Unitarian Church of Lincoln Spring Congregational Meeting  
Sunday, May 19, 2019, 11:15 a.m.

Opening Song: TBD
Welcome Linda R. Brown, Board President
Chalice Lighting Emily Shattil, Vice-President

Explanation of proposed Congregational Meeting Governance Policy and modified consensus voting Kristi Wamstad

Voting Topics
1. UCL Modified Consensus Voting (show cards)
2. Approval or Correction of 12/9/2018 Minutes (show cards)
3. Board Election Karen Dienstbier, Nominations Chair
   Slate=Trevor Jones, Lori Straatmann, Michael Krumm (written ballot)
4. Share the Plate (written ballot)

Musical interlude (TBA)

Reports
• Signage Task Force Proposal Colleen Kadleck (Written response to questions, vote Dec 2019)
• Minister’s Report The Rev. Oscar Sinclair
• Program Council Report Charles Coley, Chair Program Council
• Treasurer Dorothy Ramsey
• Introduction of Stewardship Committee Theresa Forsman
• Board of Trustees Linda R. Brown, President

Closing Song: TBD

Next Meeting: Winter Congregational Meeting, Sunday, December 8, 2019
Unitarian Church of Lincoln Spring Congregational Meeting
Sunday, May 19, 2019, 11:35 a.m.

Ninety-three members checked in at the sign-in table and received meeting materials. Each member who checked in received a packet containing the Annual Report, a Board of Trustees ballot, a Share the Plate ballot and laminated green, yellow and red cards for Modified Consensus Voting.

Board of Trustees President Linda Brown opened the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Opening Song: Julie Enersen, interim choir director.

Chalice Lighting: Jamie Radcliffe

Voting Topics

Unitarian Church of Lincoln Modified Consensus Voting

Kristi Wamstad explained the Modified Consensus Voting process, which she described as a process in which “we are all sharing with one another and engaging in decision-making.” Members use green, yellow or red cards in this voting process. Modified Consensus Voting, first introduced at the December 2018 Congregational Meeting, will replace Robert’s Rules of Order if the congregation votes for it.

Kristi’s summary of Modified Consensus Voting:

First, a facilitator introduces, in five minutes or less, the proposal to be voted on. Second, the floor is open for anyone who would like to ask clarifying questions. Third, there is a straw poll. In the straw poll, members use either the green card (to indicate they are leaning to agree) or the red card (to indicate they are leaning to block the proposal). Those who are leaning to block bring up their disagreement(s) with the proposal. The congregation discusses how to address these concerns and the proposal may be modified accordingly. Then there is a Test for Agreement on the modified proposal: At this time, members hold up either a green card (I support the proposal and I am willing to help implement it), a yellow card (I have reservations but I am willing to let the proposal pass), or a red card (I have a fundamental disagreement with the proposal).

The discussion is reopened to see if there is a path forward. After the discussion and, possibly, further modification of the proposal, there is another Test for Agreement. Green and yellow cards are counted as being for the proposal; red cards are counted as being against the proposal. The majority decides.

A member pointed out that with both Robert’s Rules of Order and Modified Consensus Voting, the majority rules. Kristi responded that the discussion and decision-making processes are different with Modified Consensus Voting.

Board of Trustees President Linda Brown asked the congregation to vote, by a show of cards, whether to adopt Modified Consensus Voting: All the cards raised were green.

Approval of 12/9/2018 Congregational Meeting Minutes

Linda made a correction to the 12/9/2018 Congregational Meeting minutes. The minutes referred to a quorum as 80 members. Our quorum, she noted, is 20 percent of membership, which would be 60. The minutes, with correction, were approved by Modified Consensus Voting.
Board of Trustees Election

There are three nominees for three open seats. They are Trevor Jones, Lori Straatmann and Michael Krumm. (Trevor Jones was appointed to the Board of Trustees in January to fill the unexpired term of Rich Little.)

Karen Dienstbier, chair of the Nominations Committee, said she was very pleased with the slate of candidates. She explained the process for arriving at these candidates: The committee invited a number of members to attend a question/answer session with the Board of Trustees several months ago to learn about board work. A number of those who attended considered whether it was the right time for them to join the board. Three decided yes. “These are very good candidates for the board,” Karen said. “We are in good shape.” She noted that several potential candidates who would be interested in serving on the board are currently heavily involved in other work at the church, which they would like to finish before considering serving on the board.

Members voted via paper ballots, which were collected by volunteers.

Share the Plate Voting

Members voted, by paper ballot, for 10 non-profit organizations to be recipients of our church’s monthly Share the Plate collection during the next year. In all, 20 organizations had been nominated. These ballots were collected by volunteers.

Musical interlude: Julie Enersen, interim choir director.

Reports

Signage Task Force Proposal

Colleen Kadleck, Board of Trustees member who co-chairs the Signage Task Force, outlined the options the task force is considering to replace the church’s sign on A Street.

At the start of her presentation, paper forms asking for feedback from members were passed out to each member. Another paper, with a grid comparing the three sign options, was also passed out.

Colleen said the Signage Task Force will make a recommendation to the board by fall and the board will bring its decision to the congregation for a vote at the December Congregational Meeting.

Examples of each type of sign were projected onto the screen as Colleen described the options:

Sign #1: Gives the name of the church, would require minimal maintenance, and has an estimated price of $9,000.

Sign #2: Includes the name of the church and four lines of 4-inch letter that are changed manually (like the current Wayside Pulpit) on each side, and has an estimated cost of $11,000.

Sign #3: Includes the name of the church and an electronic panel for announcements and events. It allows for dynamic displays and multiple messages. Messages are changed remotely via software. The estimated cost is $32,000 to $50,000.
Colleen pointed out that city code allows only one sign, so the current sign would have to be removed when a new one is added. She also said the cost of the new sign is not part of our budget and would require fundraising.

She also emphasized that the signs projected onto the screen were not necessarily the actual sign we would have but are examples of each category of sign. Colleen encouraged feedback and said she is collecting feedback sheets (passed out at the meeting and available in the church office or from her) through June 2. Members providing feedback can email her or can turn in the feedback sheets to the church office or to her.

In response to member questions, Colleen provided the following information:

All three signs are two-sided.

Sign #3 would be under warranty for seven years but probably would last longer. Individual panels, rather than the whole sign, can be replaced as needed.

When we apply for a permit for the new sign, the city will come out and inspect and will not allow us to keep both a sign and a banner, as we currently have.

The new sign will be approximately where the Wayside Pulpit is now; this site has electricity.

The current sign is barely standing up. The posts holding it up are rotted. A video of this was shown at the December congregational meeting.

The church’s name on the sign is a permanent part of the sign.

There are city restrictions on light pollution. An electronic sign would have to be turned off at a certain time and it would be programmed to do that.

The signage task force has not consulted the church’s neighbors regarding our sign options.

In response to a member’s question, Harry Heafer, chair of Building and Grounds and a member of the Signage Task Force, said Sign #1 would be aluminum and plastic with LED lights, sign #2 would be brick, plastic and aluminum with LED lights, and sign #3, with electronic components and LED lights, would have the most environmental impact.

**Minister’s Report**

The Rev. Oscar Sinclair referred the congregation to his report in the Annual Report they received. He emphasized the following accomplishments:

- Implementing the Realm database
- Adding a service on the third Thursday evening of the month
- Relaunching adult religious education programming
- Updating all job descriptions, employment agreements and personnel policies
- Forging new and deepening connections in the Lincoln community.

**Realm Database:** Oscar encouraged all members to fill out their member profile in Realm, which puts the congregational database in the cloud, making it accessible to any member, remotely.
Congregants can log in and update their contact information as well as obtain contact information for fellow members. Oscar pointed out that Realm also allows each member to monitor his or her own pledge/donation history. In response to a member’s question about security, Oscar said Realm is as encrypted as our other communications in the church. The only way to get in is to have log-in credentials. We are not a huge target for hacking, he said. If you want people’s personal info, there are databases much more valuable than ours.

