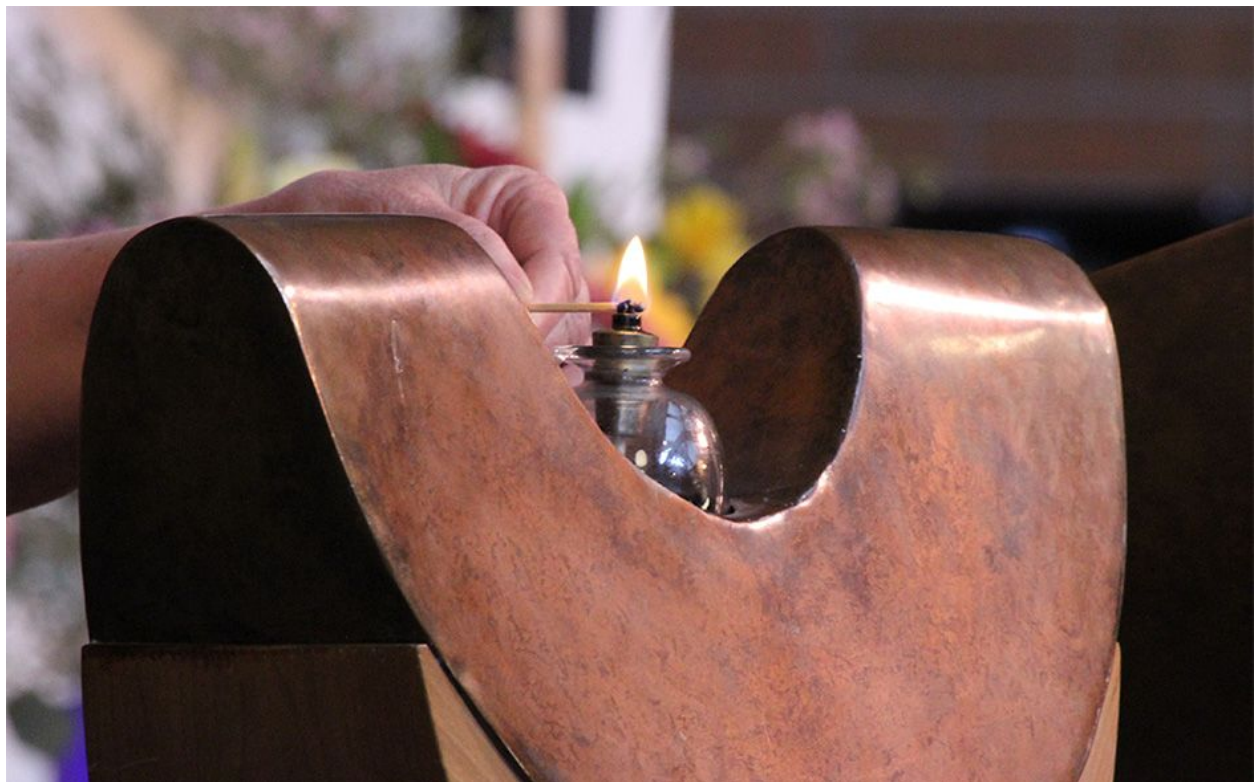




ANNUAL REPORT

2016



The Mission of Jefferson Unitarian Church

Guided by Unitarian Universalist principles and powered by the energy and resources of its members, Jefferson Unitarian Church acts to nurture our spiritual community, grow Unitarian Universalism, and transform the world outside our church walls.



Annual Report

Rev. Wendy Williams, Senior Minister

We began this year with characteristic enthusiasm. Our annual theme, Sankofa, was introduced in September complete with mascot, poem, and musical anthem (written by Rev. Keith Arnold). It invited us to look to the past and to intentionally bring forward those things that will serve us in the future. Through this frame, I offer three initial highlights:

Minister Emeritus Conferment on Rev. Robert Latham: Initiated by members of the congregation, supported by me, and formally approved by the Board, JUC made it official on October 18, 2015 at our congregational meeting. Joyfully, we celebrated on January 31, 2016 during and after each service at which the conferment was made and Robert and I spoke our shared covenant.

