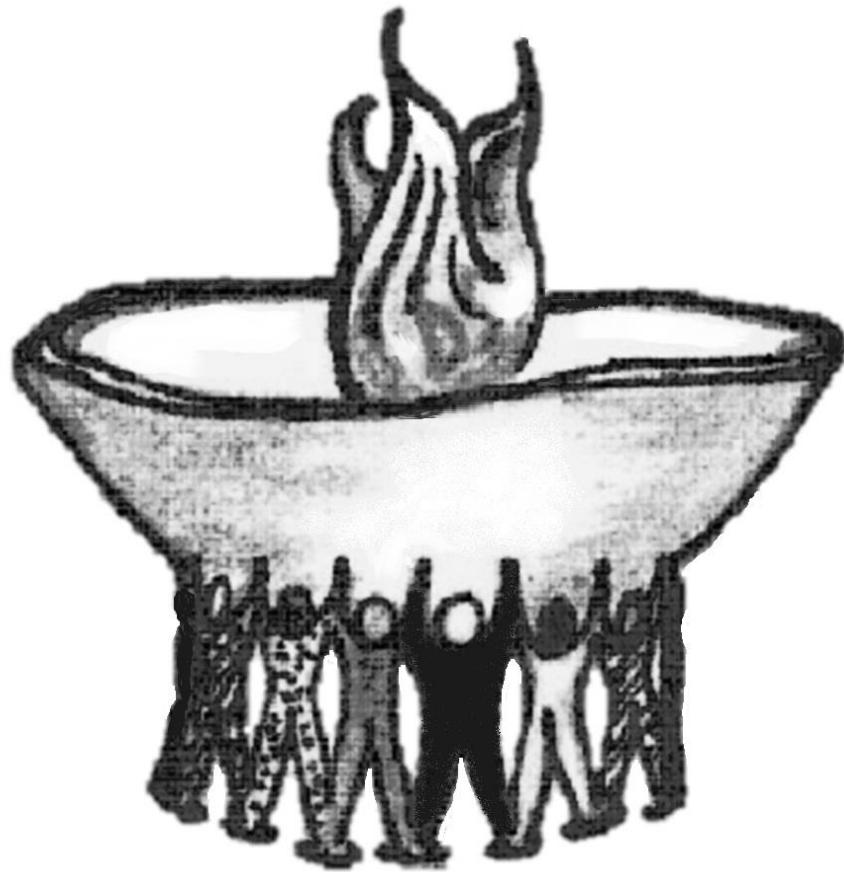


BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



ANNUAL REPORT
July 2018 – June 2019



BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

***Sharing Journeys,
Nurturing Wholeness,
Creating Community***

BuxMont UU Staff:

Minister

Reverend Kevin W. Jagoe

Minister's Report 2018-2019

This first year of ministry together has been incredibly rewarding for me, and I hope for you as well! In October you, the members of BuxMont UU Fellowship, ordained me which completed my path into the ministry in an incredible way. In our tradition, it is the congregations that make ministers. No one else can do so, and I am so fortunate that this congregation not only Called me but also bestowed the title of Reverend upon me.

My first year has been themed in my mind as *a ministry of presence*, with special focus on building relationships with as many members as possible and learning how things work. We have gotten to know each other more deeply and to see new energy throughout the Fellowship.

I remain in awe of the incredible care that members of this community put into every facet of our congregation. Throughout this Annual Report you will read of many of these efforts. Please also know that there are hundreds more activities happening behind the scenes and beyond these pages as well.

The Ministerial Search Committee made up of: Karen Anderson (chair), Blair Alegant, Nancy Bruce, Melissa Egbertson, Cheryl Osburn-Adams, Mary Youtz, and Stephanie Wardwell, and I began communicating in December of 2018 and met via video conference in January of 2019. I am so grateful to them for the initial conversation which planted the seed of possibility that BuxMont UU Fellowship was where my ministry should develop next.

The warmth and deep caring your Search Committee had for one another was my first indication that this congregation would be the right place to call home. The continued welcome that has been extended to me and my husband Justin has confirmed that initial hope again and again.

Worship and Rites of Passage

Over the course of the program year, we shared many Sunday morning services together. I have shifted some of the liturgy and added a ritual element to our Joys & Sorrows time in the service. We have continued to embrace monthly themes which helps tie worship, small group ministry, and our

religious education programs together. Average Sunday attendance is now at 95 for the nine months I have been at BuxMont, which is around an 11% increase over last year.