**Third Thursday Services:** These services use a slightly different format, Oscar said, often including the A Street band, and are an opportunity to play with the written and spoken word. Sixty people attended the last Third Thursday service. He said he hopes to do a Third Thursday type of service on one Sunday this fall, to introduce it to more members of the congregation.

**Adult Religious Education:** Oscar praised Duncan Case, Adult Education cluster liaison, for putting together a committee and providing programming to adults. “This is how as a congregation we teach one another.”

**Personnel:** In the last year, Oscar reported, he and the Personnel Committee have updated all paperwork for the staff, including completed and signed job descriptions, completed and signed employment agreements, and an updated personnel policy to ensure that the church is in compliance with UUA policies.

In response to a question, Oscar said summaries of all job descriptions would be published in the fall.

**Community Partnership:** Oscar reported that he has joined the board of the Faith Coalition of Lancaster County and has focused on building relationships with local and national organizations.

**Looking Forward:** Oscar said that in the coming year he will work with the Board of Trustees and lay leadership to get the vision of our congregation ingrained in everything we do, will add a second service and will focus on making our congregation more visible in the community.

In response to questions from members, Oscar said the church would be sending out an electronic survey in the next few days to ask members what type of second service they would be interested in. He noted that two dramatically different services every week would not be within his professional capabilities. He said the Second Service Task Force would be in the Gallery after church on the next two Sundays to take comments and questions about a second service.

Oscar thanked the church staff, Julie Eeners for filling in as interim choir director, the executive committee, and the board of trustees, including the three members whose terms are concluding: Mark Shiffler, Linda Brown and Rich Little.

**Program Council Report**

Charles Coley, chair of the Program Council, commended the current cluster liaisons (Michael Straatmann, Jackie Kehl, Schuyler Geery-Zink, Keith McGuffey, Duncan Case, Kim Ziemann and Heather Fox) for their service.

He noted that the Program Council serves as the decision-making body at the program level, so that the Board of Trustees can focus on governance and finances.
He highlighted two accomplishments: Inventing procedures for appointing new liaisons so that no positions are vacant for long; keeping the RACI (responsible, accountable, consulted, informed) model in front of the Council because it’s a good foundation for the decision-making and oversight process.

He said that Michael and Jackie are working on charter templates for determining decision-making vs. oversight roles, which they will bring back to the Council for consideration. Charles noted that his term as chair of the Program Council will be ending in a year and said the church must evaluate the Program Council model. He said the Board and Council would work together on that evaluation. He invited anyone interested in the role of chair of Program Council, in the future, to speak to him.

Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Dorothy Ramsey said the church’s finances are right on track so far this year. She noted that the Finance Team puts a priority on transparency and invited anyone with questions or suggestions to contact her.

She shared the following information from Mary Sommermeyer, special vice treasurer for member loans. The church is almost debt-free. There are only two loans totaling $35,000 left to pay, plus interest of at most $1,262. For perspective, this is 1.4% of the $2.58M cost of the church renovation project.

Stewardship Committee

Vice-Treasurer Theresa Forsman discussed the goals of the Stewardship Committee, created earlier this year by the Finance Team. She said that as Sunday attendance has been growing and as the church is setting itself up for membership growth by adding a second service, the Stewardship Committee wants to help ensure that our church has the financial resources to meet our annual budget. This committee will oversee the pledge drive. She shared the committee’s goals for 2019: to enhance online giving options, as well as other donation options, to make sure that our church’s finances are transparent, and to make it easy for our members to see how their donation support our church’s values. She invited all members to attend the Financial Stewardship Session on Sunday, June 9, at 11:30 a.m. in order to find out more about church finances, ask questions or make suggestions.

Voting Results

Linda announced the results: New trustees, elected to three-year terms, are Trevor Jones, Michael Krumm and Lori Straatmann. Share the Plate choices are UU Youth or Young Adult to UU Conference, Fresh Start Home for Women, Clinton Elementary Partnership, Voices of Hope, Food Net, ACLU Nebraska, Planned Parenthood, CLIA Center for Legal Immigration Assistance, Friendship Home and Nebraska Appleseed.

Closing Song: Julie Enersen

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 pm

Next Meeting: Winter Congregational Meeting, Sunday, December 8, 2019

Submitted May 21, 2019, by Theresa Forsman on behalf of Board Secretary Trevor Jones
A packet was provided to each member that included agenda, minutes of the previous congregational meeting, nomination form for Nomination Committee member, and the proposed 2019 budget with comparisons to actual income and expenses for the previous 3 years.

The meeting mixed liturgy with annual business. Business was conducted using a new governance model of modified consensus voting, which was explained by Kristi Wamstad-Evans.

The meeting was opened with a song, welcome from Linda R. Brown, president of the congregation, and a video created by Michael Reinmiller and Judy Hart.

**Quorum.** The 101 members signed into the meeting were well over the 80 required for a quorum.

**Consideration of Minutes.** The Spring Congregational Meeting May 20, 2018 minutes were approved by the congregation by straw poll with a correction for Denise Dickeson’s last name.

**Votes**

*Nominations Committee Candidate*—Karen Heafer presented herself as a candidate for a three-year term to the Nominations Committee, to take the place of out-going member, Jan Buffum. Kathy Disney explained that every third year a single person is elected to the Nominations Committee, while two people are elected in each of the other two years. *Karen was elected with a unanimous show of green cards in a straw poll.*

**2019 Budget**—Treasurer Dorothy Ramsey presented the 2019 budget with references to a summary handout. The budget for 2019 of $420,739 is an increase of 0.3% over the 2018 budget. Anticipated pledge income of $335,729 was 4.9% less than the previous year, more than made up for by attributal (one-time) donations of $26,201, including Bruce Raymer’s $5,000 match for pledges that were increased to 3% of a member’s income, and other anonymous donations.

Line items of note were:

- Line 10 – facility user contributions trended upward, even beyond Olli ($16,000 for 2019) and Bluestem Montessori ($7000 through June 2019). Harry Heafer warned once again (as in previous years) that we should be cautious to avoid over reliance on rental income and suggested that we seek guidance for percentage of budget to expect from building rental.
- Line 130 – music director hours were increased and a five-hour position for choir director was added;
- Line 50 - summer camp expenses were rolled into other staff duties;
- Lines 175 and 26 for solar net metering expenses and income that balance with each other for 2017, and are not figured into the 2018 or 2019 budget.
- Line 166 will show major repair and replace expenses only when they accrue. Expenses for this line item are not budgeted, but will be drawn from $12,000 Major Repair and Replacement Reserve Fund on the balance sheet. (The BOT had approved a policy goal to increase this reserve fund to $30,000 within three years).
- Line 31- A question was raised about an apparent math error for the three-year averages. The answer is that the “three-year average” for line 31 is a mix of one-, two- and three-year averages that were not used in determining the 2019 budget, and so can be ignored.
- Line 129 – “Youth associate” line item covered hiring a Youth in Action leader last year and will cover hiring an OWL instructor in the coming year.
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- Lines 125 through 130 – Staff compensation increases reflect the board of directors’ commitment to bring salaries up to the midpoint for equivalent jobs in UUA guidelines, adjusted by geographical region. This was discussed more during the BOT report.

The budget was approved by show of cards during a straw poll, in which one card was yellow and the rest were green.