Civil Rights Pilgrimage: It is impossible to live in the U.S. now and not see race as an issue. It is our country's foundational wound. Courageous and creative as the idea of our government was, the freedom and promise contemplated by our founding documents was limited to far fewer than the phrase "*we the people*" contemplated. Thus, we partnered with the Unitarian Universalist Living Legacy Project to take a pilgrimage into the south where we heard from civil rights veterans, visited sites, sang songs, and learned stories of what standing on the side of love looks like. To prepare for that journey, the staff, UUSC Task Force, pilgrims, and others participated in learning circles to prepare for the border crossing work that is understanding white privilege and the vast racial justice work that remains. The preparations, as well as the pilgrimage, have ignited among us a desire to dig deeper.

Rev. Eric Banner: Rev. Eric's second strong year among us has resulted, as we had hoped, in the Board and I agreeing that we would like him to be a called minister. Thus, the Board has approved a special congregational meeting this fall to put a motion to call Eric before the membership. If approved, this will be only the second time in JUC's history, during which it has two called ministers.

In a dynamic church like JUC, there are numerous other things to emphasize. While many will be found elsewhere in this report, I want to lift up a few items of particular significance.

Board-Staff Role Clarification: The Board has continued to do great work this year in adopting Policy Governance. That work was greatly assisted by a visit from Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs, Co-Senior Minister at Unity Church-Unitarian in St. Paul. Rev. Rob met with leaders on a Friday night in August and the Board all day on Saturday. He answered questions, helped the Board chart its course for the year, and challenged the Board to embrace its leadership role. Much of the work this year has gone a long way to helping us understand and define what things fall under the province of operations and thus, are ministry, and what things do not. The Board discerned that it wished a single Executive to hold accountable, rather than a team. Thus, we have been richly living into that

partnership this year determining what reports will help the Board maintain that responsibility. For my part, as we become more practiced in the art of this model, I have erred on the side of bringing things to the Board so that it is both advised and together we can determine why it is ministry or why it is a Board matter.

Staff Team: I am truly blessed to work with our staff. Each member is strong and together it is a dynamite team. We added four members to our staff this year beginning with **Annie Scott**, last July, as our Director of Religious Education. With over twenty years of experience, Annie has brought structure, sustainability, and soul to our Religious Education Ministry. Teachers are trained, prepared, and supported in teams. Laughter and love flow on Sunday mornings and throughout the week.

Darcy Stanton has been the lynch pin to modernizing, branding, and standardizing our communication. In addition to updating our Order of Service, Crier and electronic communications, she worked with a team to get our website cleaner and more mobile-friendly. As a member of a few years and parent to two young children, Darcy gives us a wonderful combination of knowing and loving who we are, while challenging us to get current.

As a resource-sized church, we have embraced our role as a teaching congregation, by again having an intern. **Emily Conger** served as a part-time intern and will again next year. We leveraged her background and passion for racial justice to work with us through study groups and teaching. Next year, this work will continue and deepen with a different format.

Most recently, **Beth Leyba** joined our staff as Congregational Connection Coordinator. She has met and mingled with most of the congregation as an active presence on Sunday morning recruiting and shepherding volunteers. She has also picked up the Golden Circle Lunch and Rummage Sale organization.

Suffice it to say, YOUR staff, both those who have been here and those recently added, are exceptionally gifted, creative, hardworking and committed to the mission and vision of Jefferson Unitarian Church. We are especially LUCKY to have them.

As I finish my 5th year, I am as always deeply grateful for this congregation's ability to weather transition, embrace and live into its potential, and commit time, talent and treasure to support the present and future. It continues to be a true privilege to serve with and among you as your Senior Minister.

In faith and love,

Wendy



Worship Team

Rev. Wendy Williams, Senior Minister
Rev. Eric Banner, Assistant Minister
Rev. Keith Arnold, Minister of Music
Emily Conger, Intern Minister



Mission Statement

To help us deepen to the call love has upon our lives.

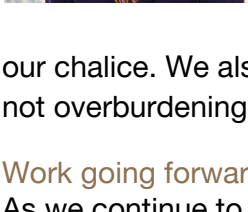


Highlights/Major Accomplishments

Our worship remained strong this year. We had several services strengthened by multiple voices, benefitted from an expanded worship band, enjoyed solid attendance, and better lived into our monthly themes.



