
First Universalist Church of Auburn, Maine, Unitarian Universalist

2024 – 2025
Annual Church Report



- **Interdependence:** We honor the interdependent web of all existence and acknowledge our place in it.
- **Pluralism:** We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.
- **Justice:** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all feel welcome and can thrive.
- **Transformation:** We adapt to the changing world.
- **Generosity:** We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.
- **Equity:** We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion.

FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF AUBURN, UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2025 AT 11:15 AM

To the members of the First Universalist Church of Auburn, Maine, Unitarian Universalist:

CALL TO MEETING

The Board of Directors requests your attendance at the Annual Congregational Meeting of the members of the First Universalist Church on Sunday, June 8, 2025, at 11:15 am in the Sanctuary. The meeting will directly follow the worship service, and will use the same Zoom link for those attending virtually.

AGENDA:

1. Opening Words – David Das, Board President
 2. Quorum Check (20% of Membership) – per Anne Kinney, Denominational Affairs chairperson, we have 94 members, therefore a quorum is 19
 3. Call to Order (Ned Claxton, moderator); adopt 2025 Annual Meeting Agenda
 4. Approval of 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes
 5. Presentation of proposed 2025-2026 budget by Finance Committee and the Board of Directors
 6. Vote on Budget
 7. Vote on proposed Leadership Slate
 8. Presentation of Rose Window Award
- Adjournment

Friends are welcome to attend to learn more about the functioning of our congregation. Voting is a privilege of membership.

First Universalist Church of Auburn
Unitarian Universalist
2024 Annual Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2024

11:27 Opening Words – Reverend McLaughlin

Quorum Check: Quorum confirmed.

Call to Order: Rick O'Brien, Moderator

Motion to accept 2024 Annual Meeting Agenda

Motion: Ned Claxton; Second: John Spruill, Jr.

Motion to amend by moving Rose Window Award to Item #1

Motion: Jane Pentheny; Second: Bill Phillips

Vote: Unanimous

Vote on amended motion: Unanimous.

Rose Window Award Presentation: Reverend McLaughlin and Anne Perron,
Board President

Rose Window Award recipients: Luke Lunt, Paula Spruill

2023 Annual Meeting Minutes:

Motion to accept: Jane Pentheny; Second: Baltasar Fra-Molinero

Vote: Unanimous

2024-2025 Budget:

Presented by Ellen O'Brien (Treasurer) and Greg Bianconi (Chair, Finance Committee)

Budget reflects the Board's vision for the future of the First Universalist Church; to grow the Church rather than continue to accept the status quo. Aware that the budget creates a potential gap of close to \$38,000 comparing projected income to projected expenses. Proposed budget includes covering that potential gap with monies from our Memorial Fund Account and our General Fund Account (held at Maine Community Bank).

Motion to accept 2024-2025 Budget as presented:

Motion: John Spruill, Jr.; Second: Beth Steucek

Vote: Unanimous in Sanctuary; Online: 2 yeas; one abstention.

2024-2025 Leadership Slate:

Board of Directors:

President: David Das (through June 2025) (first term)

Vice President: Anne Perron (through June 2025) (first term)

Clerk: Linda Greathouse (through June 2025) (first term)

Member-at-Large: Ed Bell (through June 2026) (first term)

Claire Hebert (through June 2026) (second term)

Jane Pentheny (through June 2026) (second term)

[John Spruill, Jr. not up for election; entering second year of first term]

Other Officers:

Treasurer: Ellen O'Brien

Collector: Paula Mikkelsen

Financial Secretary: Maureen Owen

Endowment Committee: Ned Claxton

Historian: Bill Eldridge

Moderator: Rick O'Brien Ned Claxton (Alternate)

Motion to accept slate: John Spruill, Jr.; Second: Angela Foss

Vote: Unanimous in Sanctuary; Online: 2 yeas; one abstention.

Appreciation: Esther Tucker thanked Greg Whitney for his service as Financial Secretary.

Straw Poll to Advise Delegates on Article II Revision Vote at General Assembly

John Spruill, Jr. gave a brief summary of the revisions to Article II. Emphasized that the vote is simply to give our delegates a sense of the congregation. Our delegates (Anne Kinney, Claire Hebert) will vote as they see fit on the revisions and on any possible amendments.

Straw Poll Results: majority in favor of the revisions.

12:10: Adjournment

Motion: John Spruill, Jr.; Second: everyone.

BUDGET

Message from the Board of Directors Regarding the Proposed 2025-26 Annual Budget

At the Annual Meeting on June 8, the congregation will vote on the 2025-2026 budget. The Board hopes that the following narrative will help members in their consideration of the budget -- a budget that reflects the Board's vision for the future of the First Universalist Church. The Board's vision requires an investment in people: 61% of proposed expenditures is dedicated directly to personnel.

The budget reflects:

- A full-time minister who is committed to a long-term future with us.
- Increased support of our amazing music staff.
- Continuing support of our DRE who is slowly but surely growing an RE Program across age groups.
- Continued adherence to UUA Fair Compensation Guidelines for staff.
- o Continuing staff salaries reflect these guidelines with a 2.5% increase (projected Social Security COLA).

The budget also shows:

- A 7% increase in pledge income (many thanks to our Stewardship leaders).
- A close to 100% increase in the rental income from 159 Pleasant Street (a direct result of the congregational vote in December to use Hackett Fund monies and of the hard work of Anne Perron and volunteers).

