open to the Courtyard that would exhibit changing shows of art, as a transition for the spiritual and religious experience in the Sanctuary.

This year the Art Committee has again exhibited a variety of shows in the Gallery, and Pavilion, providing a venue for regional artists, including BUC members, to show their art. The committee has worked to suggest and select artists, hang shows, and organized the artist's receptions.

Exhibitions in 2009 included:

- January- Yvonne Tong, paintings
- February- March -Birgit Huetteman-Holz, encaustic paintings
- April - Shelquim Dani, paintings
- May- Vana Beginin, paintings
- June- Mary Epstein, paintings
- July- Muhamar Mallo, paintings
- August- September- Jan Filarski, paintings
- September- Members Show, drawings and paintings
- October- Fran Wolok, paintings
- November- December, pastels and watercolors

Congregation members are encouraged to attend the art receptions to meet the artists and talk with fellow members about the art. Your suggestions and comments are always welcome.

Additional members are always encouraged to join the art committee.

Art Committee members: Keith Brown & Sonia Molnar, co-chairs
Andy Molnar, Ann Amenta, Lynn Arbor, John Bogner, Carolyn Vosberg Hall

Congregational Development Committee

The committee's mission is to welcome and integrate new members into our congregational life, to nurture and strengthen the affiliation of new member through their first 90 days and to involve the entire congregation in these activities. During the past year, the committee sponsored a New to UU session in January and scheduled another for the fall, which was cancelled due to low participation. New member welcome ceremonies were held during worship services on May 3 and October 11.

With the assistance of the Program Council and Lisa Crawford, the church administrator, the Getting Involved at BUC pamphlet was updated and made available to both newcomers and the entire congregation. Beginning in June, the greeters began staffing a welcome table in the pavilion after services to welcome visitors again, offer them coffee and bagels, answer their questions, and make available a variety of materials about Unitarian Universalism in general and BUC in particular.

Most recently, we have voted to purchase another coffee brewer, as well as six additional pots, to keep up with Sunday morning demand during social hour. More information about our hospitality functions is below. Our vision for the coming year includes supporting the growth of our beloved community as well as increasing our capacity for radical hospitality. Those who have served on the committee during the past year and have completed their time of service are Allen Craig and Ellen Chiuppi. The committee currently consists of: Lisa Demian, chair and Program Council representative, Elaine Morse, Walter Dean, Bruce Lipka, Karen Stankye, Larry Freedman, and Lisa Crawford.

Those who have joined BUC from December, 2008 through November, 2009:
Welcome!

Dave Bredenburg
Mary & John Morreale
Steve Schneider
Pamela Freeman
Nancy Groves
Grace Brockett
Michael Wagner

David & LuAnne Holder
Anthony & Alison Polidano
Cheryl Courage
Jorah Huntington
Lori Ostergaard & Jim Nugent
Max & Lisa Kort

Deborah Boyer
Kimberley Geis
Tim Mast
Anna Zambelli
David Bedell
Cyndi Peltonen

Sunday Morning Hospitality

During the past year, over 200 individual volunteers served as Sunday morning hosts, cheerfully helping to provide a warm and friendly atmosphere before, during and after each service.

As people arrive at the front door, two Greeters extend a cordial welcome. First time visitors are provided with a name tag, shown where things happen and are invited to visit the newcomers table in the Pavilion after the service.

Three ushers greet people with an Order of Service as they enter the Sanctuary, help latecomers find seats, collect and count the Offering and make sure that everything runs smoothly during the Service.

Most of us look forward to the coffee hour in the Social Hall after each service where we can meet friends, other members and visitors, and enjoy conversation over coffee, tea juice, donuts and bagels. This opportunity for fellowship would not be possible without the two volunteers each service who set up the serving tables, keep them stocked with food and beverages and afterwards tear everything down and clean up the kitchen.

Thanks to the Board of Trustees for providing all hosts on Welcoming Sunday each Fall and to GUUSH and UFO for handling greeting and ushering on Youth Sunday. Two Small Group Fellowship organizations each have graciously agreed to provide all hosts for a service this winter. Thanks also to Jason MacDonald, who arrives early each Sunday to set up the Sanctuary and Social Hall and make the coffee. Finally, we express the special appreciation of the congregation to Mary Lesniak , who so ably served as Coffee Hour Coordinator until earlier this Fall..

Recruiting fourteen volunteers for each Sunday is an ongoing task, and to make it easier, we invite members to stop by the Sunday Host table in the Social Hall after any service and sign up for one or more dates to be a Greeter, Usher or Coffee Server. If you have never served as a Sunday Host, you will find it to be an enjoyable experience with an opportunity to meet new people. You will also feel especially good about having made an important contribution to the success of a Sunday service.

Sunday Host Coordinators

Greeters: Karen Stankye

Ushers: Larry Freedman

Coffee Hour: Roger Marshall and Carol Wiseman

Communications

Advertising and Publicity

In fall 2009, BUC collected donation checks from BUC members to support WDET. In return for bundling donations (\$1,885), BUC will receive sponsorship spots (30 second announcements) to run in the next several months. Announcements will highlight our Religious Education program and Christmas services. Each announcement features the slogan: "Birmingham Unitarian – where independent thinkers go for spiritual community." What a great way to support WDET plus spread the word about BUC and liberal religion to a target audience of public radio listeners.

Cathie Breidenbach

Webmaster Annual Report

We have been working to make BUC's web site more member relevant. Here are some of the changes and additions.

RE Information

- Overview of K-12 Curriculum

- K-5 Rotation Themes

- Workshops

Calendars

- BUC Sponsored Events

- Campus Events

- Religious Education Activities

- GUUSH Activities

Rummage Sale Information

South Oakland Shelter information including job descriptions

Church Newsletter and archive of past newsletters

Church Business Page including documents related to organization and administration of the congregation

- Policy Governance 2004

- BUC Constitution and By-Laws

- Goals and Objectives 2008-10

- Annual Report 2008

- Balance Sheet 2008

- Budget vs. Actual 2008

- Cash Flow Statement 2008

- 2009 Operating Budget

- Annual Meeting Voter's Guide 2009-10

- Plate Collection Common Grant Application

- Custodial Work Order

Your thoughts and comments are most welcome: gloriaboddy@comcast.net

Gloria J. Boddy

Fellowship

Hal Breidenbach, Program Council Representative, Chair of Fellowship

BUC provides an environment where our congregants can work and play together to connect and build support for one another and the church.

The Fellowship Cluster consists of a number of ministries and activity groups. Many have been ongoing for a number of years, while some were formed only recently. These groups form in response to an interest or need of BUC members and continue to function as long as the interest or need exists and leaders step forward. Members of the Fellowship Cluster are listed at the left.

The 20s/30s group is under new management and the new name of Birmingham Unitarian Young Adults.

This past year one group, the Drumming Circle, ceased to exist.

We also enjoyed a revival of the Dead Composers Society.

Fellowship Cluster November 2009 - Ministries

Knitting Ministry: Rola Broid, Chair

The Knitting Ministry is a group of BUC members and friends that creates handmade gifts such as shawls, lap robes, afghans and similar items. The purpose of the Knitting Ministry is to express love to members and friends who are either in need of comfort and support or who are celebrating an important event. You do not need to be an expert to join this group and easy knitting patterns and lessons are available. Members provide their own materials or use donated supplies. We meet once a month for knitting, fellowship and good conversations.

Memorial Service Support: Joanne Copeland, Chair

There is no time in our lives when we as human beings need loving care more than when we are grieving the loss of our loved ones.

The BUC Memorial Service Support Committee is pleased to provide a loving hand to assist with memorial services and receptions at the time of the death of our church members and friends. We assist with planning a reception and in recruiting help with greeting, ushering, etc. as requested.

Our committee consists of 20 key contact members and 15 on-call members. Some of the members are serving the committee because they have been the recipients of the loving services of this committee.

Our appreciation to the following committee members & on call members: Rose Marie Adah, Judy Amir, Ilene Beninson, Joanne Copeland, Neb Duric, Julie Gragg, Susie Sherman Hall, Gary & Marissa Hancock, Tony Hardesty, Teresa Honnold & Craig Spangler, Nancy Jones, Laura Lee, Margot LeRoy, Marie & Paul Miller, Marica Mahood, Barb Richards, Alison Rule, Kim Schultes, Sheila Seaver, Pat Schwing, Bonnie Simms, Helen & Elson Spangler, Ann Throop, Marilyn Webster, Joanne Wentworth, Sylvia Whitmer, Carole Wiseman, Louise Angermeier & Mary Lesniak.
Small Group Fellowships: Gloria Abrams

Pastoral Care Associates for 2009

Alex Adah	Lynn Bell, chair	Sherry Goussy
Andie Stewart	Don Johnson	Nancy Johnson
Margaret Lefford	Marie Miller	Elaine Morse
Grace Rising	Dorothy Prier	Alison Rule
Ed Sharples	Andie Stewart	

Fellowship Cluster November 2009 - Activities

Alliance

Co-Presidents - Priscilla Hildum and Ann Throop

The Alliance has provided fellowship and learning opportunities for members since 1954. A luncheon speaker series is offered monthly from September through June. The Alliance continues to maintain a calendar year from July to June.

Our programs in 2009 have included:

- January – Joel Stone, curator of the Detroit Historical Society, “The Man on the Streets (Ladies too) – Detroit’s Historic Street Names”
- February – Bruce Annett, of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society and author of *Asylum: Pontiac’s Grand Monument from the Gilded Age*, “ Pontiac in 1928 – Life and Times just before the Crash”
- March – Carol Yamasaki, BUC member, “Update on the Wardak School in Afghanistan.”
- April – Ed Sharples, longtime educator, BUC member and leader, “Education and Technology in the 21st Century, Whither Now American Education?”
- May – At the invitation of the Detroit Historical Society, we visited the collections of Historic Fort Wayne in Detroit in a guided tour.

- June 3 – Annual Meeting – Luncheon was catered by Donna Hollis, followed by the business meeting and informal conversation.
- September – The Reverend Marcel Duhamel, BUC’s interim minister for 2009-2010 introduced himself to us, describing his background and his year’s goals for BUC.
- October – BUC and Alliance member and Cranbrook docent Bonnie Simms treated the group to a guided tour of Cranbrook House.
- November – Valerie Pryzwara of MichUHCAN (Michigan Universal Health Care Access Network) addressed the membership on the current state of health care reform legislation.
- December 9 – This annual holiday luncheon was held at the Radisson Kingsley Hotel. Open to all, this luncheon is a chance to socialize and also contribute to the support of Communities United for Children, helping the children at the Whitmer Human Resources Center elementary school in Pontiac.

Our longtime annual visits to, and hosting of, the Alliance of the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church came to a close by common consent, mostly as a result of conflicting schedules plus the distance between our two churches.

Membership is open to all members and friends of BUC. Cost of annual Alliance membership is \$10. Some members also join the national organization, Unitarian Universalist Women’s Federation (UUWF). All are welcome to attend our luncheons, which are typically brown bag lunches with dessert and beverages provided.