- Offered a message for all ages on the first Sunday of each month;
- Had a worship led by former Senior Minister (and now Minister Emeritus) Robert Latham;
- Added a fifth Sunday alternative worship in Evergreen;
- Continued ToGather Tuesday, Evensong, and Golden Circle worship services;
- Maintained worship associate presence and strong JUC tradition of personal story chalice lightings;
- Celebrated Minister Emeritus Conferment.



Challenges

Leading worship here is a delight. Our members and friends are present and enthusiastic. Sometimes it is a challenge to find fresh voices to light our chalice. We also continue to wrestle with how best to incorporate additional voices while not overburdening our worship associates with finding those people.

Work going forward

As we continue to weave message and music on Sundays, we look for additional opportunities to do so through more midweek and alternative worship services. Additionally, we would love to have a greater number of Worship Associates and to conduct training in worship arts.

Gratitude/Key Players

My profound gratitude to:

- **Rev. Keith Arnold** for being a skilled and willing partner in shaping worship which will hold and challenged people;
- **Rev. Eric Banner** for preaching consistently powerful message;
- **Emily Conger** for doing her share and offering her reflections;
- our worship Associates: **Gail Abbott, Julie Excell, Dindy Fuller, Sarah Babcock and Anne Starace**;
- the fabulous **JUC Choir**;

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- and the energetic and creative worship band coordinated by **Adam Revell**.



Religious Education for Children and Youth

Annie Scott, Director of Religious Education

Mission Statement

To provide the resources to children, youth and families so they may live lives inspired by and accountable to their Unitarian Universalist faith.

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

- Worked to develop a community of volunteer teachers that view their work as ministry with children and youth. Held monthly teacher/adviser meetings that included worship, sharing of joys and sorrows, training and program development for those volunteers.
- Improved trust with teachers, parents, children and youth through availability on Sunday mornings and more consistent and responsive communication.
- Began implementing theme-based ministry in First Sunday Time for All Ages, teacher meeting worship, a monthly Family Reflection brochure and curriculum for the 9:15 a.m. First through Fifth grade group.
- Developed infrastructure to support the 250 children and youth that participate in our programming, including: ensuring families are current in the JUC database; attendance tracking systems; and improving communication systems with families.
- Worked with the RE Team to discern the needs of JUC families and to make plans to transform into three new teams to better meet those needs. For the 2016/17 church year we will have Family Ministry Council and a Theme-Based Curriculum Team. The RE Teachers/Advisers will serve as program planners and shapers.
- Worked with Rev. Wendy to develop First Sunday Time for All Ages to bring the whole church together for monthly worship and demonstrate to families that there is a place for them here at JUC.

Challenges

Early this year, I met with over fifty individuals to learn about the history of JUC programming for children, youth, and families and their feelings about needs. I learned that isolation is a major problem facing RE volunteers, families and children. Families have had a hard time meeting other families, teachers have not felt a sense of community with one another, and children have lacked a sense of community resulting in resistance to attending. We are working to develop programming that supports family connections on multiple levels.

Work going forward

There are three key ways we are working to overcome the isolation that individuals, families and groups have experienced.

I am guided by the idea that parents/guardians are the primary religious educators of their children and youth and that happens mostly away from JUC. So, everything we do for

children, youth and families needs to be in support of what happens in the family. It's a very different way of looking at how and what we 'do' in religious education and it's called Full Week Faith. Next year, curriculum for children in Kindergarten through fifth grades, will be based on the same themes as the adult worship services and small group ministry. We will continue creating family reflection brochures to support and encourage family time and conversations.

We are starting a Family Ministry Team whose mission will be to integrate families into the JUC community. This group will lead efforts to welcome new families, help them connect with other families, find places where they can serve others and broaden our sense of celebrating the important passages of life.

I will continue working with teachers and advisers so as they serve and lead they are themselves deepened, their connections are strengthened and they engage life and the world with more of their whole selves.

Gratitude/Key Players

A heartfelt thanks to Rev. Wendy for inviting me onto this stellar team of JUC staff. Each one of them is a team player and understands that working together is the best way to serve this wonderful congregation so all may deepen, connect and engage.