Reports to the congregation

Board Of Trustees—Linda R. Brown, president of the BOT, highlighted congregational and BOT accomplishments of the past year:

- Reverend Oscar Sinclair was installed and ordained.
- Fifty to sixty people from our congregation attended General Assembly in Kansas City.
- The auction fundraiser brought in $16,814.
- An August BOT retreat emphasized trust. The BOT recognized its need to trust the Nominations Committee to do its job without requiring the presence of a BOT member on the committee.
- In late August over 30 people attended a Music Ministry Visioning Workshop, resulting in increasing the Worship Arts (“Music Director”) position from 10 to 20 hours per week, and adding a 5-hour per week Choir director position.
- The BOT approved the new financial model after refining it for a year.
- The BOT delivered the new governance model and bylaws to the congregation for a vote after working on it for a year.
- The BOT approved several policy statements that were called for in the new set of bylaws.
- The BOT secretary collected and summarized BOT meeting notes from 2013 to present and congregational meeting notes from 2015 to present, and made them available on the church’s website.

Minister—Reverend Oscar Sinclair highlighted some of his projects in conjunction with staff:

- Launched the cloud-based member database
- Launched Thursday-night worship services, in which we reach a different group of congregants.
- Prepared for Chelsea Krafska’s maternity leave and sabbatical January 1 through Flower Communion.
- With hiring task force, offered permanent position to Bob Fuson as Music Director.
- Bob Fuson will be involved in the search for and will supervise the Choir Director.

Program Council—Charles Coley, Program Council Chair, reflected on the state of the PC. The PC has had a high level of success in meeting objectives, including developing and presenting the budget to BOT, highlighting the congregation’s covenant in all meetings, and increasing sense of community and fellowship in cluster meetings. Charles noted that Brendan Evans will be stepping down from his position as Outreach Cluster Liaison.

Lincoln Unitarian Foundation—Stephanie Geery-Zink, chairman of LUF, presented the LUF report. Other LUF officers are Alan Worth, Gene Hanlon, Susan Hubbard and Duane Polzein. Stephanie noted that the plaque honoring Charles Stephen is ready to hang. LUF is working on the “Walk Now Our Vision Legacy Challenge.” LUF will meet in January.
Outside Signage Taskforce—Colleen Kadleck presented a powerpoint that outlined options for outside signage. Options considered by the task force included a range of cost and function categories: $8,900 (no optional displays); $11,000 (hand-mounted lettering); and $33,000 (digital display that would last 12-14 years). Any sign is not budgeted and would require fund-raising. Colleen suggested that congregants who desire to rename the church should act before the sign is ordered. A name change to Unitarian Universalist Church of Lincoln was considered in 2000. The process was documented, and revealed a nearly equal split in opinion at the time. The report will be placed on the UCL website. Other members of the task force are Harry Heafer, Michael Reinmiller, Martha Horvay, Amy Birky, and Aura Lee Ferguson. Someone else would have to take leadership in the name change process, as these members will not take up this issue. Linda Brown strongly suggested that we should move forward with the outside signage if no one commits to leading a name change process by February 1 to bring it to a vote in May at the Spring Congregational Meeting.

Banner Reveal—Jackie Kehl and Amy Birky revealed a banner for the Social Justice Committee for carrying in marches on a pole.

Adjournment—Linda adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

Draft version 2

Submitted January 5, 2018 by Richard Little, BOT secretary
Nominations for Board of Trustees

The Nominations Committee is presenting three candidates for the Board of Trustees. We posted the openings in the Beacon, and the Nominations Committee listed people they felt would make good board members. These names accounted for all demographics. We contacted the individuals and found three excellent candidates who felt they have the time to take part in board meetings and activities. The nominees will be present at one or both of the Town Hall meetings.

Lori Straatmann, Church member since 2014

Current and/or past involvement and experiences in the Unitarian Church of Lincoln:
Choir, Auction dinner host on multiple occasions, Pastoral Care Associates, Back-up for Youth in Action, Usher, Coffee host

My goals for the future of the church: My aim is to provide balance for the Board so all voices are heard and considered with respect. As a director at the University of Nebraska, working across departmental, cultural, and institutional lines, I believe I have the experience and skill sets that will be an asset to our church.

Some personal information about myself (profession, hobbies, interests, etc.):
I am the Director of Enrollment Operations for the UNL College of Engineering. I have been with the college for 21 years and have enjoyed all of my roles a great deal.
I am also the owner and artist of Bad Hare Pottery, specializing in Medieval and Viking era reproduction pottery. My husband, Michael, and I are avid historical reenactors, and I create many of our garments and accessories for the events we attend and facilitate.
I have a 17 yr.-old son, Nels, who earned his Eagle Rank here at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln 2 years ago. He will be leaving for college this fall, making my husband and me empty-nesters. I love singing in the choir, making things for the church auction, and seeing the occasional Marvel movie.

Trevor Jones, Church member since 2016

Current and/or past involvement and experiences in the Unitarian Church of Lincoln:
I am currently filling the remainder of Rich Little’s term on the board as Board Secretary. I previously served as the liaison from the Facilities Cluster to the Program Council. I am also a teacher for the high school RGL class.

My goals for the future of the church:
I believe that the role of any board is to ensure financial stability and plan for the long term. My goal would be to work with the board, staff, and congregation to develop a new strategic plan for the church and help make sure that progress is made toward strategic goals. I believe in our recently adopted Program Council model and I will work to help strengthen and clarify roles and responsibilities in order to fulfill UCL’s vision of being a “loving community uniting reason with spiritual exploration to transform ourselves and our world.”

Some personal information about myself (profession, hobbies, interests, etc.):
I am director and CEO of History Nebraska (the Nebraska State Historical Society) a statewide organization with 75 employees and 25 buildings. I’m a beekeeper and avid traveler who remains obsessed with making the perfect bread.

Michael Krumm, Church member since 2015

Current and/or past involvement and experiences in the Unitarian Church of Lincoln:
I was drawn to the Unitarian Church of Lincoln because of its social consciousness. Our church is about questions, not answers, which distinguishes us from other churches. I became a member because of the authenticity of our church and its members.

(Continued on page 2)
Several members were kind to my wife, which was extremely important to me because of her disability related to Parkinson’s Disease. Since Melinda’s passing, I have had my own battle with cancer, which limited my participation last year. Things have improved. As a result, I do feel a need to serve my church and see this as an opportunity to fulfill that need.

My goals for the future of the church:
The things that are happening now are the future. The problem is determining which of those things will determine the future. Prediction is often flawed, but we can recognize those things as they happen and not be unaware or paralyzed. For example, it is obvious that we need to be concerned about growth, but at the same time, we should also keep our eye on development. They are not the same thing. Growth is about quantity. Development is about deeper relationships and quality. Development spurs commitment while growth can leave us empty. Are members attenders? Are attenders members? Do our members have commitment? What factors are going to determine the health of our church?

Some personal information about myself (profession, hobbies, interests, etc.):
Prior to retiring in 2011, to become full-time caregiver to my wife, Melinda, who passed away July 9, 2018 from Parkinson’s Disease, I was the District Administrator of the Kewaskum School District in Wisconsin for 5 years, Superintendent of Schools in Iowa at the Ballard Community Schools for 12 years, and the Jesup Community Schools for 8 years. I was also a high school principal for 2 years and a language arts teacher for 12 years.

I made numerous presentations at state and national conventions on strategic direction, character education, scenario development, and resident artists in the schools as well as conducting workshops on bullying prevention and student advisement throughout Iowa, Wisconsin, and Germany. In addition to my presentations, I wrote over 45 articles for various educational publications and taught graduate classes for Viterbo, Upper Iowa, and Drake Universities.