Alliance Board - 2008 - 2009

Co-Presidents: Priscilla Hildum and Ann Throop

Secretary - Catherine Baldwin

Treasurer - Ann Throop

Membership Chair - Helen Spangler

Financial Advisor - Priscilla Hildum

Historian - Nancy Duffy

Denominational Affairs - Dorothy Prier

Nominating Committee: Bette Dyer, Lucille McNaughton, Kathleen Thomson

Program Committee: Catherine Baldwin, Priscilla Hildum, Rosemary Robinson, Ann Throop

Alliance Board - 2009 - 2010

Co-Presidents: Priscilla Hildum and Ann Throop

Secretary - Catherine Baldwin

Treasurer - Ann Throop

Membership Chair – Margot LeRoy

Financial Advisor - Priscilla Hildum

Historian - Nancy Duffy

Denominational Affairs - Dorothy Prier

Nominating Committee: Gloria Boddy, Tony Hardesty

Program Committee: Catherine Baldwin, Priscilla Hildum, Lucille McNaughton, Rosemary Robinson, Ann Throop

Small Group Fellowship

Each BUC Small Group Fellowship is a group of somewhere between 6 to 10 people who meet once or twice a month to share on a more personal level community, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, fellowship, values, and support on our spiritual journey. Each group represents an opportunity to get to know fellow church members at a deeper level.

The steering committee was created to support the existing Small Groups and to encourage the formation of new ones. We currently have 15 groups consisting of about 113 people. This represents roughly 23% of our general adult church members. The committee works to provide opportunities for anyone who is interested in joining a group and to offer any assistance to group facilitators who are interested in expanding their group(s).

Opportunities continue to exist for new groups and there is almost always room in existing groups for new members.

Small Group Fellowship Steering Committee: Gloria Abrams, Chair, Aletha Craig, Lisa Demian – Chair January through September 2009, MaryAnn Hunter, Kaaren Peters, Jane Trumbull

Potpourri Book Club

The Potpourri Book Club takes its name seriously when it comes to choosing books from every genre. Selections include biographies, fiction, memoirs, mysteries, and classics.

Monthly meetings are held in member's homes. In June, we met with the other book clubs for a potluck. In December we celebrate at a restaurant. This year we are donating children's books to WHRC.

2009 book selections were *Hot, Flat and Crowded* by Thomas Friedman, *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*, by Barbara Kingsolver, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* by Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows, *Hannah Coulter* by Wendell Berry, *Mockingbird: A Portrait of Harper Lee* by Charles J. Shields, *Pavilion of Women* by Pearl S. Buck, *Loving Frank* by Nancy Horan, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain.

Ann Amenta & Sandy Frincke, Co-chairs

Avid Readers Book Club

Avid Readers Book Club began in 2002 as one of the original book clubs. We have had many changes over the years, however, as always, we embrace fiction, nonfiction, short stories, memoirs, biographies, autobiographies; world, political, social, and religious commentaries. We vote for one book from the list proposed by each member, and we find it stimulating to discuss, disagree, and widen our life view as new faces grace our circle.

We have a full group with eight members, and we meet on the third Friday of the month at one member's home usually followed by lunch in a local restaurant. In December we have a holiday get-together, and we have one grand party during the year with the other two book clubs.

Our book choices from September 2009 through May 2010 are: *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle: A Novel* by David Wroblewski, *The King Must Die* by Mary Renault, *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto* by Michael Pollen, *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* by Muriel Barbery, *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout, *The City of Falling Angels* by John Berendt, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* by Stieg Larsson, *An Arsonist's Guide to Writers' Homes in New England* by Brock Clarke, and *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family* by Annette Gordon-Reed. We will select additional books in June.

Sylvia Cantoni & Margot LeRoy, Coordinators

Contemporary Fiction Book Club

In its 7th year the book club continued to read books that address the larger issues of life in well-written contemporary prose. In depth discussions of the selections stimulates and engage the mind. Books read and discussed in the 2008- 09 year include *Charming Billy* by Alice McDermott, *Death in Rome* by Wolfgang Koeppen, *Divisadero* by Michael Ondaatje, *The Fish Can Sing* by Halldor Laxness, *Angle of Repose* by Wallace Stegner, *Run* by Ann Patchett, *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, *Gift of Rain* by Tan Twan Eng, *Netherland* by Joseph O'Neill and *The Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole.

In December 2008 a Christmas party, book discussion and book exchange was held at a member's home and in June 2009 a potluck in the BUC Commons included the book discussion for the month and choosing the books for the

2009-10 year. In the other months the club meets at BUC for 1 & 1/2 sessions September–June. The club is presently full and, at this time, is not accepting new members.

Pauline Mengebier, Coordinator

Holiday Dinners at BUC

Thanksgiving dinner at BUC

A small group of individuals met Thanksgiving evening 2008 for a delicious potluck dinner, conversation, and celebration of the holiday. Carol Winslow coordinated the event but all the participants helped with set-up and clean-up. Like most potlucks each dish is wonderful and no one person had to make all the food! It gives people an opportunity to celebrate the holiday with others and to relax. Carol provided the cooked turkey. Everyone helped with the cost of the bird.

Christmas Day dinner

25 people gathered at Margaret and Stephen Marsh's house in Royal Oak again this year. A wonderful potluck dinner was followed by a white elephant gift exchange. Good food and merriment ensued.

Carol Winslow, Chair

Sharing Dinners

More than 80 people have signed on to participate this year in the Sharing Dinners. On the second Saturday of the month 6 or 7 individuals or couples agree to open their homes and host a potluck dinner for about 8 people. Each month there is a different group of hosts and a different combination of guests, affording an opportunity for participants to get to know many fellow BUCers in a homey setting over good food and lively conversation. It is not too late to sign up for the remaining dinners of the 2009-10 year. You can sign on as a regular or an alternate and need not be available for all the dinners. Contact carolallmanlee@yahoo.com.

Carol Lee, Coordinator

MAMA's Coffeehouse

MAMA's Coffeehouse has begun its seventeenth year of presenting fine acoustic music at BUC. Founded by David Walker (aka David Folks) in 1993, MAMA's has grown and

thrived over the years, developing into a respected music venue and attracting the attention of nationally touring artists as well as local and regional entertainers. Attendance for the first few shows of the 2009-2010 season has been considerably above average (even in these tough economic times!)

MAMA's Coffeehouse is proud of the service it provides to the church and the community by presenting this music, as well as the charitable opportunities it generates. ' portion of each season's proceeds are donated back to BUC and other charitable organizations. On October 17, 2009, MAMA's hosted a benefit concert for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society which attracted an SRO crowd and raised nearly \$4,400.

MAMA's is staffed by a wonderful group of BUC members and folks from the community. Church members Jim Bizer, Kathy DuHame, Larry Wisniewski, Hal and Cathie Breidenbach, Kathy Ransome, Jan Wheelock and Cindy Gunnip, along with Dennis Kingsbury, form the core of the staff.

Even with all these folks pitching in, we can still use more volunteers! Feel free to contact any staff member if you would like to join us. Our biggest needs are simple ones - a few bodies to help with setup and teardown before and after each show and/or some donated baked goods (brownies and such) for our concession sales. It's light work, you get to hang out with fun and friendly people and you can see the shows for free! No committees or long-term commitments - pick a show you'd like to see and sign up on our volunteer forms at the shows or in the social hall on Sunday mornings.

One of the best and most enjoyable ways to support MAMA's Coffeehouse is simply to come see the shows. If you haven't attended before, join the growing number of folks who have (re)discovered the magic of real live music played by talented human beings – there's nothing quite like it.

Jim Bizer, Booking Coordinator and Emcee

Dead Composers' Society

After a 7-year hiatus, we are attempting to restore regular monthly meetings for this group of amateur musicians where each member has an incentive to improve their skills as they learn or relearn the music that they love. There is an encouraging atmosphere for each participant to take on new challenges and take risks before a small group that provides an encouraging and friendly environment.

Choice of instruments varies from synthesizer to squeezebox and musical styles vary from Bach to Beatles with improvisation encouraged.

Attendance has been erratic, in part because we have not been able to establish a consistent meeting time with rental groups given priority in using the sanctuary. As the

new year begins, it is hoped that a more consistent meeting time will be found acceptable to both our experienced and unseasoned musicians.

Coordinator, Dick Schwing

Directors of Religious Education



The RE program in 2009 continues to develop stability and provide tools and growth for our UU children and youth. Laura Ross changed her title from Acting DRE for Youth to Director of Religious Education for Youth on July 1, 2009. Laura directs the 6th – 12th grade youth programs: three Sunday morning classes and three Youth Group programs. Laura writes curriculum, supports the Youth and their families, and works closely with the Youth themselves to support youth initiative.



Both Laura Ross and Eleanor McGuire work in partnership to maintain a fluid cohesion and professionalism in the RE program as a whole. Eleanor McGuire continues with her work as DRE for Children, further developing the new Workshop Rotation program for elementary aged children. Eleanor and Laura team with the Religious Education Council to identify long-term goals for children and youth participating in the Religious Education program at BUC; clarify procedures and policies for the RE program and for the church; and enhance program fundamentals. Kimery Campbell remains the RE assistant for the youth program, and also the nursery caregiver. Together, Laura, Eleanor and Kimery strive to meet the needs and expectations of BUC and continually seek to go beyond expectations to provide an innovative and cutting-edge UU Nursery – 12th grade RE program.

This year approximately 200 children and youth are enrolled in the RE program. More than 80 volunteer teachers and advisors support classes and youth groups. Our Religious Education program includes a wide range of curricula which provides the children and youth with grounding in:

- The beliefs and practices of religions throughout the world and history
- Embracing the values of the UUA's principles and purposes, and
- How our life experiences shape our personal religious beliefs and how our religious beliefs alter our life choices.

There were some notable accomplishments this year. A survey was conducted to create a baseline of satisfaction amongst RE current families. The survey concluded that satisfaction and enthusiasm for our current RE program is strong. The survey also reported some areas where classroom dynamics can be improved, and Laura and

Eleanor have begun a program in which these concerns are addressed. Laura is developing and writing the second year's curriculum for the High School Sunday Morning classes. Eleanor has finished writing the fourth year of the children's five year program.

Our youth groups – The Unitarian Friendship Organization (UFO – 6th/7th Grades), Rite of Passage Experience (ROPE – 8th Grade) and Great Unitarian Universalist Senior High (GUUSH- High School) were active with community service and fun events and held several multi-generational events in an effort to build a stronger connection with the BUC community and with one another. The annual bake-off auction, running Candy Cane Sunday, the pancake breakfast, preparing and serving food for the South Oakland Shelter and participation in Rummage are a few of these events. It's working! Our children and youth have become more involved with all-church activities and continue to look for more opportunities. As always, Youth Sunday and ROPE Sunday were fabulous successes! We are proudly hosting Paint Creek Unitarian Universalist Congregation's 7th graders in our 2009 OWL program.

Future plans for 2010 include work on RE curriculum, credentialing progress for the DRE staff, further survey work, and more opportunity for congregants, volunteers, families, children and youth to connect and learn in a wholesome and innovative program.