I am also so grateful for our wonderful RE Assistant, Julie Excell, who has assisted, guided and helped bring me up-to-speed. She is such a gift to this congregation and to me.

I'd like to express tremendous gratitude to the RE Team, **Andrea Aikin, DeDe Cross, Darcy Donaldson, Ayrolyn Keady** and **Kristine Mathiasen**. They have been my consultants, my teachers, my sounding board as they have had to wait as I came to understand the culture and needs of JUC families and how I wanted to move forward.

And lastly, I'd like to thank this **JUC congregation** for how welcoming you all have been to me and my husband, Mick Mortlock, and how willing you have been to take my suggestions and my lead in the various changes I've made in how we serve our children, youth and families. It is an honor to be here among you and serving you. Thank you.



Belonging and Connection

Beth Leyba, Congregational Connection Coordinator

Mission Statement

To help members find areas of connection and service within our vibrant community and to encourage involvement so that each individual has the means and opportunity to deepen to their truest selves, connect authentically with others, and engage with needs beyond their own.

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

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- Joined DOVIA (Directors of Volunteers in Agencies Colorado) and have attended two professional development opportunities: Taking it Up a Notch with Lead Volunteers and Engaging Faith-Based Communities.
 - Have continued with several programs/ministries that are already in place, such as ToGather Tuesdays, Lunch After Church, 2-Cons Potlucks, and Golden Circle Luncheon.
 - Instituted a Volunteer Spotlight in my weekly email to highlight JUC members who are involved in our various volunteer opportunities and to tell our members' stories of service.

Challenges

Encouraging involvement in Sunday Shared Ministry tasks has been somewhat daunting, so I am exploring possible changes to the program. My other main challenge is the sheer scope of JUC's great programs and social justice initiatives. On the one hand it is wonderful for our members to have so many options for involvement and service, but on the other at times it can be difficult to know which direction to steer people in. I hope that in practicing active, reflective, empathetic listening I can steer people in the right direction.

Work going forward

I have recruited eight new Commons Coordinators and have made some changes to the position, mainly going from one shift to two on Sunday. I am working on building a strong Belonging and Connection team. I am also greatly looking forward to helping with Small Group Ministry in the coming year, and encouraging members' involvement in this wonderful opportunity to deepen and connect. I plan to continue the successful programs already established, and explore ideas for new opportunities.

Gratitude/Key Players

I would like to thank **LeeAnne Dale**, who has been the lay leader for Belonging and Connection this past year and has staffed the Getting Connected table monthly. I would also like to thank **Linda Horn**, who has been an invaluable resource in learning the ins and outs of many things at JUC. Linda, along with **Mary Anne Schiff**, **Cheryl Ames**, and **Lisa Rountree** comprise our current Commons Coordinator team, and I am so grateful for all the time and energy they have put in to make sure that everything is running smoothly on Sundays. **Don Bishop** and **Diana Bright** have been wonderful hosts of Lunch After Church on first Sundays. **Bette & Charlie Carcano** with **Bob & Carol Drew** have organized "2-Cons" which has been a great opportunity for members to get to know each other over a potluck meal. **John & Gay Williford** have been hosting ToGather Tuesdays and doing a wonderful job of it. **Heather Hagemann**, **Mariska Hamstra**, **Beth Fleming**, **Caron & Clancy Cottman**, **Jill Bishop**, **Lark Birdsong**, and **Marge Petersen** were invaluable in helping with my first Golden Circle Luncheon. **Katie Wheeler** will definitely be a key player moving forward, with interest in helping to fully integrate new members into the life of the church.



Membership Coordinator

Annie Hedberg

Mission Statement

The Membership Team recognizes that new members are JUC's source for our continued vibrancy and strong leadership. It is the mission of the Membership Team to extend our outreach, welcome visitors warmly, provide a pathway for membership, and help new members begin the process of integration in order to retain members in our community.

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

Due to an unusually large group, we made a successful change to our January New Member Welcome Ceremony which we've decided to stick with since everyone loved it! We bought new and more meaningful gift books for our new members. We also made some good changes to the Path to Membership Class.

Challenges

Our only challenge at this point is keeping a dedicated Membership Team going from year to year.

