

ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019



THE UNION CHURCH IN WABAN

ANNUAL MEETING
JUNE 2, 2019

OUR COVENANT

We, the members of The Union Church in Waban, true to our founding principle of being an inclusive church, covenant together to nourish and to sustain in our common life and practice a fully welcoming and affirming church for all persons. Welcoming all persons who seek to join with us in a commitment to love God and our neighbors, affirming the inclusive love of Jesus, we are open to all, without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ability or economic circumstance. We invite all to full participation in our worship, membership, leadership and life of this church

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UNION CHURCH IN WABAN

Sunday, June 2, 2019

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Adult Education and Spiritual Formation	Rev. Stacy Swain
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Capital Campaign	Karen Weisgerber and Kent Wittler
Communications Team	Annie Gatewood, Judy Nagle, Priscilla Kelso, Molly Owen-Kiritsy, Karen Weisgerber
Deacons and Worship Team	Jim MacDonald, Judy Nagle, Frank Laski Deb McGovern, Gerry Elion, Judy MacDonald and Alison McCarty
Ministries to Children, Youth and Families	Rev. Amy Clark Feldman
Mission-Outreach	Carol Bascom Slack and Jaap van Reijendam
Music Program	Bill Merrill
Nica Task Force	Frank Laski, Diane Tillotson, Aden O'Beirne, Buz Bedford, Karen O'Beirne, Cate Brown, Alex Brown and Karen Weisgerber
Teaching Parish Committee	Frank Laski, James MacDonald Jaap van Reijendam, Thomas Vawter and Jenny Weisz
Stewardship	Grant Gund, Karen O'Beirne, Karen Weisgerber

Pastor Stacy's Report

The theme for this past church year has been "Stepping out of the Boat." It is based on the story of Peter stepping out of the boat and walking across the water to Jesus as told in the Gospel of Matthew 14: 22-33. I love and am inspired by this story. There must have been something so compelling about Jesus for Peter, so much so that he challenged himself to do something that others, I am sure, thought was not only impossible, but fool-hearty as well. Peter, a fisherman who knew the dangers of the sea, trusted that nothing is impossible with God and as such found the courage to give something new and bold a try.

We are living in a time where the future of our planet and the health of our nation are very much at stake. We are living in a time of profound change that is bringing with it a fair share of anxiety, stress and deep uncertainty. As we live into the challenges that these times bring, I am grateful for the church. For stepping out of the boat means that one must first have a boat that one is in. And we do!

Our boat, this church, is sea worthy! This church is solid and strong, healthy and capable of carrying us into all that we face in the world today. We have first and foremost amazing lay leadership and strong congregational involvement in the life of the church. This is not to be underestimated. The church is us together seeking to make God's love real. In addition, over the last many years, we have worked to create an organizational structure that is able to support and nourish the life of the church. We have restructured how council and our committees are constituted and celebrate that at our January congregational meeting, we voted to approve new bylaws. We have also seen the beginnings of improvements to our building made possible by our successful capital campaign of last year. After the departure of our beloved Taiwanese Presbyterian Church of Greater Boston over last summer, we are now preparing to welcome in new tenants. Our boat, this church, is sea worthy also because, for this past year, we have benefited by the amazing, full-time ministry of our beloved Pastor of Youth and Family Ministry, Amy Clark Feldman.

Whether it is when one walks in the sanctuary on a Sunday morning and is greeted by such warmth and welcome, or whether it is crunching budget numbers at a council meeting with not only skill and depth but also with a real appreciation for the unique gift that is church, or whether it is gathering around a lunch bunch table sharing stories and honoring lives, this is a strong and healthy community and I give God thanks and praise to be able to share in the ministry of it with you. I believe with all my being that the world needs The Union Church in Waban. The world needs this place where of love and acceptance are real and where all who gather may come to find the courage and strength to "step out of the boat" by living that love out into the world.

In the reports that follow you will read about all of the places and activities that this church has brought to us this year. You will read about all of the ways that our life together has been enriched as we shared in being church together. I am so grateful to be serving a church that has such solid organizational health; committed, capable, creative and truly extraordinary lay leadership; and a powerful sense of purpose.

So thank you for another wonderful year of being church together. I look forward to the coming year and all of the ways that we will be called to love God with all of our hearts, minds and strength and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Finally, I'd like to express my gratitude for the continued support of the Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC). The purpose of the PRC is to assist in fostering a healthy relationship between me, as pastor, and you as the congregation, in order to enhance the effectiveness of the church's mission. Many thanks to Cindy Spertner, Alicia Collins, Susan Hunt Stevens and Alan Cody for walking with me this year and I am grateful that Tom Vawter will be joining the PRC this coming year.

Pastor Amy's Report

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things... I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:8,13

Our congregation, families, children and youth continue to be a source of inspiration, hope and joy. Our church's love of and dedication to our young people is real and powerfully felt. From our wide welcome to children on Sunday mornings; to the openness to try new ideas and forms of worship led by our kids; to the dedication of our Christian Education and Youth Ministry teams, and the many, many teachers and volunteers that nurture and support them; to the generosity of resources allowing these ministries to thrive, and much more; our congregation wonderfully lives out its commitment to being child-cherishing.

The Children, Youth and Families section of this report outlines in detail the many initiatives and programs this year, and paints a picture of vibrant, faithful and growing ministry. Without reiterating that report here, I would lift up two new ministry initiatives from the past year: our High School Youth Group; and our Parents Group -- with a special note of gratitude to Mark Smith, Emma Brown and Jonathan Harvey for their leadership of the high school group; and to Annie Gatewood for her leadership of the Parents Group. I was especially impressed this year (as you can read in the report), by the dedication of our high-schoolers to understanding and addressing issues of hunger and homelessness. Their ministry this year included two overnight mission trips (to NYC and downtown Boston); and one week-long mission trip (to Kentucky later this month), living out our church's call to service, relationship-building, and mission in meaningful ways.

As I noted last year, all of our faithful ministries with our children and youth take place against the back-drop of a tumultuous and anxious world. The news of our times is troubling, and our young people absorb the impact, while also trying to navigate the academic, social and other stresses and pressures of their lives. We share and nurture our faith, gather together and deepen relationships, so that we might experience something of God's Love and presence, and in so doing, know HOPE, and find our way forward together. I would add -- and celebrate -- that our ministries are also a place where children and youth can explore God's call; and know that they have agency as people of faith to make a real difference in their communities and in this beautiful, but broken, world. From our Mini-Missions (with special thanks to Jill Coull and Soo Laski); our intergenerational

worship services, including for Earth Day, led by our young people (with special thanks to Cindy Spertner); to our many mission and service opportunities for our middle schoolers and high schoolers, we are living out the hope of the Philippians passage at the top of this report, knowing that as we focus on what is “true...and just...(we) can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.”

Looking Ahead: As mentioned in the *Children, Youth and Families* report, I look forward to working with the Youth Ministry and Teacher Teams, as well as CE PACS and the UCW leadership, to review the past year, and plan for the year ahead. Related to my ministry, I might also highlight:

- Relationship-Building and Pastoral Care: This, of course, remains at the heart of our ministry with children, youth and families. Deepening my own relationships with, and being a pastoral support to, our children and families will continue to be foundational to my ministry.
- Capacity-Building: As we grow and incorporate more ministry offerings (e.g. this year we added a high-school youth group and mission trip; next year we add the Exploring Our Faith program), it is important that we put structures in place to support all we are building. This will include little things like databases and making sure our policies are up-to-date, and bigger and more important things like welcoming and involving adults and youth in opportunities to volunteer, teach, serve and connect. This will be an important focus this summer and next year.
- Community Engagement and Widening our Welcome: Our ‘stepping out of the boat’ theme this year has inspired good conversation about how we are called to be present in our immediate communities and neighborhood; how we can be a place of welcome, support, hope and good news to the families here in Waban and Metro-West. I look forward to continuing to explore how we might better communicate, build relationships with and welcome new families.
- Worship, Weddings and Memorial Services: I am grateful to preach and lead worship approximately once a month, and also to walk with families through joy, loss and transitions.
- Newton Interfaith Religious Educators: I currently serve as the co-chair of the Newton Interfaith Religious Educators. The group gathers monthly to build community, and share wisdom across faiths relevant to Religious Education, children and youth. As acts of hate and anti-Semitism persist, including in Newton, this group is also looking at new ways to serve as a community resource to youth, families, community organizations and schools.