Volunteers who teach or help in other ways in the Religious Education program are awesome, and this year was no exception. They are the heart and soul of a good RE program. Without them the program would not exist. Please take the time to thank them for their efforts this year.

It is a pleasure to serve as your Children's and Youth DRE's in our BUC Family.

Eleanor McGuire, Children's DRE Laura Ross, DRE for Youth

Religious Education Volunteers 2008-2009 Church School year

Lisa Alfelt	Wendy Carter	Scott Farrar
Abe Amir	Michelle Chappell	Kristi Fielder
Emilia Askari	Carol Christenson	Katie Fitzner
Lynn Bell	Aletha Craig	Debbie Fordree
Laura Bodary	Tom Cranston	Kim Geis
George Borszcz	Lisa Crawford	Julie Gragg
Jennifer Bostek	Howard Curtis	Dave Graham
Megan Bourland	MichelleDaane-Gumbleton	Pam Graham
Lisa Bower	Walter Dean	Laura Hamrick
Dave Bredenber	Ellie Duhamel	Erika Hansinger
Mark Auchter-Bruening	Ann Duncan	Melinda Henderson
Laura Burleigh	Mary Jo Ebert	Glenn Hoffrichter
Keara Campbell-Fox	Fiona Erickson	Chris Hornig

Tracy Howard	Amy Music	Sue Stoll
Carol Jackson	Dennis Muzzi	Craig Stroup
Maryl Kacir-Huntington	Joel Newman	Debbie Stroup
Jennifer Karteczka	Viola Newman	Kelly Taylor
Marilyn Kelly	Kaaren Peters	Jeremy Uniacke
Claudia Kocher	Eric Sargent	Lad Vidergar
Michelle Lakocy	Sheila Seaver	Jennifer Weallans
Ann Landon	Sylvia Sesostris	Bruce Webber
Rob Lawrence	Jennifer Shearin	Carey Wendell
Rob Liegl	Caitlin Sickels	Sylvia Whitmer
Theresa L'Esperance	Kyle Sim	Frances Williams
Jean MacLeod	Bob Smith	Jennifer Yess
Carolyn O'Mahony	Bill Solomonson	
Stuart McAlpin	Kelly Sorice	
Dave McGuire	Sandi Spencer	

A sampling of BUC Youth Groups' Activities 2009

6th & 7th grade Unitarian Friendship Organization (UFO):

Fall and Spring Retreats at Mystic Lake
 UFO Kick-off
 SOS Baking Project at BUC
 Corn Maze
 Whirly Ball
 Indoor Water Park
 Rummage Consolidation
 Relay For Life

8th Grade Our Whole Lives/Rites of Passage Experience (OWL/ROPE)

ROPE BOSTON TRIP (April 23-26)
 ROPE Sunday
 ROPE/GUUSH Welcoming Gathering
 ROPE Fundraising: Poinsettias, Fair Trade Coffee/Tea/Chocolate;
 Global Handcrafters products

9th-12th Grade Great Unitarian Universalist Senior High (GUUSH):

HS Retreat at Mystic Lake
 SOS Dinner at BUC
 Rummage Consolidation
 Youth Holiday Dinner at BUC
 Weekly meetings; Biweekly Small Group
 Relay for Life
 Multiple Youth Conferences
 GUUSH Fundraising: Northern Sun T-shirts

Annual Adult Religious Education Report

In the absence of a Settled Minister the program this year has lacked the theology courses that are usually the centerpiece of our activities. Even so, we offered a number of events. Annis Pratt offered a course on 'Mysticism' in her home, which was well attended and much enjoyed. Maurice Lefford organized a birthday party for Charles Darwin to celebrate his 200th birthday. Over 50 party-goers gathered and were treated by a cameo appearance of Charles himself. Finally, Lucille McNaughton facilitated a series of videos devoted to social justice topics.

Maurice Lefford, Chair

Service and Social Justice Cluster

Pat Hammer, Council Representative

BUC exists to minister to the needs of our congregation and our communities, promote social and economic justice, and be an agent of systemic social change.

The Service and Social Justice Cluster is made up of a diverse collection of projects, affiliations, and forums which all serve to connect our values and principles to the larger community outside of the church. As the reports below demonstrate, many opportunities exist for personal enrichment through discussion and advocacy of social justice issues and active, hands-on participation in community outreach, which identify BUC as a faith community with a lively engagement in the society in which we live.

M.O.S.E.S.

For more than 10 years BUC has been affiliated with the Detroit-based community action organization, MOSES (Metropolitan Organizing Strategy Enabling Strength). We are one of about 55 faith and service groups in the Detroit metropolitan region that make up this interfaith, multiracial, congregation centered organization that exists to identify and address issues of community concern through a process of relationship building, training and leadership development, and direct action.

At present MOSES advocacy is focused on the following issues: regional mass transportation, health care reform, fair and just immigration reform, and access to quality supermarkets in Detroit. BUCers have been active this year on the health care reform taskforce and the transportation taskforce.

In February several members of BUC attended Democracy Day in Lansing, which was devoted to state health care reform initiatives. We joined legislators to hear a presentation by MichUHCAN (Michigan Universal Health Care Access Network), and later met with our local state representatives.

In October, BUC joined forces with the First Baptist Church of Birmingham to host a forum on regional mass transportation. With a deliberate focus on those residing in and

-serving the communities of the Woodward Avenue Corridor in Oakland County, the Transit Now! planning committee, composed of members of the two churches, and with the assistance of MOSES staff, met over a three month period to examine the issues and develop the program. All state and local elected officials in the area of focus were invited to attend and participate. The resulting program reflected issues particular to Oakland County – i.e., the opt-out policy which has made a patchwork of county-wide transit – within the context of the ultimate goal of regional cooperation. The forum was well received by the 50+ area residents who attended the forum which was held at the First Baptist Church. Special thanks to Jim Mellet and Annis Pratt for their work in planning the event.

The MOSES staff holds training sessions in community organizing technique periodically throughout the year, along with Issue Night programs to identify issues of local concern to the member congregations. Participation in these sessions, as well as on the issue-specific taskforces is open to all. Please contact Pat Hammer for more information: (patriciajhammer@gmail.com)

Pat Hammer, Chair, MOSES Core Team

Communities United For Children

CUFC formerly known as the Birmingham Unitarian Church-Whitmer Human Resource Center (BUC-WHRC) Partnership program has continued as the Communities United for Children (CUFC).

CUFC has been able to reach many students and their families at the Pontiac elementary school with the help of many BUC volunteers. Our tutoring and family literacy programs continue. Again we provided students with backpacks and distributed needed school supplies. Many of the literacy tutors are member of or are friends of BUC. These tutors meet weekly with students identified by their teachers. The tutors help with reading readiness skills, shared reading, and selecting books for home use and after school enrichment activities.

This year seven kindergarten, first and second grade classrooms had the opportunity to select books from book "trolley" each week and were encouraged to take these books home to share with their peers, parents and caregivers. Also three classrooms were selected to receive a bag of books monthly. The teachers selected the books for the children to borrow and take home. These classrooms represented early intervention and preschool classes. The trolley was staff by volunteers. In the spring, all WHRC students were given the opportunity to visit the Media Center and select books they wanted to keep. Over 200,000 books were provided.

Last Christmas BUC continued to sponsor families for our holiday program, providing clothing, toys, games, books and holiday decorations to the families identified by staff at the school.

Emergency medical care, an emergency food pantry and clothing closet continue to provide much needed assistance, including medications, food, and warm clothing (winter coats, hats, mittens, shoes and boots) for needy WHRC students.

The CUFC in-school office is staffed by a community liaison and several part-time volunteers - many of whom are from BUC. This team coordinates the tutors and various programs - emergency aid, the food pantry, the clothes closet, backpack and school supply distribution, holiday (Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter) programs, Family Night Program, and family literacy program.

The not-for-profit Communities United for Children (CUFC) organization includes representatives from WHRC, parents and BUC. Representing Birmingham Unitarian Church are Ilene Beninson, William Duffy, Ron Fredrick, Priscilla Hildum, George Lentz and Maria Runk.

Needs Network

Community outreach projects sponsored by Needs Network this year helped sustain our commitment to living Unitarian Universalist principles by serving the greater community. Projects were made possible by the leadership of the steering committee, and the enthusiastic participation of members and friends.

2009 Needs Network projects include: Lighthouse Food Pantry and Christmas donations, Royal Oak Warming Centers, South Oakland Community Lunch, South Oakland Circle of Faith/Habitat for Humanity, Greening of Detroit, South Oakland Citizens for the Homeless (Welcome Inn), and South Oakland Shelter (SOS).

The mission of Needs Network is:

1. to provide opportunities for BUCers to put values into action through hands-on participation in community service projects in the metropolitan Detroit region
2. to sponsor projects which address human needs such as food, shelter, and mentoring
3. to promote projects that engage the BUC community in understanding and acting upon the reality of poverty and distressed urban neighborhoods in the larger community of which we are a part.

Needs Network operates through decentralized project leadership and community networking. Members of BUC are invited to identify community service projects to the Needs Network steering committee, and to utilize the committee's budget to cover out-of-pocket costs. Needs Network committee members work together to support each other's projects.

Needs Network officers for 2009 were: Pat Hammer, chair; Lillian Dean, secretary. The steering committee is composed of project leaders.

Project leaders in 2009 were: Margaret Marsh (Royal Oak Warming Centers and Lighthouse donations); Pat Hammer and Kathy DuHame (South Oakland Community Lunch); Paul Plante (SOCOF/Habitat for Humanity SOS, and Greening of Detroit); Lillian Dean (Greening of Detroit); Annis Pratt (Welcome Inn - South Oakland Citizens for the Homeless); Grace Rising (South Oakland Shelter).

Through the efforts of the project leaders, who plan, organize, recruit and publicize their projects, more than 80 days of volunteer opportunities were offered during 2009. The response from BUCers has been outstanding. More than 200 individuals have contributed their time to the projects reviewed below, which have aided community-based organizations fight poverty, hunger, homelessness and urban decay.

Greening of Detroit

Tree planting projects with The Greening of Detroit were a success again in 2009! 36 adults and 5 youth/children from BUC assisted in planting 150 mixed variety trees in two Detroit neighborhoods on Saturday, April 25, and Saturday, May 9, 2009.

The Greening of Detroit provided trees and tools. BUCers joined with other metro-area and city volunteers to dig holes, backfill, water, and mulch the trees. Working in teams, it was possible to efficiently plant trees in a short 2 hour period.

Highlights included conversations with residents of these inner city neighborhoods, enjoying lemon aide prepared by a resident mother, working with over 200 other Detroit volunteers, enjoying two great outdoor weather days this Spring, and, experiencing first hand a different way of life in the city

As evidenced by these projects, trees transform neighborhoods...bringing hope and environmental quality to bare urban places. The opportunity to meet other volunteers and local residents makes Greening of Detroit projects worth the effort for all involved.

Thanks to all! Come join us in 2010!