Work going forward

I want us to continue improving the Path Class so that our new members join with a better understanding of how remarkable this faith and our church are. I also want the Team to revise our Mission Statement next fall to more accurately fit what we do.

Gratitude/Key Players

I especially have appreciated **Alice Fleming** who has been co-chair or chair of the MT for a number of years and has really been dedicated to the work of the team. She is moving to the East coast soon and she will be dearly missed!



Business Administrator

Carol Wilsey

Mission Statement

Tend to and leverage the church resources.

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

- Brought Darcy Stanton on board as the new Communications Manager. Amongst other accomplishments, she successfully stewarded the final steps of launching the new church website.
- Negotiated a new copier contract at significant savings.

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- Redesigned the employee health insurance program (necessary because of the Affordable Care Act) partially mitigating decreases in benefit levels and increases in cost.
 - Worked with the Year Round Pledge Team, the Planned Giving Team and the Board of Trustees. Began work with the Leadership Nominating Committee in April of 2016 when Sue Parilla transitioned out of that role.
 - Managed the facility along with the capable help of the full-time Caretaker, Eric Pieratt.
 - Managed team of eight volunteers and seven part-time staff members to cover the front desk and Sunday set-ups.
 - Reinstated composting program to include more functional and better labeled containers. The regular allocations in the budget to our Sustainability Fund paid for these receptacles.
 - Completed the transition of the banking relationship to Bank of the West (from Wells Fargo).

Challenges

- There were many transitions this year, especially with respect to roles and policies. Staffing changes were an additional stressor, especially the departure of Rona Bradley and role change for Sue Parilla.
- The complexity and increasing demands on building space and equipment.

Work going forward

- Support the Board of Trustees with the many changes involved in fully implementing Policy Governance. My role in that will largely be the development of monitoring reports and strategies.
- Continue to work with the Year Round Pledge Team to facilitate a healthy and vibrant campaign.
- Work with Planned Giving on their ideas to further members' long-term financial commitment to JUC.
- Fully transition from Sue Parilla's lead to mine with the Leadership Nominating Committee.
- Streamline and formalize facility rental arrangements. In particular, develop a package of memorial service options for non-members.

Gratitude/Key Players

I owe a big thank you to the regular office volunteers: **Wendy Carlson, Linda Horn, Frank Kaplan, Betty Minor, Trinity Saffer, Linda Ropes, Mary Anne Schiff, and Valerie Stone.** Special thanks to **Linda Ropes**, who will be retiring after 14 years of regularly volunteering in the office! The doors are open all week and a friendly voice answers the phone due to these dedicated volunteers.

The Communications Team, **Gary Feder**, **Justinian Hatfield**, and **Chris Sealy** were integral in the development of the fantastic new web site. We are so grateful for all of the work they put into researching, designing, advising, writing and reviewing content.

The Year Round Pledge Team, chaired by **Marci Sontag** and **Jane Keen**, have spearheaded house parties to round out the current pledge process. These are gathering steam and effectiveness along with the monthly table and thank you gifts that were implemented this year.

Bud and BJ Meadows, along with **Mike Kramer** have breathed new life into the Planned Giving campaign. There are now regular communications to the congregation and the existing Legacy Circle members have been contacted to be thanked and update their information. Future plans include identifying new candidates for the Legacy Circle and an Estate Planning workshop.

Lydia Stranglen is a volunteer extraordinaire doing a huge amount of number crunching for the Year Round Pledge campaign as well as church financials. She reconciles all of our accounts, prepares financial statements, and assists with projects willingly and capably.

Volunteer, **Valerie Stone**, did all of the preliminary legwork to gather information for the copier lease saving me a significant amount of time.



Communications Manager

Darcy Stanton

Mission Statement

To give JUCers in the information they need to find a meaningful identity within the church.

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

- Worked with the Communications Team and Web Developer to design, build, and launch the new website.
- Established Twitter and Instagram accounts for JUC to engage the congregation and community beyond in a more conversational tone.
- Set up a subscribable Podcast for sermon audio files.
- Redesigned the Crier in a digital format that is easier to read on computers, tablets, and smartphones. The digital format allows for direct “click-throughs” to web pages, emails, and online sign-ups.
- Consolidated all online sign-ups to a professional version of Sign-Up Genius. This allows event managers to track attendance online, send reminders to attendees, and save data for future events. The Sign-Up Site Board in the commons and Online Sign-Up Site are updated weekly to capture all of the participants.