Gratitude to Teachers, Youth Ministry Team and Others: It takes many adults and youth leaders in our community to make this ministry what it is. So many (too many to name individually here – although I mention some above), have stepped forward to lead, teach, guide, chaperone, plan, create, organize service trips, cook, donate, and so much more. In addition to those mentioned elsewhere in this report, I would like to share a special thanks to Youth Ministry co-chairs Susan Hunt Stevens and Kyle Pond; and to CEPACS members Kathy Malone and Alicia Collins, for their continued faithfulness, dedication and leadership.

Gratitude to my Pastoral Relations Committee: I am so blessed by my Pastoral Relations Committee – Anya Bassett, Molly Owen-Kiritsy, and Sue Hadley – and their support, encouragement and wisdom.

A Special Note of Gratitude for Liz Caronna: As I share in the Children, Youth and Families report, Liz Caronna, who has served as CE chair, Council member, and a wise, grounded, generous, and faithful partner for the past three years, will rotate out of her position in June. There is not one aspect of our ministries to children and youth that has not been touched by her care, creativity and gift for planning. While I know she will continue to contribute to this ministry in other ways, I would like to share my deep gratitude for her service as chair. It has been a true joy and privilege to share this good work with her!

I would also like to thank our co-moderators: Diane Tillotson and Kent Wittler, as well as Brian Donovan and Rev. Stacy Swain, for all the ways they support my ministry, and our children, youth and families. It is with great joy and thanksgiving that I look ahead to all God has planned for us in the coming year.

With Gratitude,

Amy Clark Feldman

Associate Pastor for Youth and Families

Moderators' Report

This year under the leadership of Pastor Stacy Swain, the Council developed a theme based on the story of Peter of “getting out of the boat”. That theme continues to undergird and drive our thinking about how we can all live fully into our real selves and shine that light into the world. Now more than ever, as our world continues to fracture at the intersection of enormous economic prosperity for some and devastating economic injustice and inequality for others, we are called to bridge the divide and heal the broken places. Each one of us can live into our strengths and passions and step out of the boat to be our best selves.

This church is a sanctuary of peace allowing us to live gracefully into our covenant. The vibrant energy that emanates from these church walls is astounding. The reports from all the teams will reflect just how deeply committed we are to walking humbly with our god. Please read the reports and celebrate all that you bring to this beloved community.

A survey of the broad initiatives carried out this year are incredible. We continued the management of the capital campaign funds and projects with care. We held a discernment process around our relationship with Nicaragua in advance of our trip year in 2020 to see how we can best support our Nicaraguan friends in their time of greatest need. A new Nicaragua team task force was developed to create a new structure around that mission. We found new tenants to replace the Taiwanese church to support our rental income. We restructured the Mission team leadership to collaborate across all church wide activities. We also deepened our commitment to the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO).

We held a church wide vote on affiliating with the American Baptist Church to support the installation of Amy Feldman, our beloved Associate Pastor for Youth and Families. Stay tuned for a

fall installation and celebration. Add in an all church retreat, a Women's retreat, a youth service trip to Appalachia and you can see how busy we have been.

And yet, time passes and lives diverge to new chapters. Bill Merrill our Music Director is retiring to Maine for a richly deserved rest and relaxation. We want to thank Bill for all the years of dedicated service to the church. He has given so much to us for which we are eternally thankful. Please join in celebrating him on June 9th after church.

Finally, it is with deep sadness, but gratitude for knowing them, that we said goodbye to Tess MacDonald and Dick Husher recently. Both passed away in late May. Tess was always smiling and her radiance was felt everywhere. Dick was quite industrious and was still using his snow plow the last couple winters to our amazement. Both Tess and Dick were treasured members of this community and we will miss them dearly. Dick will be joining his beloved Jean Husher who passed in December 2018. She was a force of nature and a treasure in the UCW community.

Thank you to the congregation for the continued trust you put in the Co-Moderators and the Council. We continue to serve and welcome others to join in the care of this beloved church and community.

With Regards,
Diane Tillotson and Kent Wittler
Co-Moderators

Clerk's Report

Church Membership

Active membership, July 1, 2018	237
New members	
Brian Heffernan, 12/23/18	4
Rev. Dr. Arlyne Grant, 6/2/19	
Lainie and Jay Wagner	
Death of members	3
Elsie Jean Husher	
Tess MacDonald	
Dick Husher	
Active membership, June 2, 2019	238

Services Conducted

Sunday Morning Worship Services	43
Summer Services	4
Waban Health Services	10
Special Services	8
(Blessing of the Animals, Longest Night Service, Christmas Eve Ash Wednesday children's service followed by an adult service, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunrise Service)	
Baptism	
(Note: baptism occurred during regular Sunday morning service and as such is not counted as additional services).	
Roy Jeffrey Nelson, 9/23/18	
Memorial Services	5
Elsie Jean Husher, 1/12/2019	
Patrick Walker, 2/8/2019	
Carol Amick, 2/16/2019	
Tess MacDonald, 6/15/2019 (scheduled)	
Dick Husher, 6/22/2019 (scheduled)	
Total Services Conducted	70

REPORTS FROM THE MINISTRIES
OF
THE UNION CHURCH IN WABAN


ADULT EDUCATION, FELLOWSHIP AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Throughout this past year there have been many opportunities for adults in our community to partake in educational and spiritual formation programming. For many, the small group experience is really the most meaningful and nourishing way to engage with church. Having the opportunity to talk with each other about things that matter in our life and in the world so that we can come to know and support each other more deeply is at the heart of what it is to be a community of faith. In the year to come, I would encourage us all to think of creating a nourishing spiritual life that includes regular worship, opportunities to serve, and education and spiritual formation.

What follows is an overview of this last year's programming. If you have ideas for additional small group programming for next year, please be in touch with Pastor Stacy.

Wellspring. Our women's group and ministry met monthly throughout the year on the third Wednesday of the month. Beginning with a delicious meal, we take time to share our lives with each other as well as take up a time of learning. This year we drew from the book "Still Point" by Sarah Arthur and continued with the hymn "Servant Song" to center us.


This year we complemented our monthly gatherings by holding our second annual women's retreat at Toah Nipi Retreat Center in Rindge, New Hampshire. From May 17-19, nine of us delved into Sabbath Blessings contemplating God's Rest and the Refreshment and Restoration that Rest brings to our lives.



***Sabbath Blessings:
Rest, Refresh, Restore***

UCW Women's Retreat
Toah Nipi Retreat Center, Rindge, NH

Friday, May 17, 6:30 p.m. through
Sunday, May 19, 11 a.m.



Many thanks to Priscilla Kelso for her grace-filled and spirit-inspired leadership of both Wellspring and the retreat and to Cindy Spertner who shared her creativity and leadership so generously as part of the retreat planning team.

Java Gents. Our men's ministry has also continued to meet monthly through the year on the third Friday of the month. I can always tell when Java Gents meets because of the smell of freshly scrambled eggs and crispy bacon wafting up the stairwell. Food was not the only thing served up however, I am told that there was always plenty of good humor and conversation as well.

This year, Java Gents kept up the tradition of complementing the monthly morning gathering with a festive evening of brats, beers and fabulous fellowship this past October.

Many thanks to Buz Bedford and Jay O'Beirne for their mastery of being both chef for, and convener of, the gatherings.

Lunch Bunch. While Lunch Bunch has historically been seen as Elders' ministry, we have tried this year to get out the message that Lunch Bunch is for everyone! Gathering on the last Wednesday of the month, we share in a hot meal and good conversation around a question that has been posed for the gathering. The conversation that ensued was always rich and wonderful as stories were shared and experiences affirmed. I do not think I am exaggerating to say that at the end of our time, everyone was filled to the brim both with good food and with good fellowship.

Many thanks to Judy Nagle, Molly Owen-Kiritsy, Gerry Elion, Debbie McGovern, Lainie Wagner and ministerial intern Brian Donovan for making Lunch Bunch such a nourishing time.

Book Group. We started the year with the book "Killers of the Flower Moon" by David Grann as part of the fall theme of justice. Over the winter our theme was "loving our neighbors as ourselves" and as such read two books "Strangers in their own Land," by Arlie Hochschild and "Reading to Patrick," by Michelle Kuo. In keeping with the spring theme of "Care of Creation," our last book of the year is "Where the Crawdad's Sing," by Delia Owens.