Over the course of my career, I received many awards and honors for my work in the arts and character education including the Jeff Grimes Distinguished Service Award from the Iowa School Psychologist Association, the School Administrators of Iowa Award for supporting the arts, and the Iowa Band Masters Association Outstanding Administrators Award. I was honored by the Eastman School of Music for leadership in the Chamber Music Rural Residency Initiative sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, named Outstanding Middle Level Educator in Iowa, and elected President of the Iowa Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Since moving to Lincoln, five years ago, I have returned to my college roots by taking up the tenor sax and writing poetry after a 45-year absence from both activities. I have derived considerable satisfaction from being part of the Eldon Drive Quartet.
2019/2020 SHARE THE PLATE Nominations

1. Women in Community Service (WICS)
2. UU Youth or Young Adult to UU Conference
3. OutNebraska
4. Fresh Start Home for Women
5. Clinton Elementary Partnership
6. Islamic Foundation of Lincoln
7. JUUST Living
8. Voices of Hope
9. Food Net
10. ACLU Nebraska - Campaign for Smart Justice
11. Lincoln Literacy
12. Planned Parenthood
13. CLIA Center for Legal Immigration Assistance
14. Southern Heights Food Forest
15. Friendship Home
16. Camp Summergold
17. Child Advocacy Program
18. Nebraska Appleseed
19. Young Men's Business Leadership Academy
20. Nebraskans for Peace
1. Women in Community Service (WICS)
Nominator(s): Social justice Committee, Jackie Kehl and Wendy Hines, co-chairs
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee
Assists girls in transitioning through adolescence to adulthood...providing the tools needed for positive change. Since 1970, this non-profit organization has provided a structural living environment for young women who are considered at risk. Whether they have experienced a family crisis, behavioral/emotional problem or alcohol/drug abuse, WICS is there to help them.

2. UU Youth or Young Adult to UU Conference
Nominator(s): Chelsea Krafka
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee
Attending a conference is an incredible experience for a youth or young adult. This is a way for them to become involved with our faith on a different level. These folks bring back learnings to our own congregation. Conferences offer energizing keynotes, breakout sessions and social witness activities occur and connections are made with fellow UU members from across the country. Please help support an experience for a youth or young adult in our congregation.

3. OutNebraska
Nominator(s): Abbi Swatsworth
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee
OutNebraska is an expansion of Outlinc. We continue to provide excellent community-building activities but we've added more advocacy and civic engagement work. We are working to become a statewide organization that can be a voice for LGBTQ+ people across the state. This year we've lobbied for pro-LGBTQ legislation, registered voters, and we're organizing non-partisan GOTV activities for the city elections.

Support from the UU church would help support activities in our community and the outreach we are doing in Omaha and Greater Nebraska.

4. Fresh Start Home for Women
Nominator(s): Michael Reinmiller
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee
Fresh Start was founded in 1991 by a group of people who wanted to make Lincoln an even better place to live, and wanted to help those struggling in our community. Here are some highlights from our 25+ years of helping homeless women transform their lives. Fresh Start has provided services to more than 1,500 women over the last 25 years.

2016 – 25 years of empowering women to overcome barriers to self-sufficiency.
2012 – 20 years of providing shelter services. 5 years of being in the new facility in Havelock. The Daisy Thrift Shop celebrates being open for 5 years.

1992 – Fresh Start begins shelter operations in a home provided by Joyce Burgess, one of the committee members. The original facility is a house located at 1809 Ryons Street.

1991 – Concerned community leaders began meeting to discuss the limited services available to many people in need in Lincoln. They decide to focus on homeless women without children in their custody, as this was identified as an underserved group. The organization is formed and models Fresh Start after a transitional house in Calgary, Canada. The name “Fresh Start” came to mind when someone spoke of giving women a “fresh start in life”.

5. Clinton Elementary
Nominator(s): Mark Weddleton and Clinton Volunteers
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee
Schools from wealthy parts of the city have parent groups that raise substantial amounts of funds for their use. Schools serving areas of poverty – such as Clinton, where 94% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch and breakfast – lack this advantage. Our contributions would go into the school’s discretionary fund to make possible teacher initiatives to go beyond the curriculum, such as visits by an author or illustrator, field trips to broaden experiences, native plants to beautify the grounds, or materials for enrichment projects in science or art.

We are in the second year of a developing partnership with the school, reflected in UUs leading half a dozen afterschool clubs, participating weekly in the one-on-one student literacy program, assisting in the library, and helping out at the Book Fair, Popcorn Friday and other special events. School staff call us when looking for volunteers because they’ve learned they can count on UUs to Show Up.

This nomination is a chance to deepen our partnership, which is at the heart of why we have a Share the Plate program.

6. Islamic Foundation of Lincoln
Nominator(s): Amy Birky
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee
Some of the main objectives and goals are:
• To help Muslims in Lincoln and surrounding areas to carry out activities in the pursuance of Islam as a complete way of life
• To foster a Muslim community based on Islamic principles of equality, mutual help, and Islamic teachings of peace, love and justice
• To strengthen fraternal bonds and brotherly relations among Muslims
• To promote better understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims
• To present Islam to the people of other faiths
7. JUUST Living
Nominator(s): Colleen Kadleck
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee
JUUST Living is a unique model of holistic living, creating community free from the ravages of addiction. Our mission is to help turn around the lives of substance abusers, the formerly incarcerated, and others who have hit bottom by empowering people to become their own solution. This is done in community, living with Unitarian Universalist principles and sources, and informed by permaculture design principles.

We envision a long-term residential educational healing and recovery community:
- healing and recovery: alcoholism and drug addiction, homeless, re-entry from “justice” system
- clean and sober intentional community
- and “adjacent” Unitarian Universalist congregation, building Beloved Community, and supporting long-term healing and recovery from addictions and the broken culture we are living in

8. Voices of Hope
Nominator(s): Kathy Stastny
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee
Voices provides services to those that have experienced relationship violence, sexual assault and abuse. Voices has a 24 hour Crisis line, walk-in services, support groups, crisis counseling, advocacy, protection orders, and education/training. Voices mission and vision is for victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as their families and communities, receive responsive, empowering services that meet their needs, both individual and cultural, through crisis counseling and education aimed at eliminating recurrence, challenging oppressive social institutions, and reducing violence and oppression.

Voices of Hope is a small agency but covers so many needed areas in Lincoln. They do so much with a small staff and I know they would use any money carefully. www.voicesofhopelincoln.org

9. Food Net
Nominator(s): Denise Dickeson
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee
Foodnet is a 501(c)(3) organization, and is a group of volunteers from many different churches and other non-profit organizations, trying to stop the waste of food and provide for those in need. Foodnet provides mostly perishable foods such as fruits, vegetables, dairy products, bread, etc. At least 2 FoodNet sites are open each day, including weekends and holidays. www.foodnetlincoln.org
10. ACLU Nebraska - Campaign for Smart Justice  
Nominator(s): Jean Helms  
**Purpose/Mission of the Nominee**  
The Campaign for Smart Justice is an initiative that focuses on bolstering the movement to end money bail and eliminate wealth-based pretrial detention. The initiative is a part of the campaign’s effort to reduce the U.S. jail and prison population by 50 percent and to combat racial disparities in the criminal justice system by challenging the injustices that have helped make America the world’s largest incarcerator.

Udi Ofer, director of the ACLU Campaign for Smart Justice: “This nationwide system of wealth-based incarceration keeps people who have not been convicted of a crime in jail for weeks, months, and even years. People lose their families, jobs, and homes as they wait for their case to move through the system. Money should never decide a person’s freedom, yet that’s exactly what happens every day in courts across the country.”

11. Lincoln Literacy  
Nominator(s): Amy Birky  
**Purpose/Mission of the Nominee**  
Their mission is to assist people of all cultures to strengthen community by teaching English language and literacy skills

12. Planned Parenthood  
Nominator(s): Amy Birky  
**Purpose/Mission of the Nominee**  
The newly formed group includes Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, North and South Dakota. It has 29 health centers serving 114,000 patients.