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- Designed a new JUC logo to fit within the branding standards recommended by the UUA. Continue to update printed and digital materials to fit within the brand standard.

Challenges

With such a large and active community, it has been a challenge to organize all of the communications in a clear and concise way.

Work going forward

Exciting things are coming on the communications front this year. I plan to utilize social media to further engage with the community. Email and print communications are going to see big changes with the rollout of a weekly, comprehensive bulletin-style email that will take the place of all other announcement email communication from the church. The newsletter will become a monthly, article-driven publication focusing on the monthly theme. Initial legwork is being done on the feasibility of livestreaming our worship services to reach a broader audience.

Gratitude/Key Players

Thank you very much to the Communications Team of **Chris Sealy, Gary Feder, and Justinian Hatfield** for their work on the website. Special thank you to **Carol Wilsey** for bringing me on in this position. I am very blessed to have the opportunity to serve the church I love in this meaningful way.



Evergreen Campus

Sue Parilla, Evergreen Campus Director

Mission Statement

JUC's second campus was established in Evergreen on December 18, 2011, to serve the mountain communities. JUC has two campuses and is one church with the shared mission to *act to nurture our spiritual community, grow Unitarian Universalism, and transform the world outside*

our church walls.

The Campus was established to fulfill one of three objectives set forth by the Board of Trustees in October 2009. That strategic objective was to *grow the capacity of JUC to accomplish our mission and touch lives.*

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

- JUC's Evergreen Campus is the spiritual home for mountain area UUs and seekers and a strong community among those who attend. Just as members at the Golden Campus consider JUC their spiritual home, so do those who attend in Evergreen. About 32

people make up the core of the campus community and attend services and programming with great regularity. An additional 20 or so people attend with some degree of regularity. Roughly 250 mountain area adults have visited the campus for Sunday worship. We estimate that 27 current members joined because of the Evergreen Campus and all but four continue to be members.

- Almost all of our regular attendees participate in one of four Small Groups creating a great sense of community and foundation of caring. Small Groups have provided connections for pastoral care, social action and friendship.
- The Dinner After Church monthly outing brings many members and friends together in a social setting.
- JUC has established relationships within the mountain community as a liberal, religious faith through our social connections at both Chambers of Commerce (Evergreen and Conifer), and our financial and volunteer support of our nonprofit partners: Peaceworks, Mountain Resource Center, Mt Evans Home Health Care & Hospice, 285 Backpack Project and Packs of Hope.
- We have had three physical locations for the Evergreen Campus. We currently rent space at Congregation Beth Evergreen (CBE), a Reconstructionist Synagogue and find it to be a wonderful worship venue. We have a positive and developing relationship with CBE and feel JUC and CBE members are kindred spirits.
- A fifth Sunday service was added this year intended to be multigenerational and contemporary. It has been well received by the congregation.
- During this year's drive to collect backpacks of clothing and toiletries for Packs of Hope, Ella and Sylvia Howell, elementary-aged sisters, led the charge and 23 backpacks have been received to date.

Challenges

- Worship service attendance has plateaued.
- Religious Education for children is offered through 6th grade and we provide childcare for our young ones. We have experienced a loss of families with children 6th grade and older, possibly due to lack of programming. Families with elementary aged children have very inconsistent attendance in spite of a consistent and good quality program led by Sara Kresse. Children from 20 families have attended in the past 12 months; among those, children from 11 families have attended in the past 6 months. The Family Reflection resource created by the Religious Education Team has been well received among attending and non-attending families keeping us in touch with congregants we rarely see.
- We have learned about the mountain community and how to best reach out to people in the geographic areas likely to respond to our outreach. The mountain communities have a small town way about them that requires personal connections to promote an organization, including a church. We have concentrated outreach efforts through the Evergreen and Conifer Chambers of Commerce and have just begun to make some headway in establishing significant relationships in the community. We meet people all

the time who haven't heard of us or who confuse us with another denomination, and who are interested in our message.