2009 Project leaders: Paul Plante and Lillian Dean

Lighthouse Donations

BUC continues to collect food and toiletries in a trunk in the foyer. The donations are transported to the Lighthouse emergency food pantry in Pontiac as needed. The Lighthouse appreciates our efforts and counts on our donations to assist them in providing the Pontiac community, especially the “working poor,” with needed food and toiletries.

2009 Project leader: Margaret Marsh; Deliveries: Emilia Askari; Backup: Margaret Marsh

Lighthouse Christmas

BUC donors contributed toys, clothes, toiletries, and household goods for holiday gifts for families selected by the Lighthouse. Lighthouse families are grateful for all the assistance BUC provides.

2009 Project leader: Margaret Marsh; Transportation: Dennis and Denise Newman

Royal Oak Warming Centers (St. Mary's)

For the past 10+ years a group from BUC has assumed the laundry responsibilities for St. Mary's shelter. Early on a Sunday morning in January, a group of 15 volunteers invade two laundromats to launder more than 100 loads of linen. At various times, BUC representatives have helped the warming centers as hosts and as dinner coordinators. In addition, BUC has helped with donations of bedding, clothing for guests, and food.

2009 Project leader: Margaret Marsh

Habitat for Humanity

For many years, BUC has joined with other congregations in the South Oakland Circle of Faith coalition to sponsor and build "simple, decent, and affordable housing" in Oakland County in partnership with Habitat for Humanity. HfH houses are built with the help of donated money, materials, and volunteer labor, sold at cost, and financed with a zero interest mortgage. Habitat homeowners are working people needing a helping hand. Homeowners put in hundreds of hours of "sweat equity" into the construction of their own home, and the homes of others in the HfH community.

Habitat for Humanity of Oakland County built (2) houses in Pontiac in June 2009 during a ten day blitz build. The SOCOF house was built for a mother and her two children. It was a three bedroom ranch style home. The cost was \$95,000. Volunteers representing a coalition of faith and business groups from all over Oakland County work together, side by side, with Habitat homeowners and staff.

Volunteers range in experience from none to professional contractors. Training is provided on-the-job as required. There are also many hospitality/support services opportunities available to keep the construction crews well fed and supplied with water, snacks, and sun-screen.

BUC supplied a total of 27 manpower days to the build. Special thanks goes to Eleanor McGuire who coordinated the BUC lunch for workers one Saturday, and Pauline Mengebier who coordinated a paint work crew of seven ladies. All BUC volunteers were rewarded by a job well done, a contribution well made, and new skills learned.

All ages 16 and up are welcome. Additional total slow build houses will be completed over the entire 2010 CY. Building for these will be on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturdays.

Due to the availability of many used empty homes in Pontiac, Habitat may choose to refurbish rather than build some homes new starting in 2009. Slow builds, and refurbish may be more appealing to some BUC volunteers. Habitat is also exploring building in other Oakland county cities such as Royal Oak. I will organize both type builds in 2010. HfH info can be found at www.habitatoakland.org.

2009 Project leader: Paul Plante

South Oakland Community Lunch

BUC volunteers hosted two lunches for the South Oakland Community Lunch Program this year. The lunch program offers a substantial noon meal to about 80 to 90 low income and homeless people each Saturday at the 1st Baptist Church of Royal Oak, “the Church on Main Street”.

On May 9 and October 10 our kitchen crews prepared and served BUC’s signature meal of baked chicken and potatoes, tossed green salad, fruit cup and cookies. Many thanks to all who participated: to the kitchen crew who provided the labor and to those who donated the cash, food, and supplies that make it all happen ... this is truly a project that requires many hands for its success.

2009 Project leaders: Pat Hammer and Kathy DuHame

South Oakland Shelter (SOS)

Since 1989, BUC has opened its doors to the homeless as a host site for the South Oakland Shelter, based in Royal Oak. The SOS shelter, which rotates on a weekly basis among 52 multi-faith groups in Oakland County, is a full service agency with a mission to break the cycle of homelessness. In addition to the basics of food and shelter, it offers counseling, help in finding employment and housing, and life skills training to its clients who are accepted into the SOS program for a 30 to 120 day period.

During our SOS week we provide sleeping quarters, hot dinners, snacks, breakfasts, take-out lunches, showers, and transportation for 30 men, women and children. There are 503 volunteer spots at BUC. More than 150 BUC volunteers make the shelter week happen. This year we were joined by volunteers from Emerson and Paint Creek, who participated in all aspects of the week’s activities. Some bring hot, nutritious meals to the church and help serve and clean up. Others assist with guest intake or host in the evening, overnight, or morning. Volunteers also provide transportation from the SOS office to BUC each evening, or drive guests to various destinations in the morning.

A challenging trend of recent years has been an increasing number of homeless families with very young children. This year, in addition to 22 adult men and women, we hosted 5 single parent families with 11 children among them, ranging in age from 1 to 15 years.

Our thanks go to the dedicated workers who make SOS week a reality, most especially to the 2009 team leaders: Kathy DuHame (Dinner), Barbara Robinson and Mary Jo Plante (lunches, snacks, breakfast and supplies), Paul Plante (Transportation), Lillian Dean (Evening Hosts), Elaine Morse (Overnight Hosts), Fred Straky (Morning Hosts), Pat Hammer (Intake and Shower Hosts), Larry Wisniewski (Laundry), Margaret Marsh and David Sabbagh (Set Up and Tear Down), Jan Andrews (Welcome Greeters), and Kaaren Peters (Children Activities). We also much appreciate Jason McDonald's daily clean up. This year, we also had, thanks to the organization of Cindy Peltonen, our Music Director, beautiful piano music during dinner most nights. Our thanks go to Louise Angermeier, Cindy Peltonen, John Hammer, and Bill Russell for playing. Many of our guests mentioned how nice it was.

SOS will return to BUC November 7-14, 2010

2009 Project leaders: Grace Rising and Paul Plante

Welcome Inn (South Oakland Citizens for the Homeless)

At the Welcome Inn, a daytime shelter in Royal Oak, there were homeless men and women last winter with warm hats and scarves, thanks to our Knitting Ministry. Feet were clad by new work boots, quite a few men and women had brand new long winter and ordinary underwear as well as warm hooded sweatshirts, and several received sturdy knapsacks, complete with water bottles, all purchased by BUC volunteers or funded by our Needs Network, which also supplied incidentals like coffee and juices as the winter went by. In late February and early March, twelve large casseroles were prepared and delivered by one of our small groups and other individuals from BUC, feeding everyone at the shelter for two different days.

2009 Project leader: Annis Pratt

Social Justice Committee

In 2009 the Social Justice Committee focused on engaging with our fellow, local UU congregations and with UUs state-wide through activities of the Michigan UU Social Justice Network (MUUSJN)

In April the social justice committees of BUC and Paint Creek UU Congregation partnered to organize a symposium on Palestine/Israel, with the co-sponsorship of MUUSJN. A panel of local peace advocates, reflecting religious and cultural diversity, addressed the issue of peace in the region from their personal experience and background to an audience of 90+ which represented a broad spectrum of interest and opinion.

Committee members joined with MUUSJN to promote health care reform, participating in building up a Rapid Response Team to contact federal and state legislators in

response to alerts on developing issues sent out by MUUSJN, and circulating petitions calling for a strong public option. Over 900 signatures were collected by activists from 11 Michigan UU congregations. The petitions were presented to Senators Levin and Stabenow in Michigan by a delegation of representatives from participating congregations.

In July the Social Justice Committee co-sponsored the ACLU Civil Liberties Seminar Series. Topics included education as a civil right, privacy and technology, indigent defense, Michigan workers rights, and voting rights.

The committee examines, advocates for, and presents programs on issues of social justice. All are welcome to participate. Fundraising activities of the Social Justice Committee provide the resources needed to carry out its programs. The committee receives no funding from the church.

Lucille McNaughton: Chair, Social Justice Committee
Pat Hammer: Chair, Service and Social Justice Cluster

Plate Collection Committee

For the first part of 2009 the Plate Collection was able to donate 50% to a variety of organizations doing good work in the Detroit Metropolitan Area. By summer, however, it was clear that we had used more than our 50% share, so donations were reduced to 25% of the intake. In the fall, the percentage went down to 10% for our last ten weeks of plate collection.

Our Plate Collection donations constitute an important element of our bond with the Detroit Metropolitan Region, which is our larger community. When the plate is passed, our hearts are lifted up to know that we are able so concretely to enact our principle of justice, equality, and compassion in human relations

Annis Pratt, Chair

Worship

Worship Associates

The Worship Committee has been busy this year. We organized the guest ministers and lay service leaders in the summer and this was a great success. Thank you to all who led a service or served as Worship Associates this year. It was a real pleasure and very gratifying to see and hear our members step up to conduct worship during the time between Interim Ministers Janet Newman and Marcel Duhamel this past summer. If you took a hiatus in the summer and missed it, Annis Pratt, Rev. Chris Hillman, Frank Arvan (tooting my own horn here), Soren Andersen, Rabbi Arnie Sleutelberg, Carol Ann

Arvan (tooting my spouse's horn) and Ed Sharples created some wonderful moments in our Sanctuary. Ellen Chuippi generously offered to lead a service and then generously gave up her spot to allow for a special service on dying with dignity with Nancy Manahan organized by Susie Simons.

The Worship Associate ranks continue to grow. We have added five new members. In addition to our returning Associates Sue Boyce, Hal Breidenbach (Worship Associate Chair), Elaine Morse, Frank Arvan, Dan Boyce, Dan Kosuth, Lisa Demian and Brian Schandavel, we now have Diane Lake, Kristi Fielder, Meg Borland, Ed Sharples, John Lake and Stuart McAlpin. We can look forward to their contributions in the coming year.

Music

As you already know we have had significant changes in our music staff. Barbara Woolf served as both Pianist and Director of Music. When she retired this year a double void was created. We conducted two searches this past year. The first successful search was for a new Pianist. We are now privileged to have Angelina Pashmakova at the keyboard. She is a wonderfully gifted artist and will continue the tradition of great music here at BUC for years to come. Members of that search committee included Louise Angermeier, Barbara Woolf (Chair), Sue Boyce, Eric Sargent and myself. Thank you for your good work.

The second search was for an Acting Director of Music. This search was also successful and we are also privileged to have Cyndi Peltonen with us as Acting Director of Music. She brings an enthusiasm, a desire for quality and a fresh perspective to our program and we look forward to her contributions in the coming year. Members of that search committee included Louise Angermeier, Mary Jo Larsen (Chair), Sue Boyce, Eric Sargent and myself. Thank you for your good work.

In addition to our new staff the Music Committee has been reconvened and it is contributing to the creative vitality of our already vibrant music program. Mary Jo Larsen, Eric Sargent and Louise Angermeier along with our great staff members Pam McAlpin, Abha Dearing and Cyndi Peltonen form this committee.

Service Recording

We still record Sunday services and we distribute these (stripped of music because of copyright issues) to shut-ins and anyone who wants a copy. Contact the church office if you'd like a copy. David Graham, Burr Huntington, Brian Schandavel and Mike Indyk generously give their time and talent to do this.