The Board did not create this budget lightly. Indeed, the 2025-2026 budget creates a potential gap of close to \$50,000 comparing projected income to projected expenses. This proposed budget continues a tradition of budgets with significant deficits. We propose to fill the gap this year by using funds from the checking account balance, certain monies within the Bob Thorpe Fund, and the Heritage Fund. Deficit budgets are not tenable over the long haul. However, the Board takes heart from the willingness of a minister and of eight new members to join us on our UU journey. We take heart from the flourishing of committee life, grassroots fundraising activities, and the rental possibilities of our building. We thank everyone for their gifts of time, talent, and treasure that sustain our beloved community

In faith and hope,

David Das, President Anne Perron, Vice President Linda Greathouse, Clerk Jane Pentheny, Member-at-Large Claire Hebert, Member-at-Large John Spruill, Jr., Member-at-Large Ed Bell, Member-at-Large

First Universalist Church Operating Budget for CHECKING ACCOUNT ONLY 1389		24-25 budget	25-26 estimate
Projected Income green lines are subtotals			
	Total Pledges	114320	122500
4.001	Total other gifts	20000	15000
4.107	Church Fair		
4.108	Misc. fund raising - unrestricted	4000	
4.109	Service Auction		
4.110	UU Theater		
	Total Fundraising	4000	8000
4.114	Bldg. rentals	18000	12400
4.207	159 Apt. rental	19596	38400
	Total rentals	51796	50800
4.121	Interest	2040	2000
4.122	endowment fund distributions	14400	16000
4.004	Total Other Income	206556	18000
Total Estimated Income		206556	214300

Expenses	Blue lines are subtotals	24-25 budget	25-26 estimate
	Total UUA Dues	6000	6000
	Tot. minister's benefits	7773	28593
	Total professional expenses	8000	8000
5.471	Salary/housing	20000	70000
5.472	Housing	55000	
	Self employment tax offset @ .0765	5737.5	5355
	Total compensation	80737.5	111,850
	total other ministers expenses	1000	1000
	Total music	26103	29670
	Total RE and Tech Coordinator	17844	17512.2
	Total administration	30729	30042
	Total building and grounds	40400	40400
	Total 159 apartment bldg expenses	19700	19700
5.911	charity		
5.803	Coffee hour	400	600
5.821	Membership	200	200
5.831	Stewardship		100
5.832	Ferry Beach expenses	100	100
5.833	denominational affairs	100	1000
5.835	leadership development		
5.834	CFAC, UU theater, Open mic expenses/equipment?	0	0
	community relations	200	200
	equipment for tech booth	1000	500
	worship assoc- substitute ministers	4800	3600
new line	Pastoral Ministry	400	400
	Social Justice		200
	church events and supplies		1000
	Total committees and charity	7200	7900
	Total expenses	245486.50	264074
	Projected INCOME minus EST Expenses		-49774

COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORTS

Board of Directors Annual Report

2024/2025

The Board Report for the 2024-25 church year is indeed a Congregational Report as all of us -- the congregation -- were the agents of change this year. The following is an excerpt from our Minister Application that was submitted in January, responding to the question: *How did your previous ministry end?*

“In August 2024, Reverend Terry Sweetser commenced what was projected to be a two-year ministry with us. We were excited about benefiting from Terry’s extraordinary experience as a minister and as an administrator within the denomination. Terry was very much present: he led worship for his first eight Sundays and was on track to lead worship for 80% of the Sundays through the end of the year. Terry facilitated a retreat with Board and staff and an ongoing discussion with the Board of Peter Drucker’s *The Five Most Important Questions*. He played a significant role in the relaunch of the Religious Exploration program under our new DRE. Then in mid-November, Terry became seriously ill and decided that he was unable to continue as our minister. There was no opportunity to say goodbye, to wrap up loose ends, or to plan for the future. The congregation is doing remarkably well – we are used to dealing with unanticipated change and uncertainty. Leadership has provided stability and continuity; our Worship Associates have created a full worship schedule with guest ministers and lay led services; congregation members have organized activities and celebrations. We have maintained momentum from our past 1 ½ years of renewal: RE has energy; we are looking to start the Welcoming Congregation Renewal program.”

That momentum has continued with increased pace. Committee life has prospered as is clear from the reports that follow. Worthy of note: the Stewardship Campaign hit its mark; Adult RE’s celebration of Esther Tucker within the context of the new Unitarian Universalist covenant; the rebirth of the Social Justice committee under the mentorship of our justice work consultant, Reverend Diane Fisher; the recent New Member Service which welcomed 8 new members. Our loyal cadre of guest ministers (Rev. Diane Fisher, Rev. Erica Hewitt, Rev. Mark Glovin) are happy to return to our pulpit and speak highly of our congregational vigor and vibe.

Reverend DC Fortune recognized that vigor and vibe and enthusiastically agreed to join us on our UU journey as a two-year contract minister with the goal of becoming the settled minister. Now the hard part begins.

- The Board has committed to growing our Music and RE programs and to compensating all staff fairly. The financial challenge is clear.
- Administrative support is still an issue. The plan outlined in last year's Annual Report was not a success. We hope that Reverend DC will help us create an effective system that works for the minister and the congregation.
- Breeze is still a work in process; there has been progress but there is still significant work to be done. Reviving the Newsletter, effective calendaring, and more effective means of communication depend on the full implementation of Breeze.
- The Building Use Taskforce is up and running. The first floor apartment at 159 Pleasant Street was renovated and is now producing a stable market rate rent. The Allied Field Church is a fine partner, but they are experiencing the fear and uncertainty that many immigrant groups currently experience. Are there more ways of taking advantage of our amazing building?
- We need more members.

Last year, concluding his Minister's Message, Patrick left us with the following: "I look forward to seeing you thrive and bloom in the coming years." He won't be disappointed.

