

## EXECUTIVE PROGRAM REPORT

November 2022

*Reports gathered from committee and program leaders, and staff*

Note: Although we continue to invite reports from multiple committees and teams, very few send monthly reports. These are the ones received this month. - VS

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### **Pastoral Care – Ann Mowery**

The Pastoral Care Team with assistance from Rev. Victoria finalized a new policy, Duties for Deaths/Funerals/Memorials/Celebrations of Life During Our Interim Ministry. The Team had a presence at each Sunday service and delivered the Joys and Concerns in the service when Rev. Victoria was away. Team members had contacts with 26 members or friends of the congregation during the month. Laura Berardi has launched a twice monthly Grief Group with three co-facilitators. There were 5 people that were remembered by the card group. They held their first meeting with seven total participating. Members of the Pastoral Care Team include Laura Berardi, Susan Jellinger, Gene McCracken, Ellen Taylor and Ann Mowery, Chair.

### **Amos – Barb Klubal**

- **All-AMOS Meetings**

In recent meetings, leaders reported on progress on building relational power via the 2,000 Conversations Campaign within and near our institutions: 1 on 1's, house meetings and neighborhood walks.

The fall fund-raising campaign is underway. AMOS' 40 institutions committed to raise \$40,000 to support AMOS. (This is in addition to institutional dues.)

[Invest in AMOS here!](#) Click here for the [We're Building Something Grand handout](#)

- **Affordable Housing Research Team**

[Axios](#) recently highlighted AMOS' research around Community Land Trusts as a tool to increase affordable housing.

<https://www.axios.com/local/des-moines/2022/09/22/polk-county-iowa-ponders-new-affordable-housing-model?fbclid=IwAR2xWFHOnlj7X9T8mn9nY4fCERt1ACPBq6GOFK1RU55WfSnJweqfGbxBI8o>

As of November 10, over 100 people have registered to attend the training sessions on community land trusts scheduled for November 16 and 17. The sessions will be led by CLT expert Jason Webb of Grounded Solutions Network, organized by AMOS and sponsored by the City of Des Moines. Follow-up/next steps meetings with local non-profits and Polk County municipalities are schedule for early 2023.

- **Mental Health**

The AMOS Mental Health Task Force continues to work with Polk County Administration on its implementation of the \$1.8 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds the Board of Supervisors approved this summer. AMOS will be part of a team advising County staff on how best to structure use of the money, emphasizing both recruitment and retention to increase the mental health therapist workforce in Polk County. First Unitarian member Bill Brauch will be one of two AMOS representatives on the advisory team.

- **Upcoming AMOS Meetings:**

First Unitarian board members are always welcome to come see AMOS in action!

- All-AMOS: Thursday, 12/8 at 5:30pm on Zoom
- Saturday, 1/28/23 on Zoom - Follow-up-Next-Steps on what was heard during the 2000 Conversations Campaign
- Delegate Assembly to ratify our next steps: Sunday, 2/19/23, 3-4:30pm, location TBD

- **Upcoming AMOS–IAF Training Opportunities**

The Industrial Areas Foundation (AMOS' "parent" organization) has scheduled an important 5-day training opportunity. 5-day trainings are an opportunity to reflect on yourself as a public person, get a deeper sense of AMOS' approach to social change, and build relationships with talented people engaged in similar work from throughout the United States. Contact Courtney Dufford ([crdufford@gmail.com](mailto:crdufford@gmail.com)) if you're interested in learning more.

January 17-21 in Berkeley, CA

- **IAF Meeting with Pope Francis!**

Former AMOS Lead Organizer, Paul Turner, was part of an interfaith delegation that met with Pope Francis at the Vatican on October 14th. Paul is now a supervisor with the Industrial Areas Foundation, AMOS' parent organization. Here's a [shareable pdf summary](#) of the encounter.

### **Kitchen Committee – Ann Mowery**

Holcomb Inc. started construction in the kitchen on Monday, October 31, 2022. That kicked off the contract which allows 120 days for completion, which is mid-March. The old hood that was over the range was removed, the new pass through was created in the cement block on the "dirty" side of the kitchen. The wood from the hallway above the current pass through was taken down, numbered and stored for return to its original place once the current passthrough is enlarged. Plumbing and electrical work has begun.