Many thanks to Alan Cody for his leadership, creativity and insights into the human condition. Thanks also to Anya Bassett for leading an inspired conversation of the book "Strangers in their own Land" and for recommending both that book as well as "Reading to Patrick."

Sunday Morning Bible Study and Prayer Group. For much of the past year, a small group gathered on Sunday mornings at 8:00 a.m. to read from the Bible and to learn from each other and from Scripture. Through careful reading and thoughtful conversation, we looked at the story behind the text (what was the historical setting for the text and what were the social, political, economic etc. issues at play during that time), the story within the text (what was the Scripture actually saying?), and the story in front of the text (how are we to interpret and understand these teachings in the light of our day). This year, we alternated Bible study with Prayer Group that met during Advent and was led by Brian Donovan. During the season of Lent, Bible Study took up the study of the Gnostic Gospels that also was led by Brian.



Advent Reflection Booklet. Once again, we were blessed by the creative offerings of many in our congregation as we made our way through the weeks of Advent. This year, the book also contained pictures of the prayer flags that we made in small groups during the retreat. These prayer flags depicted what the world could look like if we were able to leave behind/ move beyond all that keeps us and all of God's good creation from thriving. (*The writing on the flag says "team work."*)

"Exploring Justice: Priorities" and "Fear of the Other" study series. For six weeks in the fall, a small group piloted a new curriculum written by Rev. Anne Robertson of the Massachusetts Bible Society. The study is the first in a series on the Ten Commandments. Over the winter months, we

delled into another six week study entitled “Fear of the Other, No Fear in Love,” by Rev. William Willimon. This study challenged us to look at ways that we can distance ourselves from others and challenged us to take up the biblical call to “love our neighbors as ourselves.”

All Church Retreat November 9-11, at Rolling Ridge Conference Center. Our annual, all church retreat continued this year with thirty of us gathering in Andover, MA at Rolling Ridge. Over the course of the weekend we explored through guided activities, discussion, scripture, prayer and song what is to move out of whatever it is that is binding us and keeping us (both individually as collectively as a church or as a country) from thriving. Our weekend culminated with worship on Sunday morning where we picked up the theme for the church year “Stepping out of the Boat” and contemplated how God may be calling us to deeper engagement this year.

Many thanks to our inspired Retreat Planning Team: Tom Vawter, Kent Wittler, Diane Tillotson, Soo Laski, Nancy Zollers, Bart Kelso, Jenny Weisz, and Brian Donovan.

Looking Ahead. What follows are some ideas for adult education and spiritual formation in the coming year.

- Continue to work closely with mission leadership to craft learning opportunities that dovetail with service and mission offerings;
- Reflect with fellow travelers on the pilgrimage to Montgomery and Selma about how to bring the theme of racial justice into our UCW life next year, perhaps having a City Mission Sunday in October where we have June Cooper preach and those of us who participated on the pilgrimage give some witness as to our experience;
- Continue to think about offering other adult service/learning trips;
- Continue current Adult Ed/Spiritual Formation programming (Bible Study, Lunch bunch, Women’s Group, Waban Health,) and offer anew the Exploring the Bible series, perhaps in the evening this time around; and
- Explore with Worship Team, Deacons and Amy, the offering of dinner church once a month where in addition to sharing a meal, a lay person is invited to share their faith journey or witness to what they are grappling with or celebrating in their spiritual formation.

Respectfully and joyfully submitted,
Pastor Stacy

BUILDING TEAM

We’ve continued to care for our beloved church building, by performing many tasks, and overseeing projects. Below, we’ve listed a few!

- Monitored elevator operation and contacted repair services as needed. We are happy to report that the longstanding problem we had with the elevator has been resolved! We had one recent “glitch,” that too, has been resolved.
- We oversaw the construction and installation of the new steps, leading to the sanctuary entrance.

Recurring tasks performed as needed included the following:

- Replaced dead light bulbs throughout building.
- Replaced worn-out light switches.
- Re-lit blown out oven pilots.
- Reset circuit breakers and replaced blown fuses.
- Repaired and oiled exterior door locks.
- Snaked and plunged clogged toilets and replaced worn out valves and floats.
- Mowed lawn and trimmed hedges throughout spring and summer, planted flowers, weeded, and removed dead trees and shrubs.
- Monitored snow plowing.
- Meet with plow person as needed.
- Monitored supplies of paper towels, toilet tissue, and trash bags and notified office manager when new supplies needed to be ordered.
- Replaced altar candles.
- Touched up paint on large wooden UCW sign.
- Cleaned and polished areas of the church as needed.
- Organize areas of the church.
- Meetings with the following contractors:
 - Engineers
 - Roofing
 - Masonry
 - Window
 - Cleaning
 - Painting
 - Lighting

Recurring tasks performed at regular intervals included the following:

- Clean out the refrigerator and dispose of old food.
- Clean and polish tables, and wash down cabinets in the big kitchen.
- Flushed sludge out of both heating boilers weekly during heating season.
- Changed heating timer setting seasonally and as requested for special events.
- Changed altar, pulpit, and lectern hangings to correct colors for each liturgical season.
- Posted hymn numbers before each Sunday service.
- Set clocks at beginning and end of Daylight Saving Time.
- Adjusted exterior light timers for changes in sunset.
- Changed message seasonally in sign box by front steps.
- Put up and took down stage for Christmas pageant.

- Put up and took down aisle candle holders and candles for Christmas Eve.
- Opened and closed storm windows throughout building seasonally.
- Checked building for unlocked doors, lights left on, or water running every Sunday, and other days during the week.
- Clean and organize areas in the church that are not part of the cleaning contract.

TENANTS

Our Taiwanese Church has now found their own church building. We miss them, and they were wonderful tenants to share our building with.

We continue to enjoy a good relationship with Riverside Children's Center. They are very accommodating, and easy to work with.

There are no major issues to report.

LOOKING FORWARD

We will begin the process of replacing our roof. This work should begin in the spring/summer of 2020. We will be working closely with the engineers, and the roofing contractor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Building Team
Co-Chairs
Tom Humphrey and Judy Nagle

Capital Campaign Report

Thrive Honor Build

The ***Thrive, Honor, Build*** Capital Campaign concluded near the end of our last church fiscal year. To date, we have \$703,424 pledged and \$358,266 (51%) collected. This demonstrates the tremendous commitment of our congregation to the visions articulated in the campaign and its generosity in exceeding our goal of \$650,000. The collection period extends three years from the initiation of the campaign, with two years remaining for pledges to be paid.

The success of the campaign launched us into a busy summer. With the hopes of refurbishing the classrooms by the start of the Sunday School, a massive effort was made to remove outdated furniture and items stored in the basement, classrooms and tower room. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Judy Nagle, who oversaw the entirety of this project as well as put in many hours of sweat equity.

Once cleared, rooms were cleaned, carpet was installed in the choir room and Minister's Study and area rugs cut for the Meeting Room, Little Hale and Associate Pastor's office. Most rooms received a fresh coat of paint as well. Amy Feldman, together with the vision and design eye of Jill Coull, redesigned the classrooms and furnished them for various uses with a variety of developmentally appropriate furnishings and materials. A small private donation supported new furnishings in the associate pastor's office as well. Families returned in September to find revised, vibrant and welcoming space for all the children and their families.

The second significant project of the summer was the total replacement of the front steps. Under the watchful eye of Judy Nagle and Tom Humphrey, a masonry team removed the old stairs and impinging plantings, installed a granite and bluestone stairway and striped and repaired the rod iron

railing. The new stairway is a beautiful and concrete (yes, a pun) statement of our desire to be open to and welcoming to all.

The fall brought the Building Team into the next phase of our work: the roof. This is a main focus of the campaign and a significant undertaking. The church council voted to engage the expertise of a consulting firm (Simpson, Gumpertz and Heger) who conducted a careful analysis of the roof and drew up specifications for contractors to use in making informed and fixed-price bids. This process was invaluable in uncovering key issues with the roof and identifying what will need to be addressed to ensure we have a structurally sound roof for many years. Four roofing contractors reviewed the specifications and offered project bids. At the time of the writing of this report, the building team has selected one contractor to move ahead with. We will meet with him in late June to review his bid, discuss the pricing and scope, and come to a working agreement. The project itself is currently scheduled to begin in the spring/summer of 2020. Once we have the pricing confirmed for this major project, we will be able to scope out and schedule remaining building projects to be completed within the campaign timeframe.