- Adult education offerings have been few. Early mission based adult education book discussions have been minister-led resulting in a hesitancy on the part of congregants to take on this role. We plan to offer *Spirit in Practice* in the fall led by Kim Hassinger.

Work going forward

Our Board and staff are considering the future of our ministry in the mountain community. This process will help us evaluate how the Evergreen Campus contributes to the fulfillment of our congregational mission. The end result of this work will be a determination of any needed changes for the Evergreen campus.

Gratitude/Key Players

Evergreen Campus Team: **Kim Hassinger** (lay leader), **Jon Hassinger**, **Patti & Jeff Stone**, **Carl Stock**, **Marilyn Sturek**. Pastoral Care: **Debbie Williams**; New Visitor Outreach: **Melissa Leasia**; Religious Education: **Sara & Tom Kresse**; Worship Associates: **Kim Hassinger & Patti Stone**; Sound Team: **Jon Hassinger**, **Jeff Stone**, **Joe Kraus**, **Bill Marquis**; Small Social Justice: **Charlotte Wytias**; Group Facilitators: **Debbie Williams**, **Melissa Leasia**, **Carl Stock**, **Charlotte Wytias**, **Dave & Jerica Cadwallader**, **Eric Vaughn**, **Patti Stone**, **Krissy Lewis**; Dinner After Church: **Carl Stock**.

Being UU

Mission Statement

In support of the goals of our church, we invite personal transformation through opportunities to deepen, connect, and engage to nurture lives faithful to our Unitarian Universalist values.

Our offerings are designed to enhance faith formation in a Unitarian Universalist context. Offerings are intended to stimulate our sense of community and enrich the spiritual and intellectual lives of its members and friends by:

- seeking greater understanding of Unitarian Universalist theology and heritage;
- developing cultural competency in our members and friends;
- cultivating our individual and collective spiritual practices and sense of well-being.

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

Leadership transition, offered either under the Being UU umbrella or in coordination with others workshops in all four key areas of focus. Unitarian History (Spring 2016), Those Words (Winter 2016), Spirit in Practice (Fall 2015), a subselection of Building the World We Dream

About (Fall 2015), Elevator Speeches (Spring 2016), Wellness Movement Practice (Spring 2016)

Challenges

Congregational participation has varied widely, with minister led offerings typically exceeding available registration slots, while lay led offerings have struggled with attendance.

Work going forward

Our remaining long-term lay lead will cycle off the team this summer, and the team is currently working to discern what offerings both meet the mission of the church and Being UU while also drawing in our membership. Plans are now being made for the coming church year, farther in advance than we have done in recent years. We expect to offer workshops in all four areas of focus, with minister led offerings in history, spiritual practice, and cultural competence. One offering moved beyond the short-term workshop format that is the Being UU bread and butter, Wellness Movement Practice, and has become a freestanding affinity group. This team does not see it as our responsibility to be the sole source of engagement around our core focus areas, and are grateful that a variety of affinity group offerings allow our members to find ways to deepen to their truest selves by engaging in the regular spiritual practice/discipline.

Gratitude/Key Players

Pam Bond (recently stepped down as co-chair), **Patti Coe-Withington** (co-chair, stepping down this summer)

Social Responsibility Council

Mission Statement

The mission of the Social Responsibility Council is to promote and facilitate justice work as a vital and integral element of life at Jefferson Unitarian Church. The Social Responsibility Council provides service projects, education, witness, advocacy, and community action to ensure opportunities for members and friends to incorporate the Unitarian Universalist commitment to justice into our lives.

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

We began a major new partnership with Together Colorado which will help us use the power of community organizing to unlock the interest and engagement of heretofore un- and under-involved members who care about justice in our community. We also piloted a new strategy for field testing the viability of new justice initiatives by iteratively looking at the level of congregational support before launching, which has resulted in the Team to Reduce Gun Violence. We also navigated a major leadership transition in both of our major Housing & Poverty teams: Family Promise & Habitat for Humanity.

Challenges

While our members consistently say they care about justice, they volunteer in widely varying numbers. Family Promise continues to attract nearly 100 volunteers each of the four times we host, but our team leaders report underwhelming attendance at many of our other justice oriented events. We are also working to learn how to better partner with outside organizations to leverage our members in coalitions for justice work. It has been easier for our members to get engaged in service work than in addressing root causes.