It has been a great privilege to participate in this good work with these caring congregants and with the members of the Worship Committee, which this year includes Sue Boyce, Hal Breidenbach, Kristi Fielder, Diane Lake, Cyndi Peltonen, Grace Rising and Rev. Marcel Duhamel. I would like to thank the congregation for their

participation in Worship as well. Worship is the heart of our community and it is your participation that makes it a joyous and meaningful experience. We continue to work with Marcel as he adds his own flair to the worship service. We enjoy his presence here. We hope to bring, in the coming year, more meaningful worship for everyone here at BUC.

Yours in service to BUC,

Frank Arvan, Chair, Worship Committee

Music Director Report January 1-June 30, 2009

Barbara Woolf, Retiring Music Director and Pianist



Music in is one of many ministries in the Birmingham Unitarian Church, intersecting with diverse areas in the life of the congregation. First of all, music in our worship services is planned to be integrated with the entire service, and to enhance and enrich the worship experience for all. We seek excellence in our music for worship services, and we balance that with the goal of participation. We work to fulfill our mission to provide opportunities for congregants of all ages to develop their abilities and grow their spirituality and their sense of belonging through making music in community. In this we go beyond the goals of those organizations whose mission it is just to produce concerts.

Music is also a vehicle for social justice. We express diversity and learn about other cultures and religions through our music, in congregational singing as well as our other music-making groups. We feed our spirits for the work we undertake, and we take our music outside the church.

Our church has been and continues to be a leader in the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations in integrating music and religious education. Our Youth Music Director Pam McAlpin has given workshops at the annual conference of the UU Musicians' Network to help widen the practice. We are helping our children to grow up knowing a body of UU Music, and to relate music to their religious studies, making music part of their spiritual development..

And don't underestimate the importance singing together in worship. We witness our community and our values, no matter the quality of our voices. Music is not a spectator sport, but a shared experience among listeners and music makers, and can be a powerful way to intensify the words, or to express that which words cannot.

My last six months as music director and pianist have been rich and satisfying. Yes, we are dealing with difficult financial times, but the musical life of BUC is rich and healthy.

You can read reports by Pam McAlpin and Abha Dearing for details about the choral programs. We are meeting the goal of participation well. For instance, last Christmas season, Pam McAlpin got 48 people to join together with 19 Youth Chorus members and 44 BUC Choir members for the Festival Chorus, 111 strong. And 50 people, from 6th grade up to join the annual No-Fault Orchestra, also in December. In March 48 adults and 27 Youth Chorus sang together in the One-Hour Choir. That's participation!

Every year Youth Sunday is a joy for me, seeing how our teens are working on their faith and their spiritual development. And Abha Dearing has helped them integrate their music into their worship service, as individuals and ensembles, and as the Teen Choir.

The annual Choir Sunday May 17 was a great example of the way music is fulfilling many goals here at our church. Abha Dearing chose the topic of Gender in Equality, and she invited members of the BUC Choir and Teen Choir to choose and present readings and suggest songs, empowering all. The Youth Chorus was represented by 2 members who helped lead the congregation in singing "Standing on the Side of Love." Choir Sunday was not a concert, it was a moving religious experience from the hearts and souls of the participants who had helped craft as well as present the service.

In addition to the various choral groups and the No-Fault Orchestra, I am deeply thankful for the many congregants who share their musical talents as soloists and in smaller ensembles—we are all enriched and most fortunate to be in community together, sharing this uniquely human expression.

Finally, I cannot thank you all enough for the outpouring of love and fun as we celebrated my transition to retirement. So many people helping! So much generosity! I am humbled and most grateful to this congregation for your love and support for music and for me. I leave the BUC music program in good hands, with Abha Dearing and Pam McAlpin continuing their excellent work in their 10th and 16th years here, respectively. We have hired a top-notch pianist, Angelina Pashmakova, and an experienced music director, Cyndi Peltonen to carry on those aspects of the program. BUC music is indeed healthy and growing.

I am graduating to a position on the newly formed Music Leadership Credentialing Committee, appointed by outgoing UUA President Rev. William Sinkford to oversee the program of credentialing music leaders in UU congregations. I had worked on the development of that program as a board member of the UU Musicians' Network, and it is gratifying to see the growth in professionalism of UU musicians. Pam McAlpin now serves on the Board of the UUMN, and brings to it her experience as a church musician as well as an advisor to one of the first class of music leaders credentialed by the UUA. It is exciting to know that our congregation is part of a very broad picture, with co-religionists all over the continent. We need each other.

Music Director Report Beginning August, 2009

Cyndi Peltonen, Acting Director of Music



I am delighted to have the opportunity to serve as your new Acting Music Director. These first four months have been a whirlwind of activity. The staff and members alike have been very gracious and encouraging as I learn UU ways in general, and BUC ways in particular. BUC is truly a welcoming congregation! I am grateful to work with such a talented and energetic staff, as well as so many dedicated volunteers.

You've no doubt noticed it takes two of us to replace Barbara! You see Angelina every week, accompanying the choir and enhancing our worship services with her magnificent playing. She also recruits musicians for special music and was instrumental in lining up musicians for our October concert. I do more of the behind the scenes, administrative side of Barbara's job - coordinating music for worship and other events, fostering communication between staff and volunteers, and going to a lot of meetings!

Fundraising Concert A Great Success!

The music staff was thrilled to present our first Autumn Fundraising Concert on October 18. ROPE families provided a hearty lunch, giving people the opportunity to stay for the one o'clock concert. We appreciate the great working relationship we have with the RE staff, so we could offer this event for our mutual benefit. The audience enjoyed an eclectic variety of music provided by some of the many talented musicians within our congregation. Through the combined efforts of our BUC community, we raised \$2087, which we divided evenly between the music program and ROPE. We look forward to similar ventures in the future!

Special Hymn Sing Service

Also on October 18, we had our first hymn sing service. The songs selected by the congregation were Spirit of Life and Come Sing a Song with Me by Carolyn McDade, We Laugh, We Cry by Shelley Jackson Denham, Let It Be a Dance by Rev. Ric Masten, and Blue Boat Home by Peter Mayer. This interactive service also featured the children leading us in There's a River Flowin' with sign and song, and the Chalice Choir singing What Sweeter Music?

SOS Dinner Music

We welcomed our guests with dinner music when BUC hosted SOS this year. The guests, as well as the volunteers, appreciated the added ambience. Thanks to those who volunteered their time to "affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity" of our guests.

Suggestion Box

We are so fortunate to have many talented musicians working together, both staff and volunteers, to provide high quality musical offerings during worship services. To support our quest of continuous improvement, we would love to hear your candid feedback. We have a music suggestion box on the table in the foyer. Please let the music staff know your impressions, thoughts, and ideas on how we can make the music program at BUC even better!

Dining for Dollars

RE and Music will be alternating months at area restaurants to raise money for our programs. It is a great way to fundraise and build community! Sunday, December 6th from 11 a.m. -11 p.m., TGIFriday's, on Big Beaver (just past I-75) in Troy will donate 20% of food sales to BUC for all the customers who mention they are supporting BUC!

Many Thanks

We are very grateful to all those who have so generously given of their time and talents this fall: Cathy Sherwin , Mike McGillivray, Grace Brockett, Lindsay Boeckl, Elizabeth Ruiz, Cathy Compton, Jim Bizer, Abha and Steven Dearing, Angelina Pashmakova, Jennie Spenner, Louise Angermeier, John Hammer, Maggie Burr, Soo Choe, Bill Russell, Brian Schandavel, Dale Anderson and the members of our Chamber, Chalice, Teen, and Youth Choirs. They have richly enhanced our musical offerings.

Adult and Teen Choirs

Abha Dearing, Choir Director



It is difficult to believe another year has gone by as we continue to busy ourselves with musical activities here at BUC. 2009 has been a year of major transition for all of us, but particularly in the musical life of the church. I'd like to share my thoughts about the Adult and Teen Choirs.

The early months rolled along nicely. The adults continued to sing a variety of pieces currently in the library and the teens met regularly to sing a couple of times through the winter and spring. There were large budget freezes and cuts that challenged me to limit my choices for songs. I was unable to purchase much new music for the choirs, so I used some creativity, borrowed and explored our collection thoroughly. With the help of Barbara Woolf and Pam McAlpin, I sorted through some of the very old, obsolete pieces. I discovered we had many pieces that we would probably never sing again: for example 6 versions of the "Our Father" in English and Latin, and many English songs with gender-stereotyping that had questionable spiritual or musical value.

While I kept one copy of everything and pared down some pieces for which there were 120 copies, we donated the music to many places around the globe.

Choir Sunday's theme in May was "Gender In Equality". Choristers from both the Adult and Teen Choirs searched for poems and readings to fit between many songs that celebrated and questioned our ideas of gender. The service mixed concepts of gender-identity, stereotypes, and nature vs. nurture with humor and poignancy to get congregants to think about their own ideas regarding gender.

As a department, we have tried this year to incorporate more intergenerational music events, in particular choral events. The youth chorus, teens and adults came together on a few services and OneHour Choirs through the year to give all ages a chance to make music together.

In June, we said goodbye to our beloved Music Director, Barbara Woolf. Through various tributes, we were able to express in small ways how much we have appreciated her through the years. I have truly missed our working relationship in the rehearsal process on Wednesday nights. Barbara's support for me since I began work here at BUC has been unwavering, professionally and personally. As an expert, finessed church musician, Barbara was an integral part of the search process for our new pianist, Angelina Pashmakova.

The summer of 2009 was filled with anticipation and some anxiety about the Acting Music Director search. I continued to organize and plan music for what would become a two choir system at BUC. My experience at the Unitarian Universalist Musician's Network conference in Portland this year was invaluable. In addition to being a part of Rodney Eichenberger's choral workshops each day, I had the opportunity to hear and exchange so many ideas with churches like ours and slightly bigger. There were many fine models for our music departments at the conference. Each day teemed with learning and singing.

I came back from the UUMN with a definite plan on how to implement this new two choir system. I polled all of the BUC singers on my e-mail list, asking them about their thoughts. I received overwhelmingly positive encouragements and so decided to go through with it. In September, all singers rehearsed together for two weeks. Then, I ran a vocal technique and auditioning workshop for all interested singers on a Saturday for a couple of hours. Twenty-two singers came for that experience. The following Saturday, I held auditions for the Chamber Choir. I am pleased that we had many singers audition. The 12-member select Chamber Choir sang in services four times this fall and will sing many more times next year. The Chalice Choir is a stronger, more robust large group. Many singers from both choirs have told me that there is a renewed energy for singing all around because they are doing challenging, diverse music that fits the various tastes

and skill levels within the two ensembles. Higher standards and striving for excellence are our goals and these things move the spirit. We are on the right road, but we are still getting to know the new system! I value the many congregants who tell me that they are touched by certain things they notice about our choirs.