Meanwhile, other campaign initiatives are forging ahead. We have started our 'green movement' by an extensive replacement of all electric lights to energy efficient LEDs. Wiring to these fixtures was also brought up to current standards. This project is estimated to provide substantial savings to the UCW's electric bill while simultaneously reducing our carbon footprint. In addition, the church has switched to 100% renewable electricity. We will continue to work with the aid of our Environmental Stewardship Assessment to address next steps in our greening efforts.

With our beloved music director Bill Merrill's retirement in June, we are moving more quickly into assessing the musical aspects of our worship, with an analysis of the needs of the organ as well as considering other opportunities to enhance this treasured part of our worship.

Last, and of central importance, is the commitment we have made to our children and youth ministry. The capital campaign allowed for partial funding of the UCW's first youth mission trip. At the end of June, four chaperones and eleven youth will travel to the heart of Appalachia in eastern Kentucky. They will be working side by side with two families in renovating their homes. Our sponsoring organization, Appalachia Service Program (www.asphome.org), is a Christian ministry, open to all people, that inspires hope and service through volunteer home repair and replacement. Over the course of fifty years, almost a half million volunteers have assisted nearly 20,000 families.

All of this is being capped off with the formation of a communications team who will take the message of who we are, what we do, and what we believe out into the community so that it rings out loud and clear that all are welcome.

The theme Thrive, Honor, Build is indeed coming alive in all we are doing. Thanks to all who participated in the campaign in various ways and thank you for your donations to help make these accomplishments possible.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Weisgerber and Kent Wittler
Capital Campaign Co-Chairs

The Deacons

During the 2018 – 2019 Church Year, Frank Laski joined in service as deacon.

The Deacons continued to serve the spiritual interests of the Church and community by supporting worship, the pastors and the spiritual interests of the congregation.

The following are areas of support and care of the church and church community overseen by the deacons:

- We prepared the worship space for service. This includes all the particulars for the following special services.
 - Sunday First/Gathering Sunday
 - Advent/Hanging of the Greens
 - Maundy Thursday
 - Palm Sunday
 - Ash Wednesday
 - Good Friday
 - Easter service
 - Mother's and Father's Day Candle Lighting
- Other Deacon Responsibilities this year:
 - Deacons set up and served Communion
 - Participated in the welcoming of new members
 - Greet people and offer support at each service
 - Served on Worship Team
 - Attended Monthly Deacons Meeting
 - Lined up Scripture Readers
 - Oversaw collection/offering - recruited volunteers
 - Did the head count at services
 - Sent cards to those in need (maybe around 100 cards)
 - Lined up food and visit support to those in need
 - Sent out surprise goodie packages and cards to college kids
 - Recruit youth and others to participate in serving communion and collection
 - The monthly gathering known as 'Lunch Bunch' was hosted for lunch and a program at the church.

As we come to the end of this year the Deacons are saddened to accept the end of term resignation of our beloved Deacon Alison McCarty. She is stepping down from Deacons after two years of fantastic and faithful service. She will be serving as Co –Moderator in the upcoming year.

Respectively submitted,

Your Deacons:

Jim MacDonald, Judy Nagle, Deb McGovern, Gerry Elion, Judy MacDonald, Alison McCarty,
Frank Laski

Worship Team

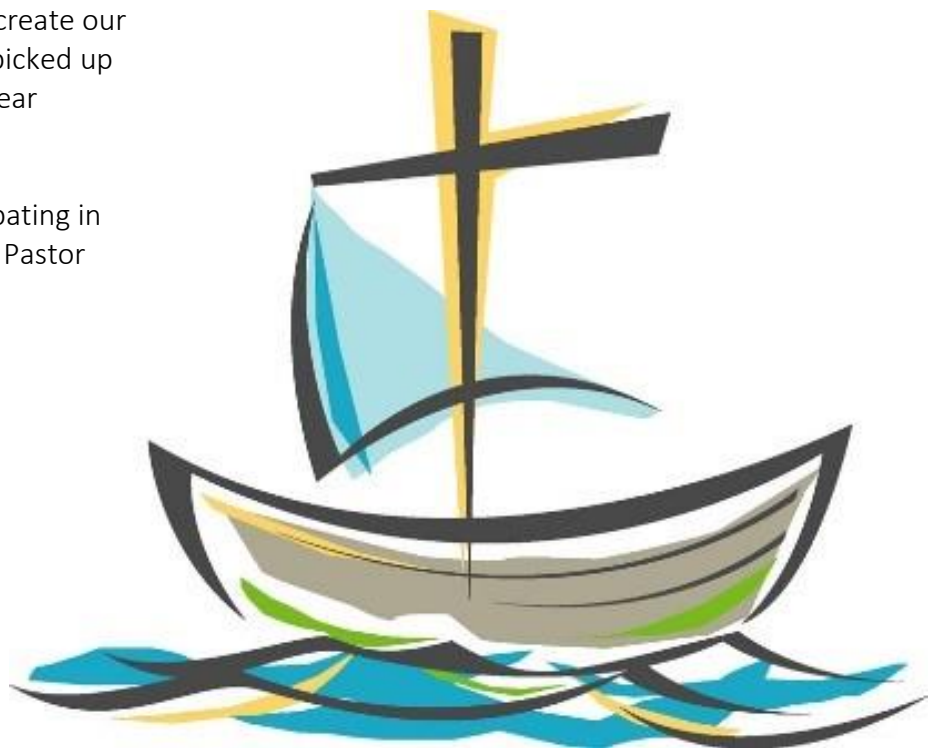
Worship team consists of representatives from Deacons, Music, Children, Youth and Family Ministries and members at large. The team meets 3-4 times throughout the year to work together across ministry areas in order to evaluate and refine the worship experience at The Union Church in Waban to help it be as meaningful as possible for those gathered.

This year the Worship Team spent some time reflecting on: mission moments; how to make sure that all elements in the service are worshipful; and the transition into the prayer time.

- Mission Moments. The goal this past year was to incorporate a mission moment into worship once a month. Both Mission Leadership and Worship Team feel the importance of mission outreach as a way that we serve and give glory to God, so weaving mission moments into worship feels right. We also realize the challenge of keeping mission moments as moments, and working to be sure they do not get too long which can end up extending the service. The placement of the mission moment in the worship service was also something we discussed, lifting up the value of making sure that there are times when the children are able to hear and to share mission moments as well.
- Making sure that worship is worshipful: We continue to discuss how to balance the elements in the service in ways that make the entirety of the service feel worshipful. While we do have announcements and times of instruction, Worship Team encourages these to be kept brief and to be shared thoughtfully.
- Finally, we spent time thinking about how best to use music to transition out of the sermon and also into the time of prayer. We have heard from the congregation that a bit more reflective spaciousness in the service would help in making some transitions between the different elements.

Worship Team also helped to create our prayer station for Lent which picked up on the theme for the church year "Stepping out of the Boat."

If you are interested in participating in the Worship Team, please see Pastor Stacy.



Ministries to Children, Youth, and Families

This has been an exciting year of connection, faithfulness and growth for our ministries with children, youth and families. Every day we are living fully into our commitment to be a child and youth-cherishing congregation, providing opportunities for faith-formation; intergenerational relationships; connection; and support for families. Notably, this was the first year of our High-School Youth Group (see below), including new mission and service trips for high-schoolers; and also the first year with our associate pastor serving full-time in her role. We are grateful to God and to this amazing church community for its commitment to our children and youth as full and valued member of our congregation.

FAITH FORMATION ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

Sunday mornings remain at the heart of our ministry to children and youth.

- **Beautiful, Functional,
Worshipful Spaces:**

This year, we highlight and celebrate the completion of updates to our Littlehale, Meeting, and Choir Rooms thanks to generous donations to our Capital Campaign. The new designs and furniture, including supply closets in the hallway, have turned these rooms into beautiful, peaceful, functional spaces that truly support the mission of our ministries to children and youth. We are especially grateful to Jill Coull, who generously donated her design expertise and time; and to Judy Nagle, Karen Weisgerber and other members of the capital campaign committee who helped make this transformation a reality. Thanks too to the youth in the picture above for serving as our summer paint crew!