In faith,

David Das, President
Linda Greathouse, Clerk
Claire Hebert, Member-at-Large
Ed Bell, Member-at-Large

Anne Perron, Vice President
Jane Pentheny, Member-at-Large
John Spruill, Jr., Member-at-Large

Building and Grounds Annual Report

2024/2025

The Building and Grounds Committee was very busy this year. Major accomplishments included refinishing, the vestry floor, painting multiple areas and rooms, and getting 159A up to snuff for rental.

We've also been maintaining the furnace, infinite elevator fire alarms, lights and all of the usual duties at the building in grounds committee does.

Levesque is on top of all of our electrical needs as well as insurance company inspections and all those little things that you don't see but need to be done.

Joan Chandler did a wonderful job with the flowers outside of the lobby. Anne Perron mows the lawn once a week, when it's not raining.

Levesque did a good job plowing this season and keeping our parking lot sanded. Anne Perron striped the parking lot so we know where the parking spaces are again.

Greg is always running around fixing something. New member Chip has helped out so much getting the apartment ready by cleaning and painting.

We held a few well attended cleaning parties this year, thanks to all for their participation.

Goals for this coming year will be getting the library and the lobby projects finished. And hopefully we can get some money to replace those unsightly corner boards outside of the addition, and then we'll give that thing a paint job.

Sincerely,

Anne Perron

Community Relations (CR) Annual Report

2024/2025

Purpose: To facilitate communication within the congregation, as well as the larger community, about church events and opportunities.

Chair- Toby Haber-Giasson

Ongoing Activities by CR:

- E-blasts- Inform the congregation about our Sunday worship services and other church news via email.
- Maintain a current activity calendar in the sUUnday e-blast and FB page
- Emphasis on brevity, timeliness and a limit of 1 message per day.
- Remind **chairs to share info** for e-blasts, etc. as early as possible.
- Promote use of the simplified form Event Checklist
- Continued initiative to show message author and contact info
- Manage email and FB page list, coordinate with Membership.
- Post events on the church website and the church Facebooks pages
- Issue press releases to local print, radio and tv & electronic media outlets

Problems/solutions: Some email recipients were accidentally deleted from the mailing list, due to a faulty contacts app. They were restored to those who reported it.

- CR has met with Membership and clarified all ACTIVE members and friends.
- CR rebuilt email lists to match the current Membership status.

Note: Members who notice they are not getting weekly emails with church news are asked to contact Toby at news@auburnuu.org or habertoby@gmail.com.

Event Checklist -blank- Chairs are asked to use this simplified form to plan all events

-Bookmark the form; Make a copy.

-Fill out a checklist with as much info as you can

-Copy link and email it to news@auburnuu.org

Expenditures- None

Budget Needs- None at this time

Goals: Get training to use Breeze to distribute church email

Find a way/person to create *The Open Door* newsletter.

Get timely and comprehensive information from board and chairs.

Submitted by: Toby Haber-Giasson

Concerts for a Cause Annual Report

2024/2025

Purpose – to raise support for the church and local nonprofits through ticket sales for music performances.

Chair: Toby Haber-Giasson

Activities – Offered input for new audio/video equipment for the sanctuary.

- Did research on how other groups run music shows

Budget Needs- CFAC is a fundraising entity and has its own “seed” money. Current balance \$613.67.

Expenditures- Depending on the act, CFAC may need to pay a booking deposit for a performer or band.

We could also improve sales by paying to boost the reach of social media.

Other Needs:

- ❑ Ways CFAC can meet building use guidelines without placing undue burden on volunteers
- ❑ Security concerns for live events
- ❑ CFAC has relied upon community support through the ticket sales and playbill ads; that support needs to be rebuilt by raising the church profile.

Submitted by: Toby Haber-Giasson

Council of Committees Annual Report

2024/2025

Purpose: to promote coordination and cooperation amongst our committees.

Members: Board VP Anne Perron, committee and event chairs and key stakeholders.

Activities/Achievements

- Committees returned to using our shared spaces, which became available for use by all church ministries as of last May
- Quarterly meetings were held July 14/October 13/January 12/April 13 @11:30am.
- Since Council was asked not to host Opportunity Fair at the Fall Ingathering,
Alt Fairs were planned for Gingerbread Sunday 11/24 and All Church B'day
- All Church Birthday Jan 26- Chairs contributed cakes, and also promoted their committees

Discussion of CofC implications for committees:

- reservation and messaging procedures
- importance of having a committee (or group) run events, use of Event Checklist
- building use parameters adopted by the board
- coordinating events through Council synergy
- resolution of shared use of space, storage, security, etc

Board Building Use Task Force (Anne P, Linda G, Admin)- clarifying processes, revised contracts

Emails to office- office@auburnuu.org - designate the message for Margaret or Claudia's attention

Calendaring- -to schedule an event or committee meeting,

-Email the Admin

-Receive verification

-When event is added to Breeze, on the board on the wall, then to Toby

Protocols

- Committees are asked to **submit monthly reports on last day of the month**, for consideration at monthly meeting of church Board of Directors
- Reports can be cumulative so that the May report can be published in the Annual Report.

Green Cabinet in Bonnie Soper room contains:

Policies

[Reimbursement form](#) - or use this link

Forms for submitting your dream budget (see below)

Budget Needs - Funding available for these committees through use of "Request for Reimbursement" form

○ Coffee hour	\$100
○ Membership	\$200
○ Stewardship	\$100
○ Ferry Beach Expenses	\$100
○ Denominational Affairs	\$100
○ Leadership Development	\$100
○ Pastoral Ministry	\$100

Submitted by: Toby Haber-Giasson, secretary to the Council

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS REPORT 2025

A focus of **Denominational Affairs** is encouraging members to form and experience a larger understanding of themselves as Unitarian Universalists by fostering UU connections beyond our own congregation.