Worship creation is also an entire staff endeavor for me and I think John & Margaret for their gifts of music; Jess for our creative collaboration on weekly Time for All Ages and special services throughout the year; and Beverly for her constant support in the office. Lay-led services add to the diversity of voices heard on Sunday mornings as well and I thank the many dedicated members who work on these monthly. I feel incredibly fortunate to have the musical talent and thoughtful partners I do.

I officiated two member memorial services this year where we remember the lives of beloved BuxMont members. It was an honor to hear the amazing stories and accomplishments their lives created both in our congregation and in the world.

- Jim Vokoun-Robinson on December 8, 2018
- Cynthia Jones on March 16, 2019

Pastoral Care and Presence

As a new minister who sees pastoral care as a core ministry, I have been humbled by the way members have opened up with me about their needs. We have connected in person, over the phone, via email, through Facebook, and by notes mailed back and forth. I have visited with people in hospitals, in coffee shops, in my office, during coffee hour, over meals, before and after committee meetings, and over Zoom video conference. No matter the medium, I have so appreciated getting to know you more personally. Know that if you haven't reached out yet, you can do so any time.

I also met with our Caring Team members regularly to help coordinate our efforts to support those in need of care and support in our community. These incredibly caring people show up for fellow members in so many ways; please read more about their work later in this report.

Encourage Spiritual Development & Witness to Social Justice

Spiritual development, faith formation, religious education, or personal deepening, whatever label you give these efforts, they are the core of why places like BuxMont exist. We do some of this work in worship each week as well as in religious education classes for children and youth.

We also do this work throughout the week in our homes, in small groups, in classes, and when we show up for justice. I am particularly happy that we have re-launched our Adult Religious Education committee this year and offered several programs, with more on the way.

Our Peace & Justice work has also grown this year with connections to POWER (Pennsylvanians Organized to Witness, Empower, and Rebuild) that have engaged dozens of members in conversations around interfaith organizing for justice.

Administration

We have incredible people supporting the mission of the Fellowship and I am honored to work with them. Our Board of Trustees and Lay Leaders have demonstrated their deep love of this place throughout the year. I also have been working to increase our staff collaboration this year through regular staff meetings and weekly one-on-one meetings.

I want to personally thank outgoing Board President Karen Reever whose leadership and knowledge was so valuable in my first months. I also want to thank Howard Barkan who completed Karen's term. Both of these members led our congregation through change and the beginning of a new ministry.

Beverly Vitek began as our Administrator this year and has done an amazing job helping us be more organized and informed as a congregation. She has increased her involvement with building rentals as the year has progressed and has been handling our bookkeeping as well. Her consistent presence in the office has been appreciated as has her warm welcome of people to the building during the week.

John Hook continued to provide amazing leadership of our music ministry and the many ways our members share their talents with us. He has also been an invaluable source of congregational history for me as I settle into BuxMont.

Margaret Lea has provided incredible music in our worship services all year long and her deep ties to BuxMont over the years show in her choices of songs. I am particularly grateful to her for her support beyond Sunday morning during memorials and our holiday services.

Jess Bors, our Director of Religious Education continues to build our programming for the younger members of our community and incredible collaboration around how religious education impacts our entire congregation. Her thoughtfulness toward families and how to help people of all ages deepen their connection to Unitarian Universalism is so wonderful to have on our staff.

Committee on Shared Ministry

We began a new approach to congregational engagement with the ministry and programmatic life of the congregation this year. The Committee on Ministry has been renamed the Committee on Shared Ministry. This is more than a simple addition of a word, but also has been demonstrated in our changed approach. Listening Sessions were held regularly on different areas of the congregation: Adult Education, Communications, Worship & Holidays, Safe Congregations, and Fellowship & Merriment. We also offered Questions of the Month through the Order of Service, eVoice, and BuxMont Facebook Group.

I want to thank the members of this committee: Karen Anderson (chair), Melissa Egbertson, Nancy Bruce, Mary Youtz, Cheryl Osburn-Adams, and Nicholas Scull.

Our ministry together is only just beginning. I hope every person that is part of BuxMont UU Fellowship adds to the collective vision of what we can build together in the years to come.