- **New Classroom:** This year we re-established the Turtle Classroom to accommodate a growing number of children in pre-school to 1st grade. We are grateful to Riverside Childcare for graciously partnering with us to share the space.
- **God's Story Continues in Us:** Included in the update to Littlehale is a Biblical timeline that runs the width of the room, beginning with the Creation story, through the Old and New Testaments, which the children and teachers completed together. We continue to use the Narrative Lectionary, as we build our Biblical literacy and understanding of the Bible as the story of God and God's People through time, continuing in us. Pastor Amy continues to write and adapt curriculum weekly for each class based on the Narrative Lectionary.
- **Relationship-Building:** We believe we experience God and come to know what it is to be the body of Christ in relationship with one another, and seek to create a safe, loving space where all children can connect with God, and with their peers and other adults. All Sunday gatherings prioritize time for check-ins, relationship-building and prayer.
- **Compassion and Serving:** We also believe we learn what it is to be church, and followers of the Way of Jesus, by serving others. Many of our weekly gatherings include time for the kids to serve or show compassion to others in some way – from writing cards to our Jewish and Muslim neighbors after this year's attacks; to preparing mittens for our Christmas mitten tree collection; to setting the table for reception.

Mini-Missions: The largest and most meaningful service program for our pre-k to 5th graders is Mini-Missions. Developed by the Christian Education and Teacher Teams, Mini-Missions is a way to get our young ones involved in simple, tangible service projects in the community. Children owned the projects from start to finish, with the goal of helping them see service as an integral part of their faith and lives, and realize they can make a difference in their communities and the world. This year, our service partners for Mini-Missions included: The Cat Connection of Waltham; The Newton Food Pantry; and Stella's Wish Bus (providing needed school supplies for children with disabilities in Kenya in conjunction with our 1K church partner Wham's Café in Lowell). In addition to collecting donations, the kids traveled to our partners to learn about their work and help serve.



CE Staff Members: Our professional nursery caregiver, Lisa Barry; and staff teacher, Ryan Barry, both continued this year as faithful, dependable and caring members of the CE team. They are both adored by children, families and the wider congregation, and we are so grateful for their ministries with us. We are especially grateful to Ryan for stepping forward as lead teacher and co-teacher for a number of Sundays, including in our new Turtle Room.

INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP

We value intergenerational worship for many reasons, including that research shows us that those who have meaningful experiences of worship as children will be more likely to seek out and find



meaning in worship as adults. We also strongly believe that God works in special ways through our children and youth, and that our congregation is enriched as a whole, and come to see God and our community in new ways, when we worship together. In addition to our annual intergenerational Hanging of the Greens, Christmas Eve and Easter services, we added:

- ***Blessing of the Animals!*** The Middle School Youth Group helped to lead our first-ever Blessing of the Animals, with a special collection for Buddy Dog Humane Society.
- ***Earth Day Worship:*** The children and youth led the entirety of this powerful worship service on May 5th. A special thanks to Cindy Spertner for her beautiful contributions to this service!
- ***Ash Wednesday:*** We returned to holding a second Ash Wednesday service for all ages that included art and movement.
- ***Pray-ground:*** Beginning in Advent we experimented with a new area in the Memorial Chapel, with art, books and activities, as a space for children who could benefit from movement or a more hands-on experience of worship.



YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM & YOUTH GROUP

Youth Ministry Team – Middle School AND High School Youth Groups

The Youth Ministry Team, co-chaired by Susan Hunt Stevens and Kyle Pond, entered a new phase this year, with our first year of separate Middle and High School Youth Groups.

For both middle and high schoolers, our work and planning continued to build on the mission-statement developed by the task-force in 2015-16:

The Youth Ministry of the Union Church in Waban is a fully welcoming community that sees all young people as beloved children of God who can live out God's love in the world. In our ministry, young people are invited to:

- *Develop authentic relationships with other youth, caring adults, and God;*
- *Embark on a spiritual journey grounded in the life, teachings, and community of Jesus Christ;*
- *Explore how their gifts and questions can contribute to the life of the church and the flourishing of all creation;*
- *Participate in meaningful service and joyful mission as part of this community of faith.*

Middle School Youth Group:

Guided by this mission, the Youth Ministry Team designed and implemented a full schedule of events for our middle-schoolers, which generally included one fellowship event and one service event per month, including the following. We are so grateful to the many parents and adult volunteers who chaperoned and contributed to this awesome year with our middle-schoolers:

- **Fall-Kick Off Party:** Food, games and time to connect at the church
- **Blessing of the Animals and Trip to Buddy Dog** (see above)
- **High-Ropes with TreeTop Adventures in the Blue Hills:** A new outdoor adventure that was fun and helped us bond as a group
- **Fall All-Church Retreat:** Included intergenerational and kid-specific offerings
- **Fall Clean Up:** Teams visited the homes of congregants who could use a helping hand with fall clean up. Youth raked leaves, planted bulbs, moved furniture, pruned and cleared yards, and more
- **Community Thanksgiving Dinner:** A meaningful, annual favorite for youth and family volunteers
- **Norwood Health Mitten Tree Collection and Caroling:** Youth led this collection, delivered the gifts, and sang carols for our friends at the Norwood Health Center
- **Snow Shoveling Team:** Youth and families again partnered with the Deacons to help UCW members in need of shoveling after the winter storms
- **UCW Youth Christmas Party:** This annual party and white elephant gift exchange has become a beloved tradition!
- **Dinner Out on the Town:** We kicked off the new year with a fun dinner out
- **Cradles to Crayons:** We're especially grateful to high-schooler Justin Pond for spearheading this service trip and collection
- **Lenten Sleepover:** Kids spent a great night at the church, with games, worship and fellowship
- **Common Cathedral:** A meaningful day serving food and worshipping with this outdoor congregation on Boston Common
- **Movie Night:** A fun night to unwind and connect
- **Year End Pool Party:** Youth celebrate and look back over a great year!



High School Youth Group:

The High School Youth Group had an incredible first year, and we are so grateful to the hard work of the high-schoolers, and to adult leaders Mark Smith, Emma Brown and Jonathan Harvey. In addition to participating in some of the youth group activities listed above (e.g. the fall clean-up, high-ropes, mitten tree, pool party, leading intergenerational worship services), the high-schoolers met one evening each month for dinner, fun, and meaningful conversation and activities.

Also, the group chose a special focus on hunger and homelessness this year, and participated in two overnight service trips; and is preparing to travel to Chavies, KY for a week-long service project in June:



- **New York – Rauschenbusch Metropolitan Ministries Urban Immersion:** In the fall, the group traveled to Hell’s Kitchen to join in the work of RMM, including urban gardening, and serving lunch in a large-scale soup kitchen. We also saw and explored issues related to housing insecurity in Manhattan; the Statue of Liberty; the 9-11 memorial and more.

- **Boston – CityReach with Ecclesia Ministries:** In the spring, we delved into issues of homelessness closer to home by participating in the overnight immersion program, CityReach, in downtown Boston. Our guides were people currently (or recently) experiencing homelessness, and, as we served with them, saw the city through their eyes, and became friends, our eyes and hearts were opened in new ways, as well. This is a program we hope to make an annual part of our youth group calendar.



- **Appalachia Service Project:** From June 22-29th of this year, ten high-schoolers and five adult leaders (including college student) will travel to Chavies, Kentucky for a week with the Appalachia Service Project. During the week, we will work to make a home, “safer, warmer, and drier” for a family in need, learn about the history and culture of the region, and explore the challenges facing the people of rural Appalachia. We are grateful for the capital campaign funds designated for youth mission that will support this trip.

PARENT GROUP

This was the first year of a new monthly parent gathering, meeting on the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30-9p.m. Parenting is full of joys and challenges, and this group offered a space for connection and support. We are so grateful to Annie Gatewood for her leadership of this ministry.

LOOKING AHEAD:

This was another good and full year for our ministries with youth and children, and we look forward to the summer, when we evaluate, as we do every year, what went well, and what we may want to continue, tweak or change in the year ahead. In addition to that important on-going work, the following are some of the areas of focus for the coming year:

Christian Education Working Group: Over the past three years, our offerings for children and youth have developed in important ways. Next year we hope to form a group to support our ministries as they continue to grow and thrive – with a special focus on Sunday mornings, and our younger children and their families. The group will discern a vision and some goals for the coming years, and look at specific areas, including:

1. *Invitation and welcome:* Reaching out into our communities to develop relationships, listen, share our story, and invite families who are seeking connection, support and a faith community into the life of our church; thinking about the experience of visitors and families new to the church and how we might better welcome them; improving communication with existing families and the church
2. *Structures and Systems:* Supporting our associate pastor in making sure we have everything in place that we need for a healthy ministry (e.g. safe church policy and emergency procedures; databases, calendars, curriculum; volunteer teams and recruitment; communications, etc).