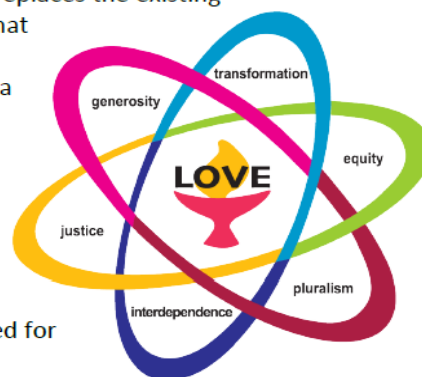
One facet of this is creating our annual retreat at Ferry Beach with two other Maine congregations, the Allen Avenue UU Church and the Norway UU Church. Another aspect is encouraging participation in UU workshops and conferences sponsored by other congregations or by the New England Region of the UUA and in attending our annual **UUA General Assembly (G.A.)**.



The 2025 UUA General Assembly, with a theme of **Meet the Moment**, will be held this year in Baltimore, MD, with an option to participate online. Our two official lay delegates this June are Diane Chasse and Anne Kinney. Our soon-to-be contract minister, the Rev. D.C. Fortune, will attend as well. We'll display our Auburn UU church banner during the 5-day conference.

At last year's General Assembly delegates took a monumental vote that replaces the existing 7 Principles and Six Sources language in our UUA bylaws with language that expresses six **Shared Values centered around Love**. The vote was the culmination of a multi-year process of discernment. It reflects UUism as a "Living Tradition" that continues to evolve as we grow and expand our awareness of systemic oppressions and expressions of our UU faith.

As Denominational Affairs Representative I regularly communicate with the UUA Data Services Office to provide updates about changes in church leadership, staff, and membership. At the beginning of each year I work with our church leaders to complete our annual – and extensive – Certification of Membership with the UUA, a process required for us to have G.A. delegates. Along with this is helping the congregation understand the importance of paying our fair share to the UUA Annual Program Fund, and including a line item in our budget to help with costs of workshops, trainings, and conferences.



The UUA and the New England Region (NER) have numerous tools and resources available for us to utilize as congregation. They can help us with guest ministers and worship materials, social justice ministries, religious exploration curricula, stewardship ideas, pastoral care trainings, board retreats, conflict engagement, leadership development, membership pamphlets, hymnals and music resources, and much, much more.

Take a few moments and explore these websites –

Unitarian Universalist Association:	https://www.uua.org
New England Region of the UUA:	https://www.uua.org/new-england
UUA General Assembly:	https://www.uua.org/ga
Ferry Beach Camp & Conference Center	https://www.ferrybeach.org

Anne Kinney, Denominational Affairs Representative



Endowment Committee Annual Report

2024/2025

The current fund balances are as reported in Maureen's report to Ellen. The total of our endowments is about \$574,000.

In the last 10 years, the annual return has been 6.38%. That includes all fees (investment management – 0.83%; MCF fee – 0.85%. Total - 1.68%).

Grant budget is 4% of the rolling 12-quarter average balance as of 9/30. Any available funds not requested roll over into the next year's Available.

We are annually allowed to spend about 3.5% of the fund balance without a vote of the congregation. Earnings above 5.15% go into the principal, which can only be drawn down by a congregation vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Ned Claxton

Financial Secretary's Report
2024/2025 Annual Meeting Report
Account Effective March 31, 2025

The Financial Secretary keeps the records of all funds of the church except for the Treasurer's checking account. The Financial Secretary is a member of the Finance Committee and Investment Committee. All funds coming into the church goes through the Treasurer. The Treasurer transfers any funds that are designated for a special purpose and reports these transfers to the Financial Secretary for record keeping.

Monies are invested in several different funds and at various institutions. These include a money market account at Maine Community Bank (MCB) formerly known as Mechanic Savings Bank, a CD at Dirigo Credit Union and a large amount of funds invested at the Maine Community Foundation. The Maine Community Foundation funds earned approximately \$33,655 over the past year. In addition, approximately \$14,640 have been withdrawn from the Building Endowment Fund at the Maine Community Foundation to support the annual budget. The attached spreadsheet shows the balance in each fund as of March 31, 2025. The various funds include the following:

General Fund – Unrestricted funds invested in MCB money market account

Memorial Fund – Established in 1959 with the stipulation that interest only be used as a fitting memorial to those for whom the memorial gifts were given. In 1972, the Board voted "to place all funds received from legacies, gifts and inheritances in the Memorial Fund with appropriate name of giver and only the income thereafter be spent". Funds are invested in MCB money market account and Maine Community Foundation.

Stained Glass Window Fund – Restricted funds invested in MCB money market account.

Nancy Hill Fund – Established by a bequest from Nancy Hill in 1913. She designated one half of the funds be invested and the earnings only be used for charity. The other half of the funds are invested and the earnings only can be used for the maintenance of the church edifice. The part for charitable use was invested in shares in the Northeast District UUA on March 31, 1968. Funds are invested in MCB money market account at Dirigo CD.

Organ/Piano Maintenance Fund – Established in 2003 from an anonymous donor. Restricted funds invested in MCB money market account.

Music Fund – Established in 1980 with an initial donation from Clyde and Thelma Thorpe. Funds are used to enhance the music program. Funds invested in MCB money market account and Maine Community Foundation.