Its goal is to provide, promote and protect reproductive and sexual health through health services, education, and advocacy.
13. CLIA - Center for Legal Immigration Assistance  
Nominator(s): Christine Hope Davis, Allison Davis, Fritz Hudson  
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee

In 17 years, The Center for Legal Immigration Assistance, or CLIA (formerly Equity in Nebraska) has served more than 7,000 immigrants and refugees in Nebraska, assisting them with the required legal work to be able to comply with complex (and ever-changing) federal immigration laws. It continues to be a community-based and community-supported organization. It’s mission remains the same: To open doors of equal opportunity by providing quality, affordable immigration-related legal services to immigrants and refugees in Nebraska.

To put the need in perspective:

- $550 - Provides for representation of unaccompanied minors such as those separated from their families at the border
- $500 - Legally empowers a survivor of domestic violence
- $180 - Helps a student re-apply for DACA so they can attend college
- $60 - Covers the first consultation fee and initial research

14. Southern Heights Food Forest  
Nominator(s): Heather Fox  
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee

The two-acre Southern Heights Food Forest located at 40th and Old Cheney includes a Food Forest, Community Crops garden plots, a pollinator garden, and a Nature Explore Classroom.

Our mission is to provide a space where members of the community can come together to learn about themselves and the natural world. We aim to be a catalyst for ecological resilience, facilitating ties across cultures and generations while teaching each other about the value of food, play, and environmental stewardship.

15. Friendship Home  
Nominator(s): Theresa Forsman  
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee

Friendship Home, which has served Lincoln for more than 40 years, exists to support, shelter and advocate for victims of domestic violence and their children. Friendship Home seeks to provide a continuum of safe, confidential shelter options—from emergency shelter through transitional shelter. It provides crisis intervention services, case management and emotional support to those they serve, helping them to rebuild their lives, free from fear. Friendship Home addresses the many complexities and barriers associated with domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence and stalking on an individual level as well as a community systems level.
16. Camp Summergold  
Nominator(s): Jean Helms  
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee  
We are a 501 c3 Non Profit organization with admin offices in Lincoln and our camp in Aurora Nebraska. Camp Summergold's mission is to bring a diverse group of teenage girls together to explore creativity, knowledge and stewardship through arts and science based mentor centered workshops and collective girl power. Any money collected through the Share the Plate collection would be matched by Camp Summergold to send one or more UU Lincoln girls (aged 11 - 17) to camp. We'd set up a scholarship application system and an ad hoc review process for interested families. We'll offer an ARTS focus and a STEM focus week of residential summer camp programming at The Leadership Center in Aurora Nebraska in June 2019 and June 2020. [www.campsummergold.com](http://www.campsummergold.com)

17. Child Advocacy Center  
Nominator(s): Jackie Kehl  
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee  
One in ten children will be sexually abused before the age of 18. Of these, 20% are abused before the age of 8. The mission of the Child Advocacy Center is to provide Lincoln, Lancaster County and Southeast Nebraska with a coordinated, team approach to the problem of child abuse in order to reduce trauma, seek justice, and foster hope and healing for children and their non-offending caregivers. To accomplish these, the center provides a safe, child-friendly environment for interviews and medical evaluations for the alleged child victim and offers continued support to the child and non-offending family members. They also provide training for professionals as well as public education and prevention efforts.

18. Nebraska Appleseed  
Nominator(s): Denise Dickeson  
Purpose/Mission of the Nominee  
I would like to nominate Nebraska Appleseed. I've worked with them for years to get expanded Medicaid.  

Who We Are  
Nebraska Appleseed is a nonprofit organization that fights for justice and opportunity for all Nebraskans. We take a systemic approach to complex issues – such as child welfare, immigration policy, affordable health care and poverty – and we take our work wherever we believe we can do the most good, whether that's in the courthouse, at the Capitol, or in the community.  

Commitment to Race Equity  
Nebraska Appleseed is committed to diversity, inclusion, and equity among our board, staff, interns, clerks, and volunteers. These foundational values are central to our mission to increase justice and opportunity for all Nebraskans.
19. Young Men’s Business Leadership Academy

Nominator(s): Christina Strong

Purpose/Mission of the Nominee

Young Men’s Business Leadership Academy is a new program at the Malone Community Center that meets weekly at Lincoln High. Their mission is "To positively influence young men to be accountable for their actions, to think proactively, and to cooperate with community entities and individuals in preparation for being servant leaders in their communities and in their future careers/ businesses."

Their activities this year have included attending the MLK Day breakfast, rally & march; hosting a Hip Hop Music, Art & Culture celebration; auditioning for Shark Tank; meetings with police, businesspeople, and other community leaders; and fundraising activities. This June they will go on their first annual one-week tour of historically black colleges and universities and black-owned businesses in Missouri, Tennessee, & Georgia.

20. Nebraskans for Peace

Nominator(s): Amy Birky

Purpose/Mission of the Nominee

Nebraskans for Peace is a statewide grassroots advocacy organization working nonviolently for Peace with Justice through community building, education and political action. The Unitarian Church of Lincoln has been partnering with Nebraskans for Peace for decades.
Pre-Meeting Preparation: Announcement and Town Halls
At least four weeks before the Congregational Meeting, the Board of Trustees shall announce the date and agenda. The agenda shall include any proposals, nominees and their written statements, or multi-slate issues to be decided.

The Board of Trustees shall decide to conduct one or two Town Halls and several Cottage Meetings in the weeks prior to the Congregational Meeting to allow for deeper exploration. A summary of these discussions will be presented at the Congregational Meeting, in writing or verbally. If further exploration of the agenda items during Town Halls and Cottage Meetings result in changes to the originally presented proposals, nominees or multi-slate issues. All modifications will be documented and presented during the Congregational Meeting.

An Open Meeting: All are called
All are invited to attend, but only members are provided voting cards and ballots.

Shortened Worship: Blending Service with Congregational Meeting
The Sunday service for the day of the Congregational Meeting will be shortened to 30 minutes.

Between Service and Congregational Meeting
The church will provide coffee and light refreshment for the 20 minute period after the service ends and before the congregational meeting begins.

Blending worship elements with Congregational Meeting
The Congregational Meeting will include elements that may typically be experienced during the worship service, such as hymns, readings, and meditation. See Agenda section.

In Person and Absentee Accounting
In Person: Members will be checked in prior to entering the Sanctuary for the meeting. They will be provided a packet containing the agenda, proposals to be discussed, descriptions of nominees and multi-slate issues, and written reports. In addition, they will be provided three colored cards (Green, Yellow, and Red) and ballot sheets for nominations and multi-slate issues. The colored cards will also include the name of the color (i.e. “Green”, “Yellow”, and “Red”).
Absentee: Members will be notified that they have the option to participate by absentee. Given the consensus process utilized for proposals, absentee members may only vote by ballot for nominees and multi-slate issues. All absentee ballots must be received one week prior to the Congregational Meeting and, after that time, may only be modified in person at the Congregational Meeting.

Agenda
The Congregational Meeting Agenda shall be included in meeting packets and displayed on the screen. Each item on the agenda will include a title, purpose, and expected time limit.

Sample (high level; ideally each proposal, issue, and report will be detailed with time limits)
- Opening (14-16 minutes)
  - Hymn
  - Welcome by Board President – (thanks will be offered to all those assisting with conducting and preparing the meeting)
  - Chalice Lighting
  - Reading
  - Meditation or Music
- Overview and Old Business (5 minutes)
  - Congregational Meeting Business Overview
  - Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
- Issues and Elections (30 – 40 minutes)
  - Proposals
  - Nominations
  - Multi-Slate Issues
  - Hymn (or Music) and Reading (5 minutes)
  - Standard Reports (30 – 40 minutes)
- Closing (5 – 7 minutes)
  - Closing Words
  - Postlude

Room Design: Concentric for Consensus
The Sanctuary chairs will be set up in a concentric circle with the intent of participants engaging with each other in discussion. Microphone runners will be stationed at each of the four aisles. The President of the Board of Trustees will present from the middle of the circle with members of the Board of Trustees, nominees, and other presenters in proximity.