Continuing to Build Our Middle and High School Groups: Next year will be fourth year of our new youth groups; and only the second year of our high school youth group. We are excited to continue growing these groups as places of connection, joy, hope and faith formation for our middle and high schoolers. We will especially focus on our high school group next year, as we learn from our first year together, and plan gatherings and mission/service trips. This may also include developing new youth spaces with funds designated from our capital campaign.

Exploring Our Faith (Confirmation/Baptism): Next year, many of our high-schoolers will also participate in our Exploring Our Faith offering – a time for our teens to ask questions, explore, and further take ownership of their own faith journeys. For some this will culminate in confirmation or baptism, or an affirmation of their continued journey. Integrating this offering into our plans for the high-school youth group in a way that allows both to thrive will be a priority.

Parents and families: Supporting parents and families also remains a priority. We are excited to continue growing our parents' group; communicating and building connections with and between parents; as well as possibly planning speakers and forums around specific topics in the coming year.

A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO LIZ CARONNA

For the past three years, Liz Caronna has served tirelessly as the chair of our CE PACS, working as a close partner to Pastor Amy. Liz will step out of her role as CE PACS chair in the coming year, although she has vowed to remain available to consult on our Exploring Our Faith programming. Her faithfulness, love, passion and wisdom are infused in every aspect of our ministries to children, youth and families – from our biggest dreams to the smallest details. During this time, she has also served as a dedicated member of our Church Council. It is hard to overstate her contributions to this ministry, or our gratitude for her and her service. Thank you, Liz!

We would also like to thank all those who participated in and supported UCW's ministries with children and youth – to the many who lead and chaperoned youth events and served on the Youth Ministry Team; to the more than 25 people who served as teachers on Sunday mornings; to everyone who contributed their time, talents, gifts, prayers and love in so many other ways. With God's grace, we look forward to another faithful, meaningful year growing, serving and thriving in the Way of Jesus together.

Mission-Outreach

Our congregation continues to place value in tackling issues of disparity, violence, oppression, prejudice, and sustainability through action and donation of time and through generous tangible contributions. As Nancy Zollers and Beth Sears so eloquently stated in last year's report, at the Union Church, we are "able to be the hands and feet of God in many places because we see ourselves in partnership with God, living our faith out into the world." We continue to seek out relational opportunities as human connection and compassion is at the root of the love that Jesus exemplified. Over the year we have sought to continue existing relationships, strengthen some that had grown weak, and listen for new opportunities. With the recognition that our little church has a big heart for outreach, the leadership structure changed this year such that two mission team leaders worked to facilitate overall organization and communication with the individual initiative leaders. This comes with the recognition that programs for which there is a lead will flourish and those without may struggle. Having said that, the mission team leaders are committed to working to sustain long term partnerships and perhaps keep the flame going until an enthusiastic lead can be identified.

Mission Fair on Gathering Sunday: Most of the initiatives listed below were represented by their respective leader. There was an opportunity for those interested to provide contact information for all initiatives. We received positive feedback on the new location (on the stage) during fellowship.

Individual Mission Initiatives and Team Leaders

1. Hunger / Homelessness / Loneliness

Thanksgiving Community Dinner (Alicia Collins and Abby Larson)

Invitations were sent to local community members as well as the Russell School community. Many volunteers helped with set up, serving and cleanup and we served about 50-70 meals.

Waban Health (Molly Owen-Kiritsy and Betty O'Beirne)

A group of about eight from UCW visit the residents of Waban Health once per month for worship. Waban Health underwent a big transition this year as they relocated to a new building in Norwood (with a few residents moving to Waltham). This has been a difficult transition for both the residents of Waban Health and for those at UCW who drew fulfillment from this relationship. While a strong commitment to continue the relationship exists, we will have to wait and see how things play out due to differences in administrative structure at the new facility as well as new logistical considerations.

Mitten Tree (Molly Owen-Kiritsy and Betty O'Beirne leading collection for Waban Health and Erika Pond leading collection for Project Care and Concern)

Our youth decorated mittens and the congregation provided gifts for around 50 residents of Waban Health and 52 residents of many different houses associated with Project Care and Concern. Sister Joyce and Anne Jarvis came to speak to the youth about the residents housed by Project Care and Concern and Ecclesia, including the long waiting list to get housed, the needs and background of the residents and how much joy our gifts bring to them.

Common Cathedral (Rob and Jane Purser and Abby Larson)

Our partners at Ecclesia Ministries provide a meal and a worship service every Sunday on the Boston Common.

This year we served about 100-150 meals. Much of the cost was donated by Abby with the remaining cost being absorbed from mission's Hunger budget.

Project Care and Concern

Easter Dinner at Walnut House

Beth Sears organized an Easter dinner for the residents of Walnut House. These are formerly homeless neighbors with few or no family or other connections at a residence in W. Roxbury.

2. Environment / Climate Change

Care of God's Creation (Kevin Johnson)

As part of greening our building, all the light-bulbs in the sanctuary were replaced.

Kevin is participating in the creation of a strategy for addressing climate-justice in the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization's climate justice working group, which formed in September and is focusing activities GBIO member houses of worship can pursue collectively, particularly in the area of advocacy for new construction in the Boston area to prioritize electric rather than gas heat.

A second initiative is the Climate Xchange coalition to support carbon pricing legislation in Massachusetts, which has helped recruit over 100 state legislators to endorse or co-sponsor H2810 An Act to Promote Green Infrastructure and Reduce Carbon Emissions. The Easter Offering was dedicated to the Environmental Defense Fund.

3. Urban Education & Living

Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (Mark Smith, Kathleen Hobson)

GBIO continued with house-meetings over the summer, gathering input from member-congregations on priorities. Then they switched gears for the election season. They organized an assembly in August, prior to the primaries, for the DA and Governor races. And then again in October for the election of DA, Governor, and Senator. These forums were well attended by 15-20 people from our congregation.

In April 2019, GBIO decided at an assembly to focus on building and diversifying the membership, to more closely reflect the diversity of the population in Greater Boston. Seven members of our congregation attended this assembly.

GBIO continues to advocate for specific policies in the area of Climate Justice (Kevin Johnson), Urban Education (Nancy Zollers), and Health Care.

Russell Elementary School in Dorchester

We have remained in contact with Dasan Harrington, an involved parent through a transitional period at Russell. The new principal, Derrik Ciesla, is energetic and enthusiastic to reinvigorate our relationship with Russell. We provided drinks and supplies for multicultural night, attended by Frank & Nancy Laski and Jaap van Reijendam.

Susan Hunt Stevens and Rob Purser have delivered the Computer Club again, every Thursday between February break and April break. In this weekly class, they have taught 4th and 5th graders how to program in Scratch.

In a fruitful meeting with Mr. Ciesla, we discussed ways that UCW members could become more involved during times that better suit our schedules. Many ideas were suggested (mentoring, Saturday tutoring, Saturday activities in Boston, etc.). We will engage the congregation in a conversation next fall to brainstorm and determine next steps. We also donated funds for the teacher and student appreciation luncheon as well as for multi-cultural night.

4. Other Initiatives

1K Microloan Initiative (Brita Gill-Austern and Alison McCarty) is a project initiated last year in which we partner with Criterion Institute in order to achieve economic justice for non-traditional borrowers. The loan to Sandra Okiror-Njoroge of Wham's Café has been paid back and that to Ryan Tacy of Shawsheen Woodwork has not yet been repaid. Ryan Tacy has struggled with loss of his job but Brita Gill-Austern is in communication with him. No other loans have been initiated.

Nicaragua

Since our last mission trip to Nicaragua in February 2018, there has been significant political unrest. In order to evaluate our relationship with Nicaragua, and the future of that relationship, the church organized several discernment meetings, open to the congregation. These were led by Alan Cody. See elsewhere in the annual report for more information on the outcome of these meetings.

Besides these discernment meetings, the church continued to support a student from Nicaragua through the Jean Brugger Education fund.

Gun Violence and Bread for the World (Priscilla Kelso)

We were relatively quiet this year after a very eventful and involved year last year. Priscilla felt it important to step back and give the congregation a break with intention of more activity next year. We are making a donation to the Mother's Day walk for Peace and will participate in the gun buy-back program that is taking place here in Newton.