Social Justice Fund – Established in 2016. Restricted funds invested in MCB money market account.

UU Theater Fund – Restricted funds invested in MCB money market account.

CFAC Fund – Unrestricted funds invested in MCB money market account. These funds are available to the general fund.

Emery Youth Scholarship Fund – Marion Bunney Emery Fund established for youth to attend Ferry Beach Youth Camp. Funds invested in MCB money market account. Combined with the Ferry Beach Account

Ferry Beach Fund – Restricted funds invested in MCB money market account. Now known as the Ferry Beach/Emery Youth Account

Bob Thorpe Building Fund – Established for building maintenance and emergencies. Funds invested in MCB money market. Funds from the closed Hackett Fund included in this account

Bill Prescott Fund – Restricted funds used for capital maintenance items. Funds invested in MCB money market account.

159 (Pleasant Street) Apartment Rental Fund – Security deposit being held on the apartment rent. Funds invested in MCB money market account.

Prepaid Pledges – This is a new fund set up to track pledge funds received in advance of the beginning of the new fiscal year. These funds will be recognized as income when the new fiscal year begins. Funds invested in MCB money market account.

Hackett Fund – Fund established when the church sold the parsonage on Park Avenue. John Hackett donated the funds to build the parsonage. When the parsonage was sold, the congregation voted to invest the money and make it available for future ministers to borrow at a low rate of interest to purchase a home. Funds are invested at Maine Community Foundation. This fund was dissolved in 2024 and the funds added

to the Bib Thorpe Building Fund for the purpose of renovating 159 Pleasant St so the church could receive rental income from both apartments.

Building Fund – Established as a result of funds from several donors. Income can be used to support the church building. Funds invested at Maine Community Foundation.

Heritage Fund – Established with funds remaining from the Arlene Siekowski and several other bequests

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen P Owen, Financial Secretary

Investment Accounts		3/31/2025 Balance	
Mechanics Savings Bank			
Special accounts 0144			
	General Fund, unrestricted	2,747.36	Available to balance the budget
	Memorial	2,447.18	Available on vote of congregation
	Stained Glass Restoration Fund	2,016.37	
	Nancy Hill	249.37	Income used for charity at minister's discretion
	Organ/Piano Maint	8,541.92	
	Music Fund	2,630.89	Avail with approval of music associates
	Social Justice	574.82	
	UU Theater	1,993.25	
	CFAC (avail to general fund)	614.67	
	Emery Youth Scholarship	-	Combined with Ferry Beach
	Ferry Beach and Emery Youth	6,623.09	
	Bob Thorpe building fund	50,410.00	added Hackett Fund disbursement to be used for 159 Pleasant renovations
	Bill Prescott Bequest	-	For capital maintenance items
	159 Apartment rental - security deposit	1,068.04	
	Prepaid Pledges	2.03	New account to track prepaid pledges
	TOTAL	\$79,918.97	
	Available to spend	3/31/2025 Balance	
Hackett Fund		-	to Bob Torpe fund for 159 Pleasant renovations
Music Fund	\$4,490	19,103.33	Used to enhance the music program
Memorial Fund	\$21,170	60,047.62	Income used for a fitting memorial
Building Endowment	\$0	370,643.06	Some income supports annual budget
Heritage Fund	\$3,260	42,075.51	Income can be used for general use
total MCF	\$28,920	\$491,869.52	
Dirigo CD	from Nancy Hill Bequest, restricted	2590.81	Income used for charity
GRAND TOTAL OF INVESTMENTS		<u>\$574,379.30</u>	

Library Committee 2024-2025 Annual Report

Purpose

To be determined!

Activities

- Newly formed Committee, by review and discussion of the Council of Committees and Board leadership.
- Identified group of interested individuals.

Goals

- Define purpose.
- Make the physical library space usable and welcoming.
- Create guidelines for collections/materials (what do we want to have?).
- Catalog collections/materials (what do we actually have).
- Investigate related activities/events to support the work of the church and other Committees.

Recognition

Gratitude for those who have volunteered to begin the work of getting a new Committee off the ground.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Foss

Library Committee Chair

andifnotnow@gmail.com

207-253-9980



**First Universalist Church of Auburn, Unitarian Universalist
Auburn, Maine**

Committee Report to Congregation/Board of Directors

Our Mission Statement: Rooted in the Sacred and strengthened by our diversity, we equip ourselves to minister through the transformative power of Love.

Committee/Task Force name: Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is charged with maintaining, nurturing, and growing the church membership. This goal is addressed by attracting and welcoming newcomers and maintaining informational material for visitors and guests. The Membership Committee provides hospitality and a sense of belonging to all members and guests.

Committee members:

Angela Foss, Anne Kinney, Linda LaBrie, Luke Lunt, Shelley Reno, Esther Tucker, Vicki Thibeault, and Paula Spruill

Significant activities/achievements:

- Planned and facilitated two sessions for our Winter/Spring **New to Auburn UU** orientation class in February 2025 and March 2025
- New Member Welcome on May 25, 2025. Seven new members were recognized.

Upcoming activities:

- Review and clarify our membership process
- Plan a **New to Auburn UU** session for Fall 2025
- Explore ways to increase membership and engagement

Expenditures:

- UUA pamphlets, flowers, welcome cake, printing supplies for membership certificates & envelopes, welcome cards & envelopes, and other office supplies

Budget needs:

- We are requesting \$200 for the upcoming year to cover the cost of materials needed for two **New to Auburn UU** sessions and UUA pamphlets.