General Guidelines for A/V and Presentations
The following Presenter Guidelines are adopted from the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA):
- Be Seen – Use PowerPoint instead of handouts. If handouts are absolutely necessary, use large print. Elevate yourself if possible.
• Be Heard – Every speaker use a microphone. Don’t cover your mouth when speaking.
• Scent Sensitivities – Do not use scented candles, incense, or perfumes.
• Be Mindful of Cultural Appropriation – Credit your source & explain why you chose the material. Respect that which is sacred to a culture. Include contemporary as well as historic references.
• Say “Rise in body or in spirit.” Do not block aisles or exits.
• Use Inclusive Language
• Respect Copyrights. Obtain permission when necessary, credit sources, use PowerPoint.
• Honor Diversity – Age, race, ethnicity, religion, class, gender, sexual identify, affectional identity, cultural, physical ability
• Speak from your own experience
• Don’t make assumptions about others

Voting on Issues: Modified Consensus process

Step 1: Introduce and clarify the proposal(s) to be decided
A) Facilitator (or designee) presents the proposal in five minutes or less
B) At the conclusion of the presentation, the floor will be open to clarifying questions

Step 2: Explore the proposal and look for initial consensus
A) Commence with a straw poll of those leaning to agree (green cards) and those leaning to block (red cards)
B) Floor will be open to comments from those leaning to dissent. Request those with fundamental disagreements with the proposal to start with identifying issues and concerns. The scribe documents these comments on a paperboard easel for all to see.
C) Floor is open to ideas for resolving issues and concerns raised. Scribe collects ideas for solving the issues and concerns noted.
D) Identify any emerging modifications that address key concerns.

Step 3: Test for agreement
A) Three options:
   ○ Agreement: I support the proposal and am willing to implement it. <Raise a Green Card>
   ○ Reservations: I have some reservations, but I am willing to let the proposal pass and will abide by the group’s decision. <Raise a Yellow Card>
   ○ Blocks: I have a fundamental disagreement with the core of the proposal that has not been resolved. We need to look for a new proposal. <Raise a Red Card>
B) If any Blocks, return to Step 2: B). If blocked, one round of return will be allowed for an issue. If unresolved, congregation shall move to vote by majority.
Voting on Nominees or Multi-slate Issues: Selection Process

Step 1: Introduce the elected position(s) and/or multi-slate option

A) Facilitator (or designee) describes the elected position to be filled or the multi-slate option in five minutes or less.

B) For elected positions, nominees will have the opportunity to introduce themselves and describe their interest in the position. For nominees that are not able to attend, a written or recorded presentation will be shared.

C) At the end of this recognition, the facilitator shall thank the nominees for their willingness to serve.

Step 2: Voting by Sheet

A) For elected positions, each member will receive a ballot sheet listing the names of the nominees and clearly state the number of positions to be filled (i.e. “Select ONE”)

B) For multi-slate options, each member will receive a ballot sheet listing the options and clearly state the number of options allowed (i.e. “Select TEN”)

C) Absentee ballots shall be allowed for elected positions or multi-slate options unless revoked by the Board of Trustees before the meeting announcement. In the case that an absentee ballot is submitted and a nominee or multi-slate option is removed prior to the meeting, any votes for the removed nominee or multi-slate option may only be modified at least a week prior or in person.

Step 3: Delivering Results

A) Ballot sheets shall be collected and counted during the meeting.

B) The counts shall be delivered to the Facilitator. The Facilitator shall select the appropriate time for reading the results.

C) Upon announcing the results, the Facilitator shall offer gratitude to all nominees.

For reaching conclusion on topics not deemed a proposal, nomination, or multi-slate issue, the Board of Trustees shall adopt and advertise the decision-making process with the announcement of the meeting.

Roles

- President of the Board: Convenes and facilitates the Congregational Meeting. Develops agenda with the Executive Team. Leads the agenda and consensus process.

- Co-Facilitator: Member of the Board responsible for recording comments from members on an paper pad easel.

- Secretary: Summarize notes from the previous congregational meeting, highlighting key decisions made. Calls for edits to previous meeting minutes. Completes meeting minutes for meeting.

- Time keeper: Member of the Board responsible for tracking time associated with agenda items and with any comments. All comments and their
respective responses are offered a total of three minutes each. At two minutes, a yellow card is raised. At one minute, an orange card is raised. At time, a red card is raised. The President of the Board is allowed to offer an additional three minutes to any member speaking.

**Post-Meeting Sharing of Fellowship**

After the meeting, members, friends, and visitors will be invited to share in fellowship with either coffee/small plates provided by the church or a potluck.
Minister’s Annual Report
Rev. Oscar Sinclair

Overview
This spring marks the 200th anniversary of Rev. William Ellery Channing’s “Baltimore Sermon,” generally considered the beginning of institutional Unitarianism in the United States. Channing preached his sermon (officially titled “Unitarian Christianity”) at the installation and ordination of Rev. Jared Sparks, the first minister of my home congregation in Baltimore. There is a certain poetry, then, in beginning this report with the service of Ordination and Installation held last June. Ordinations and Installations are rare events in the lives of both ministers and congregations, and it was an honor to share that day with the Unitarian Church of Lincoln.

In the year since, we’ve built on much of the groundwork we laid in our first year together, introducing new styles of worship, improving our personnel practices, building partnerships in the community, and growing towards the vision of this congregation: that we will be “a loving community uniting reason with spiritual exploration to transform ourselves and the world.”

Worship
This has been a year of innovation in worship. Last September we launched a monthly ‘Third Thursday’ worship series, using contemporary music and different styles of worship than we use on Sunday morning. These services have been successful, and we will continue with them in the 2019-20 church year.

The Third Thursday services, like our Sunday morning services, use the Soul Matters themes we adopted in the fall of 2017. Each month follows a single theme, from Sanctuary (October) to Journey (March), to Beauty (June). This allows worship leaders to develop related services from week to week, and to be in conversation with each other and themselves over each month.

Most of the Unitarian Universalist congregations in our area use Soul Matters, which helps to facilitate connections between congregations. We’ve had several pulpit exchanges this spring, as well as guest preachers from nearby congregations.

A review of attendance patterns this spring strongly suggested that we are near capacity with a single service on Sunday morning. The Program Council has appointed a task force to explore how we would add a second service. Our goal is to bring a proposal to the congregation at the Winter Congregational Meeting, for implementation in January 2020.

Administration
The Personnel Committee and I have spent significant time this year updating and consolidating our personnel files. All staff members have updated job descriptions and employment agreements, using a common format. We developed a sabbatical policy for non-ministerial staff, and implemented it this spring with our Director of Religious Growth and Learning, Chelsea Krafka. This spring we put together a major revision of our personnel policies, to reflect current best practices in church employment.
Our staff team continues to use and implement new parts of Realm, the church database software we introduced a year ago. Realm has maintained all the functionality of our previous database, but has additional tools that we are just beginning to implement. It allows all of us access to information remotely: members can check your pledge balance from home, and I can record confidential notes following hospital visits.

Staffing and administration is one of the most complicated tasks in any church, and it has been a joy this year to work with our Personnel Committee: Kay Hoff, Mary Ann Meisner, and Karen Dienstbier. We took on an ambitious set of goals over the year, and through their dedication achieved them.

**Partnership and Public Witness**

Three years ago membership of the Unitarian Church of Lincoln had a big idea: “For the next three to five years, we pledge our talents, resources and building to partner to meet needs in the Lincoln community, protect our environment and promote peace and social justice.”