We received our first change order from the contractor largely related to changes required for the City permit. The cost of the changes is being negotiated but will be at least an additional \$30,000. The City is requiring us to install a fire suppression hood above the range tops. The appliances we had purchased do not all meet ADA requirements. We are in the process of trading those out for ADA compliant models. Additional cost will be about \$2,000.

The kitchen committees continue to meet to address issues of the project.

The Aesthetics Committee has purchased a table, chairs and bar stools that will fit in with the décor they have selected. They are working on a donor recognition art piece with Fern Stewart. Walter Pearson has completed another donor recognition for each household of givers that will be distributed around the time the kitchen opens. We are pursuing outside vendors who could make the cabinet needed in Griffin Hall for the Memorial Committee's dishes and valuables.

The Furnishings/Logistics Committee has purchased more dishes and silverware after receiving comments at its Forum. The Committee is pursuing serving dishes and utensils, tables for Griffin Hall, pots and pans, shelving, etc. The Committee has adopted a job description for a

permanent kitchen committee that will oversee its use. We are looking for those interested in doing the work of keeping the kitchen organized and clean.

The Communications Committee continues to monitor the happenings of the kitchen remodel and present this information to the Congregation via several modalities.

The overall Kitchen Committee will plan for any cost overruns and address with the Board possible ways to pay for them. At this time, cost overruns are about \$10,000. The Committee also started initial brainstorming for a formal opening event probably in April. We will not wait to use the kitchen until then. The kitchen will have a “soft” opening once it is ready.

### **Faith Formation - Birch Spick, Director of Faith Formation**

- *Children & Youth Faith Formation:* Coming of Age held their Fall Retreat at Camp Wesley Woods outside Indianola on 10/23; they will hold another retreat in the Spring. YRUU and the Congregational Life Committee’s Ministry of Fun held a Halloween party on 10/28, with upwards of 50 adults and children in attendance – including families that had not been to church before, but saw the event posted on a community calendar. The Youth Faith Formation Committee held a Fall Party for children & families on 11/13 at Chelsea & Eric Hayes’ house with upwards of 20 adults and children in attendance.
- *Adult Programming:* The Transgender Action Group held a potluck on 10/15 to kick off the new church year and solicit ideas about what LGBTQ people in the congregation want to see. The Pagan group (CUUPs) hosted a monthly Tarot Study Group on 11/10, which will recur on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month; CUUPs also held a Samhain (All Hallows) ritual off-site. First Unitarian’s Monthly Game Night resumed on 11/12, and will recur on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month.
- *Looking ahead:* There will be no Faith Formation events for youth & children on 11/27 (the Sunday after Thanksgiving). Birch and facilitators are planning OWL classes for K-1 and 5-6 grade-groups, which will run in the spring. The Buddhist Sangha will hold an in-person meditation retreat on 11/19. CUUPs will hold a Yule ritual and potluck on 12/10.

### **Congregational Life - Birch Spick, Coordinator of Congregational Life**

- Hospitality team-leads met on 10/22 and discussed highs and lows of their respective Sundays over the last two months. We have updated and distributed procedures for ushers, greeters, and food-service. Team-leads will meet with Birch on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every other month moving forward
- We held a two-part class for new members on 10/29 & 11/05, and held a ceremony for new members during the service on 11/06. We welcomed 11 new members, and will post their photos and bios on our Membership Bulletin Board in the Gathering Area in the coming month.
- *Looking ahead:* the Ministry of Fun is organizing a brunch potluck at the church on Christmas Day, time TBD.
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### **Administrative Updates – Alice Stewart, DFA**

- We’ve increased janitorial services to include twice a week upstairs and once a week downstairs due to increased building usage.
- Birch found and purchased a new percolator before the next Sunday service after the old one kicked the bucket.

- Emily created an Event Publication Form and a transferrable RSVP Form, and they both work great.
- Emily updated the website to be more streamlined.
- Birch has all the Faith Formation Facilitators using Realm and it's working great.
- Emily worked with website hosting to ensure media backups for the website.
- Hannah repaired the door key problem - it wasn't accepting any new keys and now that's fixed.
- Alice took a week of vacation, and the rest of the staff were amazing in her absence.
- Alice presented a Sunday Forum lecture about the state of staffing and business practices in church offices nationally and here at First Unitarian.
- Staff continue to cross-train in professional development monthly.

Respectfully submitted,  
Victoria Safford