Special Recognitions:

- A **HUGE** thank you goes to **Anne Perron** for building, staining, and installing small pew rack holders to store joys and sorrows papers, pens, and visitor cards. The pews look organized and much neater!
- **Kudos** to **Anne Kinney** for offering a terrific history discussion about Auburn UU and to **Anne Perron** for leading a fun tour around the church for our newcomers.
- **Heartfelt appreciation** to our guest minister, Rev. Mark Glovin, for creating such a meaningful New Member Ceremony for us this year.
- **Submitted by:** Paula Spruill **Date:** May 27, 2025

Music Associates 2024-2025 Annual Report

Purpose

To support the music program as an integrated part of the worship life of the church. This group explores the deep potential of music to enhance worship, encourages broad participation in the choir, and works closely with the choir director, organist, and minister to expand our music ministry.

Activities

- The Choir and Music Associates email lists were separated, and everyone had a chance to opt in/opt out of emails.
- Music Service was held on March 16th. A variety of folks participated and (despite some technical challenges!) the service was successful and well received.
- The Choir was active throughout the year, contributing to regular Sunday services and the Christmas Eve service.
- The Choir sang at the memorial service for longtime choir member Tricia Griffin.

Goals

- Standardize and document processes for when the choir director and/or organist are off.
- Continue cleanup of the music room/choir director office.
- Scan/digitize the music library.
- Catalog the music library.

Recognition

Deep thanks to all who participated in and helped coordinate the Music Service: Pam Weeks and Phil House as always for advice, guidance and musical excellence; Ned Claxton for planning and Worship Associate-ing with grace and humor; Sam McCune for positivity in the face of technical challenges (and unexpectedly leading the congregation in song!); Toby Haber Giasson, Cynthia Grimm, and John Spruill for their technical expertise; and all those who shared their music with us – Tricia Griffin, Bill Frayer, Mike Giasson, Rick O'Brien, Ellen O'Brien, Ned Claxton, Toby Haber Giasson, and Cindy Greathouse.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Foss
Music Associates Chair
andifnotnow@gmail.com
207-253-9980

Open Mic Annual Report

2024/2025

Purpose – to offer a free forum for the church and the wider community to celebrate the spirituality of music and spoken word. Open Mic also has served as a way to bring the community through our doors, and raise awareness of the church, often attracting new members.

Co-hosts Toby Haber & Mike Giasson, and Brian Bickford.

Communication- monthly e-blasts and Facebook posts

Activities/Achievements

- ❑ Toby and Mike hosted Deck Jam live in June
- ❑ Open Mic met monthly on Zoom all year, as they have since 2020.
 - Take Open Mic LIVE on Facebook some months, with help from Cynthia
- ❑ In March, Open Mic marked its 19-year anniversary on Zoom.
- ❑ In May, Open Mic host Toby emceed the Talent Show at the Ferry Beach Retreat
- ❑ Co-promotion with Allen Avenue's Open Mic
- ❑ Offered input for new audio/video equipment for the sanctuary and vestry.

Upcoming Activities

- ❑ Deck Jam will be held in June
- ❑ Consider options for future of Open Mic including a new night or a new format.

Expenditures- OM has no expenditures for its Zoom iteration.

If we go back to live format, we will need to replace some of our equipment.

- Good will donations were used to pay for some gear.
- Open Mic paid the church annually to offset the cost of heating the space.

Budget Needs- not at this time

Other Needs:

- ❑ Security concerns and meeting building use guidelines without placing undue burden on volunteers
- ❑ Storage in vestry still a need.

Submitted by: Toby Haber-Giasson

Religious Education/Exploration (Children) Annual Report

2024/2025

Religious Education/Exploration at Auburn UU has completed and planned the following since the beginning of the church year from 2024-2025:

- In the beginning of the church year I met weekly via phone call with Rev. Terry to discuss the RE Program.
- After Rev. Terry's departure, I have been having weekly phone meetings with David Das, President of the Board.
- We added a quiet play area in the back of the sanctuary for children during worship including soft toys, books, puzzles and coloring pages.
- Time For All Ages finally has a consistent style to it. There were originally some varying opinions on how it should be done (and if it should be done).
- RE Classes started up again since the pandemic on October 6th, 2024.
- It was decided to use the Soul Matters curriculum for the most part during this church year. We will likely continue with this in the next church year.
- RE Classes have been possible thanks to two volunteers in particular.
- We have had eight children/youth registered for RE Classes this year. The age ranges are from 5-13 years old. Although, in addition we do also have some children that are too young to become registered for classes just yet. Unfortunately, due to the short volume of volunteers, we were only able to focus on the younger curriculum this year but have a hopeful plan to offer classes for a wider age range next church year in the fall.
- We held a RE Family Game Night for all ages.
- As Religious Education Coordinator, I participated in a Trunk-or-Treat event held by Mr. Drew and His Animals Too. We had candy donated from the congregation. I decorated my car to the theme of "Spread Kindness Around Like Candy" and handed out RE flyers to those who asked for one. We won first place for the organizations/businesses that participated. Thus, we were able to have a free presentation by Mr. Drew at our church. There were a good amount of children and adults in attendance. A couple of children that don't usually come to church attended as well.
- I did research on other churches and their safety policies. I drafted a version that we could use. The Board voted it as acceptable to use. The document is titled: "Auburn UU - Safety with Children and Youth Policy."
- We now have an RE Committee that has met at least once since forming.
- We've had background checks go through for current and potential RE volunteers.