True partnership takes time and trust to build, and in the two years since you called me, I have focused on building relationships with local and national organizations. These range from direct advocacy, testifying with Planned Parenthood at the Nebraska Legislature; to support work, traveling to Nevada to support No Mas Muertes; to simple relationship building with other faith communities and clergy in Lincoln.

This work is cumulative. By building authentic relationships with other houses of faith and organizations in Lincoln, we are better positions to work in partnership on a variety of topics. To further build on these relationships, I have agreed to join the board of the Faith Coalition of Lancaster County in the coming year.

**Looking Forward**

I am looking forward to continuing our ministry together in the 2019-2020 congregational year. In the coming year I hope to continue building relationships with our partners, as well as focusing (along with other staff members and lay leaders) on how we structure our outreach and communication with the broader community of Lincoln. By adding a second service, we will build capacity for future growth. Our vision is ambitious. To truly ‘transform ourselves and the world’ we have to be willing to show up, and to tell the world what we have found in this community.

This congregation has been served tremendously, in ways both seen and unseen, by your lay and staff leadership in the last year. Outgoing board members Linda Brown, Mark Schiffler, and Rich Little have been steady, wise voices who will be missed in board meetings next year—even as we look forward to the gifts new board members bring!

Lastly, it is an honor to serve with the staff team at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln. Jean Helms, Chelsea Kraftka, Bob Fuson, Judy Hart, and Christina Strong: Thank you.

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1 Minutes of Spring 2016 Congregational Meeting
Timeline of Major Projects

June
• Ordained June 17, 2018.
• General Assembly

August
• Began “Third Thursday” worship services
• Rev. Kimberley Debus led weekend long visioning workshop for music program
• Vigil for Carey Dean Moore
• Joined Faith Floods the Desert action in support of No Mas Muertes in Arizona

September
• Staff Retreat
• Reformed Adult Programs Committee Launches

October
• Prairie Star UUMA chapter retreat
• Appeared on “Invisible Worlds” podcast
• Developed Sabbatical Policy

November
• Tree of Life Vigil
• Began Transitions Coaching work

December
• Hired Dr. Bob Fuson as permanent Music Director
• Joint Solstice Service with Order of the Red Grail

January
• Staff completed revisions of Safety Policy
• Chelsea Krafka began sabbatical
• Hosted ADL Event
• Board of Trustees Visioning Retreat
• Led Transitions workshop for First Unitarian Church of Omaha

February
• Led Worship Associates Retreat
• Pulpit Exchange with Rev. Aaron Stockwell
• Led Transitions workshop for Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Lawrence, KS

March
• Job Descriptions and Employments Agreements updated
• Lobbied at legislature on behalf of LB501 and LB627
• Attended first anniversary March for Our Lives
• Began prison visits at request of Nebraska ACLU

April
• Attended MidAmerica Regional UUA conference
• Completed revisions to Personnel Policies
• Began work on Task Force to consider adding a second service
• Attended Academy of Spiritual Formation Five Day Retreat
May
  • Pulpit Exchange with Rev. Jonalu Johnstone

Projects for Next Church Year

  • Add Second Service
  • Prioritize communications and outreach to the Lincoln community.
  • Continue to strengthen ties with area nonprofits and religious institutions.
  • Work with Board and lay leadership to strengthen congregational knowledge and ownership of UCL’s Vision.
President's Report May 2019

When trying to frame this report, I decided that I wanted to do an overview of the last five years at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln. I wanted to give context for our many successes. All of this change, that I am about to detail, could have been a significant stress to our congregation, but I feel like "We are sailing on"!

The congregation moved to Faith Methodist Church near 33rd and Holdrege for the entire year of 2014 to make way for construction at 6300 A Street. The Rev. Fritz Hudson preached his last sermon of his 16 years ministry in June 2014. He left on a high note, knowing that construction on the 2.5 million dollar expansion and renovation of the church at 6300 A St was well in-progress. The Rev. Dr. Justin Osterman started his year of interim in the fall of 2014 and completed it in the summer of 2015. We appreciated his fine sermons and evening classes on the Bible. However, his ministry was a challenging time for staff and leaders.

We loved moving back into our newly renovated and expanded space at the end of 2014. We embraced reconfigured classrooms, a new office wing, new bathrooms, bigger hallways, better storage, and a choir room. The energy efficient renovation included 96 solar panels, 15 geothermal rods under the parking lot, a new roof, LED lighting, thermal panes, and insulation. We positioned ourselves for Phase Two, the building of a sanctuary to the north, by putting in an elevator shaft during Phase One.

In the fall of 2015, The Rev. Dr. Gretchen Woods arrived to heal us and prepare us to search for a settled minister. She recognized that the congregation had grown to the point where the small church pastoral model was no longer appropriate. She worked mightily to help us move to an alternate mid-size church governance model, where a program council takes on more of the day-to-day work of the church. We worked on a new financial model for a year before agreeing to it. The board and the Lincoln Unitarian Foundation worked on solidifying terms of a working relationship. Gretchen also worked her tail off, providing us with opportunities to experience different styles of ministry. She was preparing us to embrace new ways to think about ministry. In 2016, in her second year of interim ministry, she acted as a resource to the Ministerial Search Team, as they did the work of introducing our church to prospective candidates seeking a position as settled minister.


In June 2017, we invited Oscar Lewis Sinclair to accept the job of settled minister at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln. We are so grateful that he said, "YES!" Why do we love him? He comes prepared. He tells good stories. He responds to the big news of the day. He constantly
preaches "loving community". He models caring from the pulpit with his use of inclusive language. He pushes our level of multicultural thinking. His is careful not to appropriate other's experience.

In June of 2018, we joyfully ordained and installed Oscar Sinclair. Oscar invited his close minister friends to help in the ceremony. They all came. We felt enfolded by the denomination. About 50 of us followed these ministers to General Assembly in Kansas City in the week after Oscar's ordination.

Now it is May of 2019. I want to talk about more success from these past 5 years. Many of them are financial. First, Administrative Director, Jean Helms and a hired financial consultant worked to make sure our financial process is robust. The work paid off. We passed the financial review performed by HBE, CPA's & Consultants/Wealth Management, Lincoln NE in February of 2018. HBE suggested that the Board adopt a Gift Acceptance Policy. We have done that work. They also suggested that we should develop a formal investment policy. That work needs to be considered between the Board and the Lincoln Unitarian Foundation (LUF) committee.

Since we added the position of vice-treasurer in 2016, treasurer succession is no longer the worry that it once was. Spurred by a workshop offered online from the UUA MidAmerica Region, we decided to form an on-going Stewardship Committee. That group will run the pledge drive in 2019. The group recognizes that just rolling over pledges from one year to the next has an inherent problem of not being adjusted for inflation or for not reflecting increases in financial position. Hmm. What do we do?

In 2015, Judy Cole left a large sum of money to the church in her will. We were able to use $185,000 of that money to match pledges from members to help pay off the last of the debt from the building renovation. We only have $35,000 plus interest, left to pay in 2020. How is that for success? This congregation is amazing! In addition to paying for the 2.5 million dollar improvements to our building, we have been able to make our budget with successful pledge campaigns. We continue to hold ourselves accountable for moving staff salaries to mid-point of UUA guidelines, as soon as possible. We are working on increasing benefits. We granted Chelsea Krafta, our Director of Religious Education, a 5-month Sabbatical in 2019 to finish her Master's Degree. She birthed a baby and graduated in May! Good job Chelsea.

The Worship Cluster met with the UUA's Rev. Kimberly Debus in an all-day workshop in August, to consider the future of the music program. The group asked the board to consider increasing the hours of the Music Director position to 20 hours per week and adding a 5-hour per week choir position. The board accepted that proposal, with the idea that we were supporting the
possibility that we could add more worship services. The one-a-month Thursday service was added.