5. Financial Support

This year the generous **Special Collections** were:

- Thanksgiving-**Church World Service**, a faith-based organization that welcomes and supports immigrants and refugees.
- Christmas- **City Mission** for the work they do to empower and assist those experiencing or who formerly experienced homelessness in the Boston area.
- Easter- **Environmental Defense Fund** to emphasize our commitment to protecting the earth.

In addition to the initiatives above, this year we chose to support the following with a monetary contribution:

- **City Reach**--We provided funds for the youth to engage in a weekend trip to explore issues of homelessness in downtown Boston.
- **City Mission Society** -We sponsored a quarter page ad in the program book for the annual City Mission Gala.
- **Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries** -We sponsored an ad in the program book in support of the interfaith justice work engaged in by CMM on the occasion of their annual dinner "Healing the American Spirit"

Thank you for joining us as we were able as a church community to walk with faith and intention in the commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Submitted by:

Jaap van Reijendam & Carol Bascom-Slack
Mission-Outreach Co-Chairs

Music

As we near the end of the church year, I look back and remember do many moments where music played an important role in the life of the Union Church in Waban. Some of these were happy, such as our Christmas Eve service with the Bell Choir ringing so joyfully with our choir, and the Bach “Largo” played with such profound beauty by Lisa Crockett and James Cooke during of Easter service. There were somewhat sadder times as well, in particular the Memorial Service for Jean Husher, this year and Libby Dell last year, both pillars of the church and devoted supporters of the music program.

Our small but dedicated choir of volunteer singers continues to provide anthems that inspire us and lift us up spiritually. Their singing of the “Cantique de Jean Racine” by Faure was especially moving. We have endeavored to offer the congregation a wide variety of musical styles, including spirituals, folk anthems, praise music, and even some classical pieces when possible.

I could not have accomplished any of this without the support of our two minister, Stacy and Amy, as well as our ministerial intern, Brian Donovan. Our new assistant music director and soprano soloist, Kayla Gautereaux has been a great blessing to me, not only in her musical and vocal skills, but also her eagerness to help me at every turn.

It is with mixed emotion that I retire from The Union Church in Waban this summer. I will miss all of you very much and remember all the joy that we had in making music together. I believe that when people share music with love in their hearts, the spirit of God is truly there. I’m not sure how one knows this, but a voice within me said that it was time to turn the page and go to a new chapter in my life. Carl and I move northwards to Mt. Desert Island, but please know that I will always be thinking of you fondly. Please do keep in touch, and if you are able to, come and visit us in our seaside haven – you are always welcome!

With love and good wishes,
Bill Merrill

Nicaragua Team and 2020 Trip Information

SUMMARY

2018/2019 was our “non-travel” Nicaragua year but plenty of NICA activity took place nonetheless. This year, it was decided that a new leadership Task Force would be stood up to lead the team to replace our out-going team leader, Soo Laski, who spent several years capably leading the team. Many thanks to Soo for her deep dedication and leadership to the NICA community and team. The new Task Force consists of Karen Weisgerber, Karen OBeirne, Alex Brown, Diane Tillotson, Annie Gatewood, Frank Laski, Buz Bedford and younger (not youth) members Cate Brown and Aden OBeirne. The Task Force has begun meeting to plan the NICA year ahead.

This past year has also been a very sad and difficult year for the San Juan del Sur (SJdS) NICA community we serve as well as the Nicaraguan people as a whole. Nicaragua has been in political turmoil for most of the year with student and youth protests against President Daniel Ortega and his regime's proposed social spending reforms triggering violent Security Forces crackdowns in response across many Nicaraguan communities. This has led to more than 320 deaths and about 2,000 wounded protesters and innocent victims according to Human Rights Officials. Besides the violence, many journalists were expelled or fled, business and tourism is suffering, many people fled the country, and resulting supply chain disruptions led to shortages of food, fuel, and other essential materials in many parts of the country. Although SJdS was severely impacted with business and tourism suffering and some shortages of essentials, the protests and violence was focused in communities outside of SJdS.

The encouraging news is that things are stabilizing and appear to be getting better. We are hearing this through a combination of our partners on the ground in the community, church member trips to SJdS by Diane, Karen W, and Cate, and general open source reporting we are following across many news outlets. Although tensions and challenges remain, conditions on the ground are improving according to all sources.

This leads us to our biggest challenge and opportunity for the 2019/2020 year, answering the question of "What we do next?"

- How do we balance safety concerns with the increased need of the community who needs our help now more than ever?
- Should we have a trip at all this year?
- Should we travel like we usually do?
- What does that travel group look like?
- How can we best serve the community regardless of if we travel or not? *We will support the community regardless of travel decisions.*

These are a few of the questions that the Task Force is considering to communicate and discuss with the broader church community as we plan the coming year together.

More to come from the Task Force on our continued support of SJdS and the trip, other NICA happenings from this past year include:

BRUGGER STUDENT

The Union Church has had a partnership with the Brugger Foundation for more than a decade. This foundation gives life changing opportunities to dedicated and deserving high school students to attend college. They provide support and encouragement to the students and also require them to give back to the community in some way with a community service project. The Church has supported numerous students over the years and several have graduated. Both current and former students have joined our Church group while we are down in Nicaragua doing community projects. Our newest student, Marvin Ernesto Collado Vargas, has just begun his college journey with a dream of becoming a nurse.

Respectfully submitted by
The NICA Task Force

Teaching Parish Committee

In September, the Teaching Parish Committee (TPC) welcomed back Brian Donovan, as our Ministerial intern for a second year as he finished his studies at Boston University School of Theology. The TPC supported Brian so he could successfully complete his field education plan to pursue and advance in his goal to prepare for parish ministry. Throughout the year, the TPC provided advice and support to Brian and his supervisor Rev. Stacy Swain. The TPC conferred with the student on the development of his learning goals and learning plan objectives and assessed his progress. Our meetings with Brian were productive and focused on supporting the needs of the student. In addition, individual TPC members provided support as requested on an ongoing basis and through their efforts made significant contributions to the learning process.

The TPC experience this second year with Brian has served once more to confirm that the congregation of the Union Church provides a vital learning environment. Brian was able to participate in a wide range of church activities throughout the year. Rev. Stacy Swain, through her careful mentoring and generous personal support, encouraged Brian to take on challenging assignments that proved to be rewarding and fruitful both for the student and the church. We also acknowledge the gracious support of our Associate Pastor Amy Feldman, collaborating with Brian and enriching our field education mission.

This year proved again that a two - year term of field education for our students offers many advantages and strengthens our teaching parish mission. In the second year, TPC members and Brian were able to reach beyond the activities specified in the learning agreement and explore in greater depth his calling to the ministry. Brian had many additional opportunities to practice all aspects of worship both on Sundays and special services. Our video review of Brian's sermons and assessment of prayer time led to insights that allowed for continuous improvement and mastery of these essential pastoral tasks. The second year also provided for increased opportunities for pastoral care and dealing with uncommon events such as the transition of our Waban Health ministry to a new facility in Norwood. As the year progressed, Brian contributed more and more to life of the church, and shared his gifts with a huge helping of tireless teamwork.

Over the last eight years, our TPC experience has strengthened our commitment to extending Christian education to providing opportunities for professional development and spiritual growth to those called to God's ministry. We have a congregation that welcomes ministerial students, enjoys their presence and in countless ways contributes to making the Union Church a true teaching parish.

Next year, we are fortunate to have Jade M. Hargrave, a student at Boston University School of Theology join us as our Ministerial Intern.

We are also glad to note that Andrew Heintz, a UCW TPC alumnus (2017-18) is now Church School Coordinator at St John's Episcopal Church in Arlington, MA and is finishing up his studies toward a Master of Sacred Theology from Chicago Theological School.

As members of the TPC team, we feel blessed for the opportunity and challenged to fulfill the promise of this most important ministry.

Respectfully submitted by the Teaching Parish Committee,
Frank Laski, James MacDonald, Jaap van Reijendam, Thomas Vawter, Jenny Weisz

Stewardship Annual Report

The following report provides information on the performance of the Church's Investment Account and the current status of pledges for fiscal year '19/'20.