There have been other activities and developments as well. We have added Cyndi Peltonen as Acting Music Director, and Angelina Pashmakova as our fine new pianist/accompanist. Angelina and I have established a warm, respectful rapport. I enjoy working with her immensely and have deep respect for her musicianship and spirit of camaraderie. To raise funds for our program, we had a Chamber Music recital in late October which starred only BUC musicians. It was a great success and we were able to purchase some new music and organizational materials for the music program. With these new funds, we invited Dr. Mike Mitchell, renowned Choral Director from Oakland University to come and give a choral clinic to our choirs. It was an exciting event, full of spirited music-making, joviality and challenging work, the result of which was an inspired sound! The choir and I were appreciative to have this chance to work with Mike. The Teen Choir performed in the fall and we had eight strong members who loyally attended rehearsals and enjoyed singing at church. I hope to have this group sing more often.

As the year comes to a close, I remember how proud I am to be a part of a community that holds music in such high esteem. As a newer Unitarian, music has always been my true religion. I look forward to the New Year with excitement and anticipation.

Sopranos

Gloria Abrams
Louise Angermeier
Cathy Compton
Mary Dunn
Carol Forrester
Carol Lee
Nanette Magner
Anita Plous
Kathy Ransome
Pat Schwing
Carey Wendell
Sylvia Whitmer
Barbara Woolf

Altos

Judy Amir
Kathy DuHame
Martha Hale
Melinda Henderson

Mary Jo Larson

Margot LeRoy
Lucille
McNaughton
Janet Patterson
Amy Smalley
Jennie Spenner

Tenors

Catherine Baldwin
Jim Bizer
Gregg Bloomfield
John Brus
Steven Dearing
Ron Fredrick
Mike Indyk
Don Loomis
Jim Nugent
Bill Rittinger

Basses

Mike Auchter-
Bruening
Larry Freedman
John Lake
Eric Pierce
Rich Schreck
Ed Sharples

Teens

Leora Ben-Ze'ev?
Iris McNitt
Emily Arnold
Antonia (Campbell-
Fox)
Merritt Fozz
Keara Campbell-
Fox
Jorah Huntington
Dan Kendra
Charley Kosuth
Asha Krishnan
Anna Zambelli

Youth Music, OneHour Choir & No Fault Orchestra

Pamela McAlpin, Director



The Youth chorus has seen great growth this year with younger families coming to BUC. As of this writing, we now have 29 children in chorus. We practice weekly downstairs in the music room between services. This allows the children in first and second service to begin working together and building community. We sing in the worship serve 12-16 times per year. The ages range from 1st - 7th grades.

It's wonderful watching the older students helping and mentoring the younger children. The weather for our outing at the water park this summer couldn't have been better and enjoyed by all.

Kid sing is still going strong. I go into the classrooms weekly during service and teach a core group of hymns to our youth in grades K-5. You hear a part of what we've learned during "kidsing" in services. I also love going into the nursery and preschool to start singing as part of their Sunday mornings.

The UUMN (Universalist Unitarian Musicians Network) was in Portland, Oregon this year and especially good for directors. We started each day with a worship service,

Sight read new music for our choirs, attended a variety of workshops, listened to performances, and discussed ideas and strategies with like-minded musicians. I have

been elected to be on the board of the UUMN this year and look forward to being on the cutting edge of what we hope to accomplish and bring it back to BUC.

The No Fault Orchestra is always a challenge but great fun. Seeing different generations of players with varying degrees of talent is a delight to behold. We have two hours to prepare for our Sunday morning services and have fun doing it.

The One Hour choir gets larger every time we do it. It gives people who are normally too busy or unsure of their musical talent a chance to sing in a large group. I try to select simpler pieces that are easy to rehearse in one hour.

Morning Song is something that is starting in many UU Churches to give the congregants a chance to hear and practice new or rarely sung hymns. It gives me a chance to sing!

I had great fun preparing the talent for Barbara Woolf's retirement party. She still helps me record and make many CD's for my choir and the one-hour choirs. Her upbeat cheerfulness and creative ideas were a wonderful part of staff meetings and she is dearly missed.

Senior Minister Search Committee

In the fall of 2008, we decided to extend the ministerial search process from one year to two, and after a very full year of activities in 2008 (detailed in the 2008 Annual Report), our efforts continued in 2009, as detailed:

- We met with the Transition Team to coordinate our efforts as to what can be accomplished during the interim year(s) that will aid in the success of a settled minister to follow.
- Some of us participated in the Nautilus Listening Project as “Listeners”, others as “Talkers” as a way to keep in touch with congregational concerns and deepen connection.
- We also made note of the concerns expressed at the World Café around the topic “How can we energize and engage BUC members to the church and to each other?”
- We reestablished our Listening Post during coffee hours to continue to present the search timeline and listen to congregational concerns and ideas.
- We continued to have items in each month's newsletter to chronicle our activities and efforts for the congregation, and keep all apprised of our process and progress.
- In June we met with Interim Minister Janet Newman and the Transitions Team to discuss how the year had gone and what had been accomplished.
- We invited Gini Courter, Moderator of the UUA, to speak in September. She and our Interim Minister, Marcel Duhamel, also met with the Board and our committee during her visit in September.
- In April we began work on our Congregational Record, our self-description posted for ministers to see if they want to apply. We worked on this for many months, and posted it at the end of October.
- At the same time we identified elements of the more elaborate self-description, our packet, sent to candidates we wish to interview and possibly pre-candidate. This too took many months of work to prepare. It was complete in early November.
- Over the summer we had our second official meeting with our district Ministerial Settlement Representative, to discuss the search process and for her evaluation of how we were doing

- Concurrently, precandidating weekends were arranged for 2010 for future pre-candidates.
- We wrote a “script” for telephone interviews we will conduct with several prospective candidates. And we rehearsed it with our Interim Minister, Marcel Duhamel.
- Members of the committee served on the Compensation Committee to draft a Letter of Call and Agreement for the prospective minister. It is part of our packet.
- During November and December, we are reading many Ministerial Records and Ministerial Packets, and conducting telephone interviews as well. We aim to have our Pre-Candidates selected by the end of December.
- We are looking forward to precandidating weekends in 2010, concluding with Candidating Week May 7-17.

But we are more than just the work. We have deepened our commitment to this church through this year of discovery. We have found joy and laughter (a lot of laughter) in our work together. We are each better at articulating our UU faith because of this search and your input. We are honored to be doing this work for and with you.

Senior Minister Search Committee

Judy Amir, Gregg Bloomfield, Dick Halsted, Teresa Honnold, Kym Worth
Matt Chope and Marilyn Mast, Co-Chairs

Rummage 2009

Kimery Campbell, Coordinator

In 2009, the Rummage Committee faced new uncertainties, many of them related to the faltering state economy. Although there was no doubt that there were many customers for whom resale shopping had become a necessity, we were not certain that we would attract enough of them to make up for the loss of big spenders from previous years. Nonetheless, the committee moved ahead and sponsored sales that were reasonably profitable, under the circumstances.

One area in which we have not suffered is in quantity of donated goods. Although there is some anecdotal evidence that the quality is “not what it used to be,” we filled up every department and had plenty leftover to give away at the end. Possible reasons for the drop in “better” donations include: ready availability of websites such as e-Bay and Craig’s List which enable potential donors to sell their own good stuff; reluctance to part with high-ticket items in uncertain economic times; a decline in the frequency with which people replace such items; chance. To counterbalance this, Laura Lee, the new Silent Auction chair, solicited donations of services, tickets, and other specialty items, which considerably increased the income from that portion of the sale.

Our gross income for the spring sale was around \$12,500 and for the fall sale, about \$14,500. In the spring, we were once again cursed with bad weather on the opening night of the sale; in the fall, the bad weather hit on Friday and was not as big a problem. At both sales, we saw a steady flow of customers, but sale workers felt that there was an increase in people shopping for necessities rather than luxuries. It should be noted that the cash income represents only a portion of the benefits our church gains from Rummage. Since BUC gets “first pick” from the donations, any furnishings, office supplies, books, or Religious Education supplies that come from Rummage represent cost savings. In addition, Rummage attracts many visitors, some of whom have been known to linger and ask questions about our church community. We were particularly fortunate that Ben Hall, proprietor of the Russell Street Deli in Eastern Market, became interested in BUC and Rummage and donated a lovely lunch for the workers during both the spring and fall sales.

Rummage, of course, is much more than a money-maker-- it is also a ministry. This year we shared our bounty with Kids for Afghan Kids; Most Holy Trinity’s men’s outreach program; and the Salvation Army.

These were my second and third sales in the capacity of paid Rummage coordinator. I again tracked the hours I devoted to Rummage this fall and found I spent about 87 hours on it, including set-up and follow-up. Laura Lee, my volunteer co-chair, also put in very long hours preparing and executing the sale, particularly Silent Auction. Other members of the 2009 committee include: Walli and Soren Andersen, Carol Ann Arvan, Scott Cameron, Carol Lee, Margaret Marsh, Eleanor McGuire, Grace Rising, Pat Schwing, Debbie Stroup, Ann Throop, and Walter Dean.

Treasurer’s Report 2009 Financial Report

Once again BUC has had a year of transition and economic challenges. Major events this year include:

- An economic downturn affecting our state, Southeast Michigan and our BUC family and friends
- Retirement of BUC’s Music Director /pianist of 38 years. Hired Acting Music Director and a pianist, both part time positions
- End of the position of Executive Director, mid year
- Seamless transition from one senior interim minister to another
- Preparations to select a permanent senior minister in the next year

During the first half of the year we saw a drop in pledge and rental incomes and some service contracts were more expensive than anticipated. As a result, midyear, the Budget and Finance Committee recommended:

- Termination of the Executive Director position
- Freeze in salaries through 2009
- Reduction in pension benefits
- Elimination of extra salary payments for curriculum development
- Reduction of the portion of the plate collection distributed to the community
- Reduction in UUA and Heartland dues
- Freeze in all budgeted expenses where possible
- Acceptance with gratitude of Interim Minister Janet Newman's unused professional expenses budget

Financial reporting is finally moving smoothly between the Budget and Finance Committee, the bookkeeper and Quickbooks. The loan from the Endowment Committee (approved in November 2007) has allowed an upgrade of many buildings on the BUC campus and expenditures on physical plant emergencies in the past year. Interest on the loan at 5% and part of the principal are repaid annually.

For the first 10 months of 2008, operating expenses exceeded income by \$9,206. We are anticipating that November and December will be breakeven or slightly negative from a net income standpoint, and therefore anticipate an operating deficit for full calendar year due primarily to the factors mentioned above.

Total income through October 31 was \$557,591, of which \$322,398 was from Pledge Income, and \$235,193 was from Other Income, primarily Rentals (\$71,824), Rummage (\$32,374), Fundraisers/Auction (\$30,740), Non-pledge Contributions (\$25,895), Endowments/Investment Income (\$21,263) and Plate Collection (\$15,838).

Various expenses are over or under the anticipated budget amounts year-to-date, with total operating expenses approximately \$13,000 over budget through October 31. The largest variances are Office Staff expenses primarily due to additional bookkeeper time related to changes in financial reporting processes and Facilities Staff expenses primarily due to unanticipated repair and maintenance expenses.