- I met with Rev. Debbie Rogers Duval from the High Street Congregational (UCC) down the street from our church. We have plans to meet again once Rev. DC begins to see if we can have some sort of OWL and/or interfaith collaboration for children/youth. We also have one adult who might be interested in becoming trained and leading OWL classes for grades 7/9 and 10/12.
- Lastly, I plan to have Summer RE Classes this year that focus on a common project for all ages of children/youth to participate in. They will focus on the project(s) all summer and have a reveal event at the beginning of the church year.

I am so thankful to those who have stepped up to aid and help with Religious Education/Exploration this year in any capacity. I look forward to working together throughout another fruitful year!

Signed:

Samantha McCune (she/her)

Religious Education Coordinator

5/27/25

Rental Task Force Annual Report

2024/2025

This year we created a rental task force. The task force members are the church administrator, Anne Perron, and Linda Greathouse.

This year we had great success. Rental contracts, room descriptions and pricing for each, and instructions for how to leave the space when renters leave the space were updated. The phone has been ringing off the hook for rentals.

We have also rented apartment 159A to a lovely family related to our longstanding tenant in 159B. This should provide steady income throughout the year.

The Allied Field Church, has been renting the sanctuary on Sunday afternoons for their services.

If anybody should want to use the building or a meeting room, please contact this group for coordination and to get on our church calendar.

Sincerely,

Anne Perron

**Social Justice Committee
2024/2025**

The Social Justice Committee has established committees to work on topics of concern:

- LGBTQ++ , including UUA Welcoming Congregation certification renewal
- Women's Rights
- Freedom of Speech
- Immigration

We are getting up to date info on what is happening and bills coming up to make unwanted changes. Participants are also contacting legislators.

Participation in Peace walks are also encouraged with posters and UUA participation.

Projected budget: \$300

Chairperson
Diane Chasse

Stewardship Annual Report

2024/2025

Purpose – to plan and carry out a fundraising campaign to sustain the church, with the support of Finance.

Chair: Toby Haber-Giasson with Greg Bianconi, Ellen O'Brien and Paula Mikkelsen.

Activities/Achievements

- Planned Stewardship campaign with Finance committee, set goal of \$120,000
- Provide resources materials and narrative for pledging
 - “We’re Not Lost” theme- borrowed from a sermon by Rev. Tara
 - Featured the little wooden church from “Esther’s Story”
- Coordinate with Membership and Collector
- Plan Stewardship Sunday kickoff with a minister
- Testimonials by three committee chairs to share their passion projects
- Weekly Stew Updates via email expressing gratitude to those pledging
- Close of Canvass tally
- Canvass clean-up” via calls, visits and email.
- Pledges totalled \$128,000 at close of canvass.**

Upcoming Activities – Contact new members about pledging.

Expenditures- none.

Submitted by: Toby Haber-Giasson



First Universalist Church of Auburn, Unitarian Universalist

Auburn, Maine

Committee Report to Congregation/Board of Directors

Our Mission Statement: Rooted in the Sacred and strengthened by our diversity, we equip ourselves to minister through the transformative power of Love.

Committee/Task Force name: Tech Booth Volunteers

Committee members: Cindy Greathouse, John Spruill, Toby Haber-Giasson, Mason Pratt

Works with staff members Cynthia Grimm and Pam Weeks

Communication to the Board/Members/Friends Since Last Update

Significant activities/achievements:

- Continue to use a booth schedule pre-loaded with a volunteers rotating coverage that allows for having a plan, and the flexibility to swap Sundays when someone plans to be away.
- We did drop to one tech per Sunday when Carlos left for college; some Sundays this works fine, other Sundays, depending on planned activities, we recognize the need for a 2nd person. (i.e. when a video is planned for the service)
- Mason Pratt is not currently in the rotation, but has been shadowing tech booth volunteers to help with learning the processes and working towards helping with coverage.
- We did have a few meetings – recognizing we needed documentation updates on the general Sunday process and how to troubleshoot when issues arise.
- All volunteers are included in the weekly communications in prep for Sunday service; this helps when there is a last-minute change in coverage.

Upcoming activities:

Coverage for summer; recruit and train additional volunteers

Relocate “booth” to make the tech area easily accessible.

Expenditures: \$0

Budget needs: \$3,000

- New /refurbished computer
- Camera upgrade to allow for running the service from the sanctuary
- iPad or tablet for sound board (currently Pam Weeks’ personal iPad is used for this purpose)

Other needs:

Recruit additional volunteers – needs to be a person familiar with our typical order of service with some ability to understand booting up and connecting peripherals to a PC (Mac) and monitoring and responding to messages. Taking actions necessary to ensure a smooth service. Key attributes: Communication skills, flexibility and ability to troubleshoot as needed for the situation.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Greathouse

Date: 6/3/2025

WE RISE UP AT THE 2025 TRI-CHURCH FERRY BEACH RETREAT!

Families and friends from Auburn UU, Allen Avenue UU and Norway UU shared our **annual oceanfront weekend** May 2nd– 4th at the Ferry Beach Camp and Conference Center in Saco with a theme of *Rise Up!*



Our joy at being together on this beautiful campus manifested in spontaneous chats, campfire conversations, beach walks, delicious s'mores around the fire pit in the Grove, laughter while dodging raindrops, and plentiful dining hall meals none of us had to cook.

Most of us took advantage of our **optional workshops and activities**: kite-making, table games, hat-making, card-making, a TED Talk on *Revolutionary Love in a Time of Rage*, group photo, Talent Sharing Circle, a plethora of goodies in our fundraising Raffle, and morning Worshipall provided by gifted and generous church members.