In Community,

Rev. Kevin W. Jagoe

Director of Religious Education

Jess Bors

Here we are at the end of our second year together; my fourth year as a professional religious educator. I am overjoyed in your choice to have Rev. Kevin as your settled minister. He is a gifted minister and we are both excited, along with the entire staff, to continue in our work together. Kevin has been an integral part of helping to formulate our programming in religious education this year along with our healthy and dedicated RE committee.

"The DRE will lead and continue to develop an innovative and robust religious education program which will provide our children and youth with a strong connection to Unitarian Universalism, allow them to grow spiritually, and encourage them to work for positive change in our communities and our world". This is done here at Buxmont for ages 0-18 through various programs.

In order to serve your congregation to the best of my ability I continue to be a member of the Liberal Religious Educators Association- LREDA. As a part of that membership I was able to attend the annual conference in Houston in November. This five day conference was not only a wonderful opportunity to connect with colleagues, it was a chance to be in conversations about white supremacy culture and learn new and innovative things happening across our denomination. I was also able to take two courses this summer at RE Week at Sea, get certified as an OWL facilitator, and get trained in CPR, First Aid and AED use.

Rev. Kevin and I have made the Time For All Ages a weekly occurrence in our services and therefore we are all together as a congregation with the only exception of our smallest members in the nursery at the start of each service. This continues to be a welcome part of our ministry at Buxmont. I had also suggested we continue to find ways to make our congregants and families of all kinds visible by having guest chalice lighters each week. This is also very well received and gives us all an opportunity to get to know each other in our community.

Our previous nursery provider was unable to return this past fall and Madeleine continued as our lead. We are so blessed to have a UU in that role for the year. Katherine has finished her third and final year as our leader in the Pre K/K. She will step down from that role next month to focus on her graduate studies. Madeleine has agreed to be our PreK/K leader and we are grateful to both her and Katherine for making this a seamless transition.

Moving our Youth programming to the mornings based on parental surveys was a huge success in both attendance and fluidity of programming. Our youth group was happy to have the addition of a coffee cart.

My wish for the coming year is that we begin family connections through Fellowship Sundays and other activities to connect outside of a Sunday morning. I want to continue to support families in the faith formation of not only their kids but themselves. The world moves at a pace the likes of which we have never seen and we should help each other, hold space for each other and work on our faith formation together.

Administrator

Beverly Vitek

Purpose/Mission

- Facilitate communication of all Fellowship activities, support consistent operations, and manage the building to achieve BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship's mission and vision.
- Responsible for a broad variety of administrative tasks with minimal guidance. Manages office procedures, facilities, schedules, purchasing, and bookkeeping.
- Knowledgeable with major office related computer applications including database management.

Highlights of the Year

- Supported BuxMont by communicating clearly, listening to concerns, providing information and looking at all of the possibilities that come with being the office administrator.
- Adjusted processes and communications to meet the changing needs of the Fellowship.

Hopes and Plans

- Since my first day here, July 23, 2018, I have learned so much and strive to continue to do my job effectively in supporting staff and members.
- Continue to work closely with the Minister, Music Director, DRE, Liaison to the Fellowship Council and other committees to facilitate programs and services to the benefit of our community.

Concerns

None at this time.

Music Director

John Hook

Participants in Music Program

Margaret Lea, Accompanist (accompanies services, Adult, Instant and Family Choirs)

BuxMont Adult Choir: 14 regular + 3 supplemental singers. Led by John Hook

Family Choir: Variable but up to 20 participants. Led by John Hook

Instant Choir: variable, usually about 6-12 performers. Led by John Hook

Creedless Creekwater Revival (band): 20 adults. Convened by Greg Sturn & Anthony Perotti

Metaphysical Singers (Men): 8 regular singers. Led by Bob Chalmers

Instrumental performers (1-6 per time) about 10 in Sunday Services

Music Committee: 7 members chaired by Bob Chalmers and Mike Sherman

Purpose/Mission

Our music program deepens our worship experience, connects the congregation in community, nurtures and supports a wide variety of volunteer performers and music leaders. The Music Director provides vision, coordination, development and support to this program and supervises our accompanist. He also works with service planners to help maintain our overall worship experience.