BUC's cash accounts totaled \$386,996 at the end of October. Net operating cash totaled \$134,580, or 20% of our 2009 annual budgeted expenditures. BUC's endowments totaled \$252,416 as of October 31.

Special thanks are due to President Carol Ann Arvan and Budget and Finance chairman Craig Stroup who have spent untold extra hours following the departure of the Executive Director. BUC is fortunate to have their expertise, dedication and leadership.

Outlook for 2010

- Pledges have increased
- Church administrator Lisa Crawford is aggressively soliciting renters and rental income in our depressed economy
- The only staff salary raise is for the church administrator for additional communication duties
- Plate collection distribution is budgeted at 10% for the Minister's fund for special needs, 35% for community distribution and 55% for internal BUC activities such as the Needs Network
- UUA and Heartland dues are budgeted at 35% of Fair Share (same as the plate collection distribution)
- A service auction will be held on Saturday, February 27, 2010
- Expenses will increase for the senior minister search

Pauline Mengebier, Treasurer

Craig Stroup, Chairman, Budget and Finance Committee

Agenda

Annual Meeting of the Membership

Sunday, December 6, 2009, 12:30 pm

Welcome and Call to Order	Carol Ann Arvan
Centering	Rev. Marcel P. Duhamel
Minutes from December, 2008 Annual Meeting	Julia Gragg or Keith Ensroth
Leadership Development Committee Report & Vote	Sheila Seaver & Michelle Daane-Gumbleton
President's Remarks and Volunteer Recognition	Carol Ann Arvan
Comments	Board of Trustee Members
Interim Senior Minister's Remarks	Rev. Marcel P. Duhamel
Director of Religious Education for Children Remarks	Eleanor McGuire
Directory of Religious Education for Youth Remarks	Laura Ross
Endowment Report	Dick Schwing
Treasurer's Report, budget Presentation and Adoption	Pauline Mengebier
Result of Election	Sheila Seaver & Michelle Daane-Gumbleton
Issues Arising for the Good of the Congregation	Carol Ann Arvan
Adjournment	

Birmingham Unitarian Church

Annual Meeting of the Congregation

Sunday, December 7, 2008, 12:30 pm

Welcome and Call to Order--Donna Cunningham, President, Board of Trustees

Call to order at 12:53 Attendance: 82

Centering and Chalice Lighting—Rev. Janet Newman, Interim Senior Minister

Be Gentle by Richard Gilbert

Minutes from December 2007 Annual Meeting—Julia Gragg, Secretary

Approval of minutes tabled until January 18, 2009 meeting of congregation

Announcement--Comments are welcomed from BUC members and nonmembers. Voting members (defined as someone who has signed the membership book before September 8, 2008 and has made a financial contribution or pledge in the past year.) may submit a ballot.

Leadership Development Committee—Keith Ensroth, Chairman, LDC

Thank you to LDC members for their work in preparing slate of candidates.

Thank you to all candidates for volunteering their service to the church community.

We present the following candidates to the congregation for approval:

Board of Trustees

Choose 1 for each position (there are 3 Trustees):

President 1 yr Carol Ann Arvan

Vice President 1 yr Julie Fream

Secretary 1 yr Julia Gragg

Treasurer 1 yr Pauline Mengebier

Trustee 2yrs Peggy Woehrlen

Trustee 3yrs Boris Silberberg

Trustee 3 yrs Tom Cranston

Program Council Representatives (2 year terms)

Choose 1 for each position

Worship Frank Arvan

Congregational Development Lisa Demian

Fellowship Hal Breidenbach

Leadership Development Committee

LDC committee is made up of 10 members each serving 2 years, which are elected to the committee in a staggered fashion of 5 new members being elected each year. BUC constitution requires a slate of 9 candidates to be presented to the congregation from which 5 will be elected.

Continuing on the LDC will be Darrell Ebbing, Michelle Daane-Gumbleton, Burr Huntington, Sheila Seaver and Fred Vocino.

Vote for no more than 5 of the following to serve 2 year terms:

Walt Palmer	Bill Fox	Paul Plante
John Arnold	Jennifer Yess	Ed Sharples
Jeff Braun	Mary Jo Ebert	Frances Williams

President's Remarks and Recognitions—Donna Cunningham

Highlights of 2008: A year of change: "Change has no natural allies."

1. Retirement of Senior Minister and Church administrator—Each of whom served the congregation for over 20 years.
2. Associate Minister and Director of Religious Education for youth both left the service of BUC.
3. New Hires included: Church Administrator, Bookkeeper and Acting DRE for Youth.
4. Celebrated the 60th anniversary of BUC
5. Celebrated the years of service of Doug Gallager and Celia Thurston conferring the distinction of Emeritus and Emerita status.
6. Two Search Committees formed and working to find a Senior Minister and Interim Minister.
7. Membership as of Jan. 2008 at 560 members
8. Small Group Fellowship involvement has increased.
9. Strength of RE program is illustrated by the presentation of BUC's curriculum at recent workshop.
10. Rummage sale income was steady. Service auction was a successful fundraiser.
11. Stewardship campaign was innovative and celebrative.

Recognitions

The congregation as a whole was thanked for their financial support and their volunteer time and energy.

Staff recognition and appreciation expressed to: Ministers, Executive Director, RE staff, facilities staff, administrative staff and music staff.

2008 Board Members recognized: token of appreciation given to outgoing members-Rich Schreck, Mary Jo Larson, Craig Stroup.

Budget and Finance Chair: Chris Music thanked for taking over position midyear.

Stewardship Committee Chair: Craig Spangler thanked.

Interim Minister's Remarks—Rev. Janet E. Newman

Janet has had 3.5 months of service to BUC providing parish ministry and consultancy in interim ministry. It is her hope that the scheduled “transition talks” and a planned BUC timeline activity will help the congregation to better appreciate the transition process. Transition Team was recognized: Frank Arvan, Maurice Lefford, Sydney Lentz, Grace Rising, Bill Fox, Bill Pratt, Peggy Woehrlen, Susie Sherman-Hall. Janet volunteered funds designated for her 2009 compensation to support the salaries of other members of the BUC staff.

Executive Director's Remarks—Jill Warren

Many changes in the sixteen months she has been on staff.

Recognitions and thanks given to:

BUC staff: They are efficient, effective and passionate about their work for BUC.

Volunteers: They are a privilege and pleasure to work with—Budget and finance, facilities, community service.

Individuals recognized: Kathy DuHame, Gloria Boddy (website), Bruce Webber (stewardship website), Kimery Campbell (newsletter and rummage coordinator).

Stewardship comments: history of pledging saw an average pledge of \$1592 in 2007 and \$1580 in 2008. It is a challenge for congregation to increase their generosity.

Religious Education Staff Remarks

Eleanor McGuire, Director of Religious Education for Children (K-5): Many changes in 2008 including the departure of Nancy Otto, the hiring of Laura Ross and the reestablishment of the RE Council. Program is currently in the third year of a five-year rotating curriculum. The fourth year curriculum is currently being written. One hundred percent of the families of children enrolled volunteer in some way to support the program.

Recognition and thanks to Pam McAlpin for providing a wonderful music curriculum for the children and to Sylvia Whitmer, for her leadership in the development of curriculum.

Laura Ross, Acting Director of Religious Education for Youth (6-12): Recognition for support given to the RE program by all BUC staff. Currently, we are working to update policies and procedures to increase safety and transparency in the RE program. 2008 has been a time of transition and challenge. Laura has felt welcomed. The K-12 curriculum is collaborative and well networked as it continues to evolve on the shoulders of work done at BUC throughout the Church's history. The Sunday morning high school (9-12) program is currently in the first year of a four-year rotating curriculum. The scope and sequence of the curriculum is available to congregants to look at. The 8th grade OWL program is currently a collaborative effort between the UU congregations of Paint Creek, Emerson and BUC.

The high school youth group (GUUSH) program also involves much collaborative activities with other UU churches in SE Michigan. The goal of the youth programming is to engage the youth through Sunday morning activities and youth group activities to: promote the development of leadership; build enthusiasm, friendships and connection to Unitarian Universalism; grow our youth programming; and, raise funds for social action and the 8th grade ROPE trip to Boston.

Music Staff Remarks—Barbara Woolf

Mission of the BUC Music department: To enhance life through music. It is a multigenerational empowering ministry.

Pam McAlpin—Youth music: Has served BUC for 14 years. She is active in Sunday morning teaching, director of the youth chorus, no fault chorus and orchestra. Pam works 23 hrs/wk at BUC, an exciting dynamic place to work!

Abha Dearing—Adult music: has served BUC for 8 years. She conducts the adult choir and is currently looking to grow the teen choir. Historically the HS participants have been part of the adult choir, but there is enthusiasm to have a separate HS choir. Barbara Woolf—Music Director and Pianist: Has served BUC for 38 years, first as pianist starting in 1971, and then took on role as Music Director in 1991. She has strived for a program of excellence and inclusiveness. Barbara announced that she plans to retire in June 2009. BUC will always be a place, a home, to grow and become.

Senior Minister Search Committee--Marilyn Mast, Chair

The senior minister search has been extended from a one-year search to a two-year search. It became apparent that the time spent for discernment and inquiry regarding BUC's history and future needs was of importance. It is not enough to just fill the job. Recommended the book *Change of Pastors*. The time between settled ministers is a time of growth for the congregation. Members of committee introduced: Matt Chope, Judy Amir, Gregg Bloomfield, Dick Halsted, Teresa Honnold, and Kym Worth.

Endowment Report—John Lake, Chair

Committee members introduced: Dick Schwing, Ron Fredrick, Nancy Jones, and Marilyn Mast.

Endowment Funds as of Nov 20, 2008: General Endowment Fund \$250,000

Memorial Glen Endowment Fund: \$33,000

Music Endowment Fund \$22,000

A \$120,000 Loan has been made from the general endowment fund to the general fund of the church at 5% over 10 years to fund facility repairs and needed improvements.

Yearly campaign occurs in December. In 2007 the campaign net \$25,000

Heritage Society currently has 88 members, and exists with the goal of maintaining the BUC society for future generations.

Treasure's Report—Craig Stroup, Treasurer, Board of Trustees

2008-A year of Transitions.

Accounting software has been changed this year from Church Windows to Quick Books.

2008 budget review-expect break even for 2008 financial year.

Income for year through Oct 2008: \$687,000

Meeting turned over to 2009 President-Elect--Carol Ann Arvan

Acknowledged appreciation of the work Donna Cunningham has done on behalf of BUC. She has led us with a vision for change and hope.

2009 Budget Presentation—Carol Ann Arvan (President-Elect), Craig Stroup (Treasurer)

Background: BUC is currently classified as a large, mid-sized church.

We have no mortgage.

Individual support has generally increased or remained constant 2007 to 2008.

\$65,000 surplus from 2007 was used to fund 2008.

There will be no surplus from 2008, no income cushion for 2009.

Request made to please submit 2008 pledge payment ASAP.

A Balanced budget for 2009 will necessitate cuts. In determining our priorities we must keep in mind our core purposes: Worship, Learning and Outreach.

Potential cuts outlined:

Decreasing denominational support.