Work going forward

Finalizing a new set of rules governing how we administer our justice work, including special plate offerings, to align with our congregational mission and to implement the Board's leadership under our new governance structure will be key in the coming year. We have been acting "as if" for some time, and the time to write down new rules is coming due.

Gratitude/Key Players

Jill Armstrong, Laura Hollingsworth, Martin Voelker, Gretchen May, Gilla Lachnitt, Carol Kolesnikoff, Don Armstrong, Don Macalady

Pastoral Care

Mission Statement

The Pastoral Care Team at Jefferson Unitarian Church covenants with our members to enhance the capacity of all to care for one another. We strive to cultivate the resilience needed to live full spiritual lives by supporting each other in times of struggle and sorrow and by celebrating major milestones like new babies. In partnership with our professional ministers, the lay leaders and volunteers of the Pastoral Care Team provide meals and rides to members in need of short-term assistance, loan durable medical equipment like canes and shower stools during recovery from surgery, host workshops about life issues, including end of life, visit regularly with members of our congregation who may be struggling with life transitions or getting to church, host receptions following memorial services, and write cards to the people we're holding in prayer.

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

Invited Guest Workshop on Resilience with Head Chaplain at Children's Hospital (Fall 2015), Hosted "In Our Own Words" workshop on mental illness (Spring 2016). We provided assistance to almost 100 JUC members in 2015. We added five new Connectors, three new Caring Visitors, and at least a dozen new volunteers on our meals and rides list, primarily coordinated through JUCeHelpers. Our memorial receptions team provided a consistent and caring presence to our members and their families in times of grief, including covering three memorial receptions in a two week period.

Challenges

As with many of our lay led teams, many people are interested in serving, but it is substantially harder to locate individuals who want to step up to the highest levels of

leadership. We are now exploring what it means for the leadership team to function with the guidance and leadership of the minister, and have implemented a number of systems to ease the workload on our volunteers while continuing to provide care. Also, our Caring Visitors program continues to work to find it's most effective service going forward in a congregation where many people facing acute life challenges decline care from the church, or only want logistical support, such as rides.

Work going forward

We will continue to provide the caring presence and support that is at the center of pastoral care in our congregation, through partnership and collaboration with our professional ministry team.

Gratitude/Key Players

Deda Nelson (Chair), **Sara Lohaus** (Caring Visitors Chair), **Phyllis Bunting** (Memorial Receptions Chair), and the remainder of our leadership team, **Sara Kreesse**, **Beth Finnell**, **Debbie Williams**, **Don Armstrong**, **Elaine Zenger**, **Dorothy Smith**.

Small Groups

Mission Statement

To help members deepen to their truest selves and connect authentically with others by engaging in the spiritual practice of deep listening.

Highlights/Major Accomplishments

We are now up to four small groups located in the Evergreen Campus service area. Our small group leaders have begun to see themselves as stronger leaders, including providing valuable feedback about program materials that have helped our offerings connect more effectively with our participants. At the Golden campus a particular highlight has been the formation of a small group focused on moms with children at home that has been a source of deepening and connection in ways those mothers were longing for but struggling to find in the other offerings at JUC.

Challenges

The penetration into the congregation has remained smaller than desired. While a range of times and days of the week were offered, some small groups didn't reach a critical mass, and others ended mid-year for lack of ongoing participation by people who had signed up. A deep evaluation of what actually works for our members and what they are longing for and willing to commit to is due for this summer. It may be that our members have a greater interest in small group discussion, than in small group spiritual practice, in which case our offerings may need to change to engage a larger portion of our membership.

Work going forward

This area of engagement will shift from primarily being under Rev. Eric's leadership to Rev. Wendy's leadership for the coming church year.

Gratitude/Key Players

The small group leaders, including **Michael Higgins, Darrin LeBlanc, Doug Anderson, Heather DeCaluwe, Debby Bower, Eric Vaughn, Lisa Rountree, Charlotte Wytias, Carl Stock, Melissa Leisia, Nadine Swahnberg, Marilyn Sturek, Dave & Jerrica Cadwalader, Jessy Hennesy.**