We extend many thanks to our activity and workshop leaders from A2U2, Auburn UU, and Norway UU: Dee Farr, Toby Haber, Bill Frayer, Rick Kimball, Kathy Neddeau, Jan Vachon, Patricia Ellen, Holly Cooney, and Betsy Jo Whitcomb, and all the spontaneous volunteers who stepped up to be welcoming and attentive to the needs of the group and to care for our spaces.

Much of our joy together comes from stories we share in informal groups, our delight in having 'down time' with one another in this ocean-front setting, free-flowing laughter, and the support, strength, and community that emerges among us.

Year-round work of the Tri-Church Planning Committee includes: signing a legally binding contract with Ferry Beach, creating publicity, and collaborating with Ferry Beach staffers to arrange meals, dorms, meeting spaces, and equipment. We plan programming, write and print our own materials, provide retreat snacks, oversee a scholarship raffle, and arrange several million dollars in insurance coverage for our weekend. We pay an annual \$125 membership fee to Ferry Beach, and provide a \$500 (refundable) damage deposit.

The Committee offers flexibility for retreaters in length of stay and partial financial assistance if needed. Participants may stay one or two nights, or commute on Saturday. Costs are set each year by Ferry Beach.



Our ongoing goal is to grow the Retreat and emphasize its family-oriented nature for members and friends. The committee is open to new members – we usually meet during a week day at Pineland Farms.

Anne Kinney for the *Tri-Church Ferry Beach Retreat Committee*

Auburn UU: Anne Kinney, Jan Vachon, Holly Cooney & Ron Spofford; **Norway UU:** Dorothy Raymond;
A2U2: Connie Cross, Betsy Jo Whitcomb, Kathy Neddeau, Patricia Ellen, and Carol Sue Hayden.

UU THEATER Annual Report 2024/2025

Purpose: to speak our UU values from the stage, bring the community through our doors, and raise awareness and money for the church.

Chair: Toby Haber-Giasson

Communication- press releases, e-blasts and Facebook posts

Activities/Achievements

-UUT collaborated with Adult RE to create and stage “About Love: Esther’s Story”

Presented on Dec. 1 in the sanctuary

-Toby & Charles Nero developed a script through interviews with Esther Tucker

-Rehearsals were held on Zoom and in person with the cast:

Interviewer ...Ned Claxton

Esther 1/2/3...Cindy Greathouse, Toby Haber-Giasson and Cynthia Grimm

Live Music by Phil House and Pam Weeks

-Paula Mikkelsen collected freewill donations of \$262

-The show attracted advance press as well as post-show coverage on the Sun Journal
front page on Christmas Day

-Creators exploring copyright of material and sharing with MNED/UUA

- The stage’s back wall and ceiling were painted black by Anne Perron and crew, in place of the black cyclorama curtain that was removed.

- Offered input for new audio/video equipment for the sanctuary.

- Collaborated with Adult RE to develop concept and discussion panel for “Grief & Loss”

Upcoming Activities – “About Love: Grief and Loss” panel discussion- rescheduled to June 22

Expenditures- not at this time.

Budget Needs- UUT is a fundraising entity and keeps its own “seed” money. Current balance \$1,990.

Other Needs:

- ❑ Security concerns and meeting new building use guidelines without placing undue burden on volunteers
- ❑ UUT has raised revenue through ticket sales and playbill ads; community support needs to be rebuilt by raising the church profile.
- ❑ Playbill- Need volunteer(s) to sell playbill ads, collect money or produce the book.
- ❑ Behind the scenes- Need volunteers to set/strike chairs, sell tickets and refreshments.
- ❑ Find funding to restore black cyclorama curtain, which was removed without input from UUT. This would require professional cleaning and re-treatment with fireproofing material by a company in New Jersey. An estimated cost would be in the thousands.

-submitted by Toby Haber-Giasson



**First Universalist Church of Auburn, Unitarian Universalist
Auburn, Maine**

Committee Report to Congregation/Board of Directors

Our Mission Statement: Rooted in the Sacred and strengthened by our diversity, we equip ourselves to minister through the transformative power of Love.

Committee/Task Force name: Worship Associates

The Worship Associates assist the pastor every Sunday by leading the Shared Values and Principles, assisting the DRE with the Time for All Ages, doing the Time for Joys and Sorrows, the offerings, readings when the pastor wants, and lighting and extinguishing the Chalice.

Committee members: John Spruill, Ned Claxton, Luke Lunt, Diane Chasse, David Das, Ed Bell, and Ginny Starbird

Significant activities/achievements:

We filled the pulpit every Sunday with Supply Pastors and Worship Associates as needed

Upcoming activities:

Special services during the summer.

Expenditures:

Budget needs: \$3000 for supply preachers

Other needs:

Submitted by: John T. Spruill, Jr, chair

Date: May 31, 2025

Proposed Leadership Slate

2025-26 Leadership Slate

First Universalist Church of Auburn, Unitarian Universalist

Board of Directors:

President: Angela Foss (through June 2026) (first term)

Vice President: Mary Kay Weisenberger (through June 2026) (first term)

Clerk: Linda Greathouse (through June 2026) (second term)

Member-at-Large:

Charles “Chip” Gustavson (through June 2027) (first term)

Holly Cooney (through June 2027) (first term)

Not up for election but remaining on the Board – serving 2nd year of two year term:

Member-at-Large:

Ed Bell (through June 2026) (first term)

Jane Pentheny (through June 2026) (second term)

Other Officers:

Treasurer: Ellen O’Brien

Collector: Paula Mikkelsen

Financial Secretary: Maureen Owen

Endowment Committee: Ned Claxton

Historian: Bill Eldridge

Moderator: Rick O’Brien

Ned Claxton (Alternate)

Rose Window Award