In addition, don't forget. We support the denomination. We pay our fair share to the UUA and the MidAmerica Region.

It turns out that our new space has been attractive to renters. We are proud to host Blue Stem Montessori School. We added a paid audiovisual specialist to support the many Olli class rentals. We considered our big idea of "Partnering" when updating the building use procedures. Now community groups can get free space if sponsored by a church committee. The committee provides a church member to host each of these community uses of our building.

After experiencing the alternative new program council-governance model for a year, in 2018, we accepted the new model of governance and the resultant revised bylaws. The next step has been to review and update board policies specified in the bylaws. Both board and staff have worked on updating financial procedures, building-use procedures, personnel and safety policies, along with others. We have an ultimate goal of posting the most recent accepted version on the church website.

The board focused on questions of strategic vision at its second retreat in January. We reviewed the goals from the 2011-2012 Strategic Plan, and discovered most of them had been accomplished! We talked about the importance of looking at data before making decisions. We support Oscar in the proposal he sent to Program Council to explore the idea of multiple church services in a week. The data he presents suggests that our church may have been filled to capacity for Sunday services ever since we moved to 6300 A Street in the early 1960's! In the future, we would like to embrace Oscar's desire to teach, by supporting a ministerial intern. We want to prepare for Oscar to go on Sabbatical to get his doctorate degree about 2023. We want to get a new sign, and get it paid for before looking too closely at the Facilities Cluster Wish List. We want to grow 3-7% a year, as counted by numbers in the building at each church service. We want to increase staffing. About 2021 might be a good time to think about Phase Two: building the new sanctuary! We will need to develop a statement of needs to guide an architect to provide preliminary building plans.

Finally, we have tried to look at the process one takes in growing our relationship with our spirituality in this church. From the first day, when we enter the doors, what steps do we take that deepen our connection to this loving community? What opportunities enable us to get to know each other, to start being inclusive and caring? How do these relationships empower us to serve the church and go out into the community?
Lastly, I want to say thank you to the presidents of the last five years: Curt Donaldson, Lindsay Bartlett, Reed Maly, and Kristi Wamstad. I have made special "asks" of each of you, and you all came through!

Thank you to our fine Board of Trustees:
Emily Cameron Shattil, vice-president, Trevor Jones,(who finished the last part of Rich Little's term as secretary), Mark Shiffler,(who is finishing his 3rd year), Michael Reinmiller, Kay Hoff, Dan Payzant, Colleen Kadleck, and Denise DeBose. Thank you to ex-official members: Kristi Wamstad, immediate past president, Dorothy Ramsey, treasurer, Theresa Forsman, vice treasurer and Charles Coley, Program Council Chair.

Now I can hear The Rev. Dr Gretchen Woods asking her famous question for retiring church leaders: "What's on your bucket list now?" I am personally thinking that choir might be good! Thank you for inviting me to serve on the board. Linda R. Brown, President of the Board
Our covenant, as a welcoming congregation, is to inspire a sense of awe, joy and reverence in people of all ages. We celebrate through words, music and the arts. We actively model an inclusive, diverse, and sustainable community. We each contribute to the work of the church. We provide a safe and nurturing haven for free thought. We treat each other with loving kindness. We cultivate growth and celebrate the changes growth brings.

**Youth Programs, 21 percent**
Religious Education Supplies; Youth Activities; RGL Salary, Benefits, Professional Development; Portion of Denominational Affairs

**Worship Services, 20 percent**
Sunday Services; Audio-Visual equipment; Portion of Denominational Affairs; Music Director Salary, Benefits; Choir Director Salary; Committee on Ministry; Portion of Denominational Affairs

**Facilities, 17 percent**
Church property (maintenance, utilities, supplies, repair/replace; Property/liability Insurance

**Administration, 15 percent**
Administrative Associate Salary, Benefits, Professional Development; Portion of Denominational Affairs; Board of Trustees; Fundraising; Video License

**Outreach, 10 percent**
Portion of Denominational Affairs; Audio-Visual Support; Social Justice; Green Sanctuary; Advertising

**Membership, 10 percent**
Portion of Denominational Affairs; Friendly Faces; Audio-Visual; Leadership Development; Membership Umbrella; Welcoming Committee; Membership Associate Salary and Benefits

**Adult Programs, 4 percent**
Portion of Denominational Affairs; Open Circles; Meditation Sangha

**Social Events, 3 percent**
Fellowship Catering; Receptions

*Many of the resources that our church community allocates to this category consist of volunteer time and labor, which are not reflected in the financial budget.

A portion of the expenses below were included in each of the eight categories above:
--Office Expenses
--Minister’s Salary, Benefits, Professional Development (based on Oscar’s estimate of his time allocation)
--Administrative Director Salary, Benefits, Professional Development (based on Jean’s estimate of her time allocation)
Unitarian Church of Lincoln: How We Spend Our Money

Facilities: 17%
Administration: 15%
Membership: 10%
Outreach: 10%
Social Events: 3%
Worship Services: 20%
Youth Programs: 21%
Adult Programs: 4%
Where Our Money Comes From

- **Pledges**: 80%
- Other Donations: 8%
- Auction: 3%
- Goods/Services: 6%
- Facility Use: 2%
- Reserve Funds: 1%
Accomplishments of This Church Year:

Summer 2018-
Coordinated and represented our church at a booth at PRIDE festival
Attended General Assembly in Kansas City
Implemented changes to a new curriculum for use in our K-1 classroom: ‘Picture Book UU’
Hired Ashleigh Fuson to be middle school OWL lead teacher and coordinated with her to plan for OWL for the year
Hired Ashleigh Fuson to be Youth In Action lead teacher and coordinated with her to plan for YIA for the year
Drafted request for Sabbatical

Fall 2018-
Planned and facilitated the following trainings:
K-5 teachers
K-5 assistants
Middle school teachers and assistants
High school teachers and assistants
Offered Parent Orientation (facilitated by Ashleigh Fuson - RGL Chair)
Attended UU Identity online Renaissance Module Workshop
Planned and facilitated Third Thursday Worship ‘Wonder and Awe’
Planned for Sabbatical
Revised position descriptions for: Preschool Lead Teacher and Summer Sunday Lead Teacher and Childcare Providers
Created position description for Acting RGD

Winter 2018
In partnership with the task force, hired Kim Ziemann for Acting RGD during Sabbatical, Charisa Ramsey for Summer Sunday Lead Teacher, Ashleigh Fuson for Preschool Lead Teacher and Meredith Enersen for Summer Sunday Assistant Teacher

Provided training for new employees: Kim Ziemann, Ashleigh Fuson, Meredith Enersen and Charisa Ramsey

Planned and facilitated UNICEF Pumpkin Decorating Ingathering and raised more than $150 to donate to UNICEF

Began conversation with Adult RGL Committee about my role with them

January 1st began Sabbatical

Continued work on thesis project for Master of Arts Degree

Attended Adult Faith Formation online Renaissance Module Workshop

**Spring 2019**

Welcomed baby Milo Sage Emerson Krafka into our family

Successfully completed thesis project: ‘Teaching Peace in a Unitarian Universalist Classroom’ with accompanying curriculum

Successfully defended thesis project and it was accepted for submission for completion of the Masters of Arts program at UNL

Anticipating graduation May 3rd at UNL with a Masters of Arts Degree in: Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education with an emphasis in; School, Society and Reform with an additional teaching endorsement for teaching English Language Learners (ELL)

**Projects for Next Church Year:**

Navigate role within adult religious education in collaboration with Rev. Oscar Sinclair and adult RGL committee

Establish relationships with the people who were newly hired this last year and explore how the new position descriptions are working

Find opportunities for further professional development