Decreasing Executive Director funding from 12 months to 9 months.

Cuts to employee compensation/ not funding at UUA Fair compensation guideline levels.

Reducing distribution of plate collection.

Plan for determining final budget for 2009:

Today, the projected Income and Expenses for 2009 will be presented to the congregation and a discussion will follow. Congregants are encouraged to submit their additional comments to our Executive Director, Jill Warren, by Dec. 15, 2008. The Board will consider all comments and recommendations made, and will at their Dec 18 meeting, develop the final budget proposal. This final budget proposal will be published in the Newsletter and on the BUC website. Hard copies will be available by contacting Lisa Crawford, Church Administrator. On January 18, 2008 at 12:30 an additional congregational meeting will be held to vote on the 2009 Budget as proposed by The Board. A Look At the 2009 Budgeting process --Pie Chart presentation followed:

Income:

No surplus will be available from 2008. Pledge income is down. Plate collection income is down. Rummage income is down \$5,000. Special fundraiser income is down \$9,000 (no auction). Rental income is down. Investment income is down. (Endowment is down due to loan made to general fund for facilities improvements.)

Expenses: (recommended reductions outlined)

- Learning costs--decrease DRE expenses.
- Plate expenses--decrease by \$26,000 by recommending that BUC keep half of that collected rather than distributing to outside organizations.
- Professional expenses reduced. Music expenses reduced (\$8,000).
- Facilities budget is now a larger piece of the pie due to commitment to fund needed repairs.
- Admin/office expenses flat.

- Denominational dues reduced.

The floor was opened for questions and comments from congregants in attendance.

The following are the topics brought to the floor by members of the society:

- Concern regarding having the Executive Director for only 9 months.
- Question re: how prior year pledge monies and current year pledge monies were accounted for.
- Concern that decreasing the plate collection disbursements was not voted on by the congregation.
- Concern re: maintaining a budget line item for an Associate Minister.
- Question on how to better get financial commitment from new members as they join the church in 2009.
- Membership: 560 members in 2007, 490-510 members as of Jan 2009. We can't sustain a large church operation if we are a mid-sized church.
- Concern re: UUA dues. The paying of UUA dues raises BUC conscience of being part of a larger congregation. How will a decrease in our support of the UUA impact our process of attracting a new minister? Opinion expressed to restore full funding of fair-share dues to the UUA.
- Concern re: UUA dues. BUC had many years of not paying any UUA dues. Not paying at the level of "fair-share" is better than BUC being "bankrupt". BUC has many needs that must be considered.
- Clarification: "Fair-share" is defined as 4.2% of previous year's expenses or based on number of members. Designation of BUC as GEO 5 (highest rating based on socioeconomics of region) currently is being challenged. Detroit area is not comparable to San Francisco or NYC. In addition our membership list is being cleaned to determine number of truly active, contributing members.
- Clarification: Membership is defined as those individuals who have signed the book and given a contribution of record in the past 12 months.
- Question why rental income is decreased-potentially a result of socioeconomic situation of SE Michigan?
- Plate collection consideration: Hypothesis made--Anticipate that there will be up to a \$19,000 drop in collected funds in the plate if the proceeds are kept in house. This will represent only a \$7,000 net gain to the church. Is that worth giving up?
- Solution offered—Get more new members!
- Opinion: UUA dues are sacred expense
- Fundraising options: suggested that we look at fee for RE registration, or other one-time charges.
- Funding of office equipment—need to compile wish list to make possibility of donations of what is needed. Need committee to help find needed equipment at reasonable or no fee.
- Appreciation expressed for hard work of the board in the past five years during a period of significant transition.

Election Results—Keith Ensroth, Chairman LDC

The slate of candidates as presented by the LDC for the Board of Trustees and for the Program Council Representatives has been elected by a vote of the congregation.

Board of Trustees

President 1 yr Carol Ann Arvan

Vice President 1 yr Julie Fream

Secretary 1 yr Julia Gragg

Treasurer 1 yr Pauline Mengebier

Trustee 2yrs Peggy Woehrlen

Trustee 3yrs Boris Silberberg

Trustee 3 yrs Tom Cranston

Program Council Representatives (2 year terms)

Worship Frank Arvan

Congregational Development Lisa Demian

Fellowship Hal Breidenbach

The Newly Elected LDC Members (in a close race): Jeff Braun, Bill Fox, Jennifer Yess, Mary Jo Ebert, Ed Sharples

Investiture of the new and continuing members of the Board of Trustees of Birmingham

Unitarian Church by Rev. Janet Newman.

Closing remarks by Carol Ann Arvan, President

Why are we here? History? Friendship? Meaning? Service? Support? Growth?

A period of CHANGE!

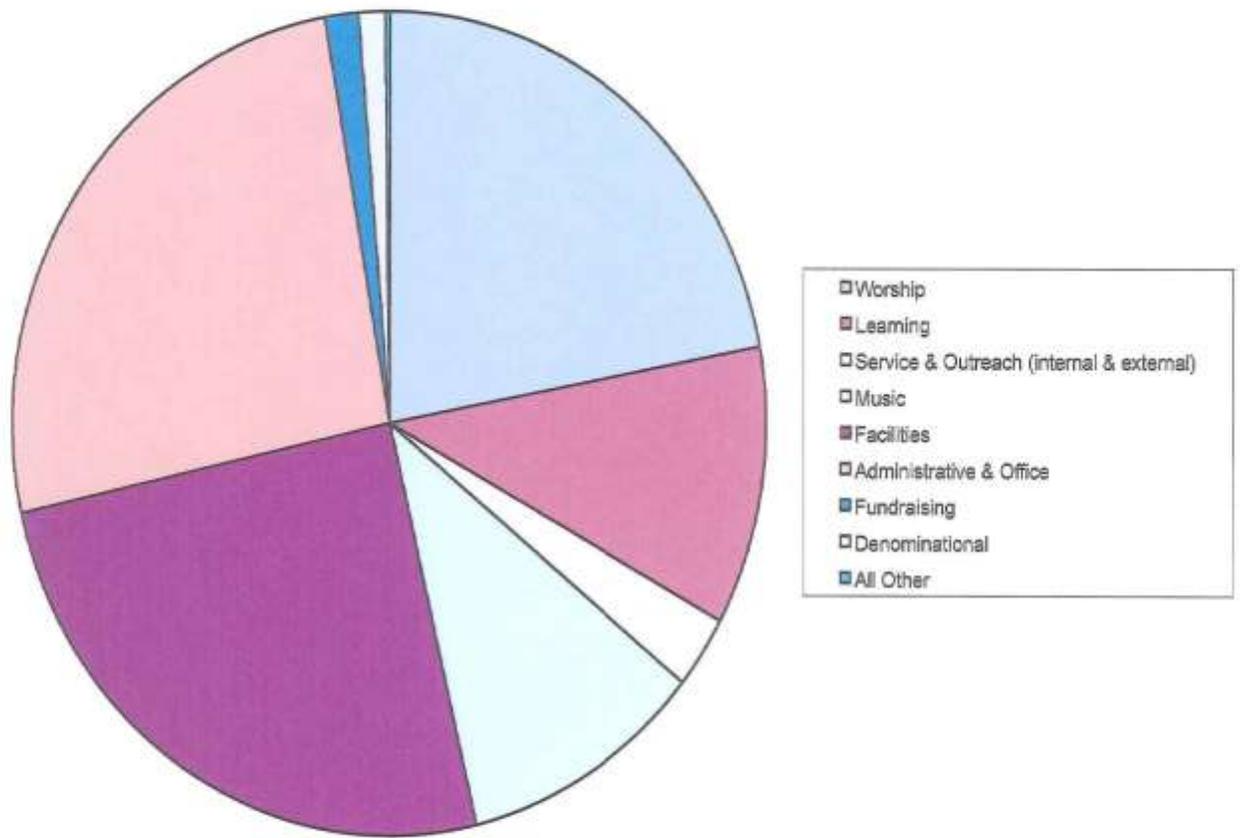
A period for giving/sharing: share of your money, your time and skills—if you have more time than money, give of your time. If you have more money than time, give financially.

Our future is full of possibilities for service.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45

Minutes submitted by Julia Gragg, Secretary, BUC Board of Trustees

BUC 2009 Budget Expenses



BUC 2009 Piechart Data

	2008		2009		
Income					
Pledge Income	472,319	57.9%	408,500	66.8%	8.9%
Non-Pledge Contributions	30,065	3.7%	25,000	4.1%	0.4%
Rentals	103,743	12.7%	88,200	14.4%	1.7%
Transfer from Op Reserve & Restricted Assets	76,338	9.4%	-	0.0%	-8.4%
All Plate Collections	42,106	5.2%	23,100	3.8%	-1.4%
Rummage	35,000	4.3%	30,000	4.9%	0.6%
Special Events	17,000	2.1%	8,000	1.3%	-0.8%
Investment Income & Distributions	28,700	3.5%	21,930	3.6%	0.1%
All Other	10,628	1.3%	7,080	1.2%	-0.1%
Total Income	815,867	100.0%	611,790	100.0%	
Expenses					
Worship	247,327	30.2%	134,387	22.0%	-8.2%
Learning	87,014	10.6%	96,923	11.0%	0.3%
Service & Outreach (internal & external)	43,607	5.3%	17,450	2.9%	-2.5%
Music	72,534	8.9%	64,200	10.5%	1.6%
Facilities	152,835	18.7%	153,880	25.2%	6.5%
Administrative & Office	155,062	18.9%	157,380	25.8%	6.8%
Fundraising	12,027	1.5%	8,750	1.4%	0.0%
Denominational	44,060	5.4%	6,943	1.1%	-4.2%
All Other	4,200	0.5%	1,200	0.2%	-0.3%
Total Expenses	818,688	100.0%	611,114	100.0%	

Birmingham Unitarian Church 2010 Slate of Candidates Annual Meeting, December 6, 2009

The annual meeting will take place December 6 after the second service. Voting will take place at that time. Should you be unable to attend the annual meeting and still wish to vote, please ask Lisa Crawford (BUC office) for an absentee ballot.

Board Candidates: The LDC is nominating the following:

President: Carol Ann Arvan

Vice President: Tom Cranston

Secretary: Keith Ensroth

Treasurer: Pauline Mengebier

Trustees: Julia Gragg, Walter Dean

They will join these trustees continuing their current terms: Alex Adah, Boris Silberberg, and Peggy Woehrlen.

Leadership Development Committee

Each year five new members are elected to two-year terms. They will join the five members who will finish their two year terms. Church members will elect five of the following:

Jack Corley
Glenn Hoffrichter
Diane Lake
Carol Lee
Marcia Mahood
Marie Miller
Bill Pratt
Brian Schandavel
Susie Sherman-Hall

Program Council The LDC is presenting the following cluster chairs:

Lucille McNaughton: *Service/Justice*

They will join these current cluster chairs:

Cathie Breidenbach: *Communications*

Silvia Whitmer: *Learning*

David Graham: *Secretary*

Frank Arvan – *Worship*

Lisa Demian – *Congregational Development*

Hal Breidenbach – *Fellowship*