Investment Account

The report that follows gives a detailed view of the asset allocation and performance of the investment account for the trailing twelve months ended March 31, 2019. In summary, the invested assets increased 2.98% over the last year. The account has 50.27% in fixed income and cash and the remainder (49.73%) in domestic and international equities. The allocation is definitely on the conservative side and reflects the advisor's uncertainty related to the current economy, and their overall desire to preserve assets rather than aggressively pursue returns.

The balance in the account at the end of March was \$305,636.

2018-2019 Stewardship Campaign

The 2018-2019 pledging target was budgeted at \$175,000. We received \$168,164 in recorded pledges, and an additional \$8,300 in verbal pledges, bringing us to a total of \$176,464 of anticipated income. As of May 8th (the writing of this report) we have collected \$120,126. Statements will be mailed shortly and will serve as a reminder to those with outstanding pledges.

2019 – 2020 Stewardship Campaign

The pledging goal for 2019-2020 is \$197,500. As of May 8th, the pledge campaign had 6 pledges for a total of \$21,060. The campaign has its final stewardship moment Sunday, May 12th at which time we anticipate a number of incoming pledges. Afterwards, the committee will consider direct outreach to boost participation.

Respectfully Submitted,
Grant Gund

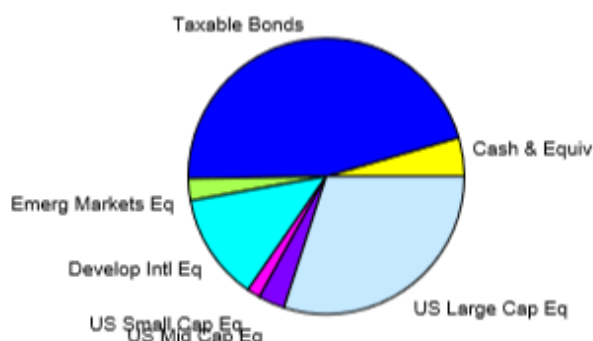
UNION CHURCH IN WABAN

Fund ID: 50498940
Report Period: 07/31/2012 to 03/31/2019
Fiscal Year Ends: December

Schedule 189

Portfolio Composition

	Market Value	% of Total
Total Fund	305,636	100.00
US Large Cap Eq	91,560	29.96
US Mid Cap Eq	9,468	3.10
US Small Cap Eq	4,731	1.55
Develop Intl Eq	38,357	12.55
Emerg Markets Eq	7,868	2.57
Taxable Bonds	139,765	45.73
Cash & Equiv	13,891	4.54

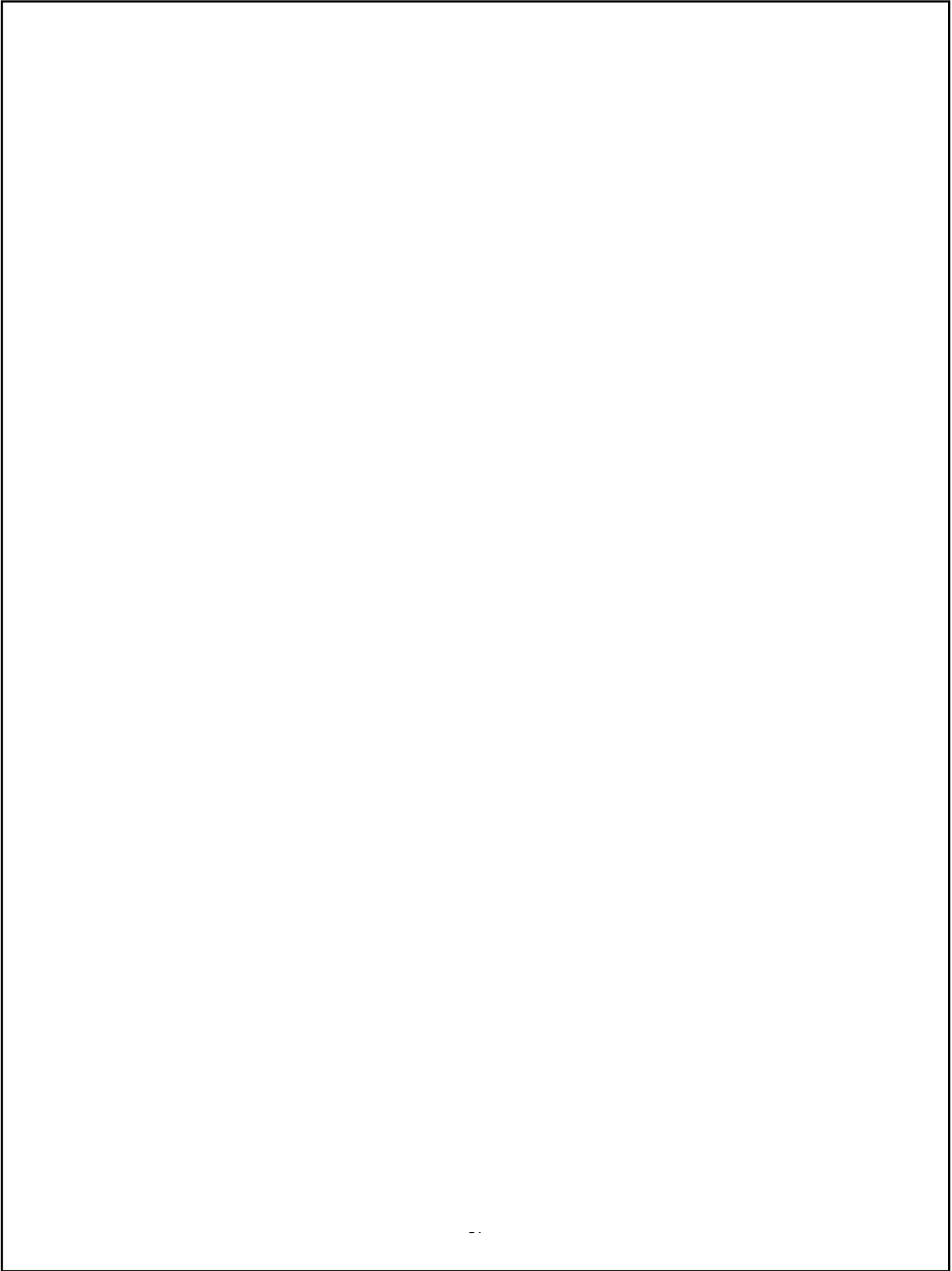


Performance Summary

	Inception Date	Latest Quarter	Fiscal Yr to Date	Latest 1 Year	Latest 3 Years	Latest 5 Years	Since Inception
Total Fund	07/31/12	7.19	7.19	2.98	6.74	5.18	6.44
Balanced Index		6.93	6.93	3.52	6.81	5.32	6.67
US Large Cap Eq	07/31/12	13.28	13.28	9.13	13.18	10.82	13.54
S&P 500		13.64	13.64	9.49	13.51	10.91	13.77
Russell 1000		14.00	14.00	9.31	13.52	10.63	13.80
US Mid Cap Eq	12/31/15	16.81	16.81	6.01	11.63	N/A	11.08
Russell Midcap		16.55	16.55	6.48	11.81	8.81	11.62
US Small Cap Eq	12/31/15	16.97	16.97	6.27	13.01	N/A	12.30
Russell 2000		14.59	14.59	2.04	12.92	7.05	11.35
Develop Intl Eq	07/31/12	12.80	12.80	-6.53	6.25	2.28	5.84
MSCI ACWI Ex-US		10.32	10.32	-3.42	7.38	2.39	6.97
Emerg Markets Eq	12/31/15	12.79	12.79	-3.42	11.58	N/A	11.69
MSCI EM - Net		9.92	9.92	-7.41	10.69	3.68	11.72
Taxable Bonds	07/31/12	1.12	1.12	2.71	1.05	0.92	0.85
ICE BA Treas 1-5		1.22	1.22	3.14	0.97	1.29	0.99
Cash & Equiv	07/31/12	0.52	0.52	2.37	1.17	0.71	0.53
FTSE T-Bill 1-Mo		0.60	0.60	2.08	1.13	0.69	0.53

Account Activity Summary

	Latest Month	Fiscal Year to Date
Beginning Market Value with Accrued Income	297,733	282,795
Contributions	3,215	3,215
Withdrawals	0	(707)
Net Flows	3,215	2,508
Earned Income	365	1,159
Gains/Losses	4,323	19,174
Total Earnings	4,688	20,333
Ending Market Value with Accrued Income	305,636	305,636



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