Highlights of the Year

- Support BuxMont in Rev. Jagoe's first year as our minister. This has been a very successful transition.
- The staff has come together as a strong team, with regular meetings, and intentionally overlapping schedules for better coordination. This has helped a lot with coordinated vision and planning. Since three of the staff are relatively new to BuxMont, I am often a resource for how and why things have been, while supporting our efforts to make things work better.
- Two performing concerts, one focused on ensembles, the other vocal. Given the success of our recent concerts, the Music Committee has volunteered to contribute more of the concert income to the operating budget.
- Song Circles continue to attract 10-15 participants
- Coffee Houses have been growing in performers. We would like to attract larger audiences. The music quality is excellent, and this is an important aspect of nurturing our musicians of all levels of experience.
- High levels of performing participants for services, concerts, coffee houses and song circles -- probably about 50 musicians in one or more of those.
- Themed worship and long range service planning process continues to improve our ability to bring in new music that is well prepared and fits well with the topic.
- High performance standards in our worship music balanced with welcoming acceptance of all skill levels of our performers (beginner to professional).
- Continued nurturing strong congregational singing at BuxMont. Also reached out to other Philadelphia area congregations in a song leading workshop.
- Music Service tradition is continuing with one planned for June 2.

Hopes and Plans

- Work with other BuxMont worship leaders to encourage the development of a robust, ethical streaming of our services, including music.
- Help create a long range vision of A/V technology in the sanctuary in support of worship.

Concerns

- I have been tracking my hours more carefully as part of an ongoing effort to align my work hours with my salary. Next year I will be working with Rev. Jagoe to use that data to help in that alignment.
- Two of our sopranos recently left the BuxMont Choir due to changing life situations. We have three new members, but we need to attract more singers into our choral program, particularly in the treble voices.

Board of Trustees

Chair

Howard Barkan, President (term expiring 2019)

Members

- Greg Sturn – Board of Trustees, Vice President (term expiring 2020)
- Mike Sherman- Board of Trustees, Vice President- Finance (term expiring 2020)
- Jackie Drewes – Board of Trustees, Secretary (2 year single term expiring 2019)

- Lynne Nugent – Board of Trustees, Fellowship Council Liaison (term expiring 2019)
- Martin Kaplan – Board of Trustees, Trustee at Large (term expiring 2019)
- Laurie Brooks - Board of Trustees, Trustee at Large (term expiring 2020)
- Gary Breen – Treasurer (elected annually, non-voting member)
- Rev. Kevin W. Jagoe – Minister (non-voting member)

Purpose/Mission (summarized from BuxMont's By-Laws Article VIII)

Authority and responsibility for the conduct of the affairs of the Fellowship rests with the Congregation which delegates power to the Board of Trustees to perform the following duties:

- All business and financial affairs.
- Approve terms of employment of all full or part-time employees of the Fellowship (note: acts as an agent of the Fellowship in employment of the Minister after the minister is approved by the Congregation).
- Appoint regular committees as needed, and delegate authority necessary to carry out the work.
- Speak for the membership in relevant matters consistent with BuxMont's By-Laws, and any other matters pertaining to the administration or business operations of the Fellowship.

Highlights of the Year

Major accomplishments of the Board of Trustees for 2018-2019 include the following:

- Supervision of Major Building Construction including complete bathroom renovation, renovation of lobby and Circle-time room, and numerous other projects.
- Oversight of the New Minister Ordination and Installation.
- Oversight of hiring of a new administrator.
- Oversight of transition of leadership in time of family emergency
- Revised Board oversight of Financial Matters, delegating some spending authority to Finance Committee with Board approval.
- Establishment of a ByLaws Ad Hoc Committee to oversee updates and improvements to ByLaws
- Plan and implement Annual Meeting.
- Participated in the UUA Startup Workshop for BuxMont Leadership. Its purpose was to focus on mutual expectations, roles and responsibilities and recommit to the mission/vision and shared ministry

Hopes for FY20 -

- Implementation of updated ByLaws and Policy and Procedures.
- Continued improvement of Fellowship Governance
- Facilitate updated online capabilities including updated website, potential digitalization of Fellowship Documents
- Oversee establishment of system of reminders for important Fellowship Business

Concerns

None at this time.

Committees

Adult Ed

Chair

Jerry Johnson

Members

Rev. Kevin W. Jagoe, Nancy Bruce, Laurie Brooks, Dave Jones, Bill Talvitie, Rosemarie Monaco

Purpose/Mission

The Adult Religious Education and Enrichment committee offered both educational and affinity groups this year.

Highlights of the Year

- A class led by Rev. Kevin W. Jagoe on UU history.
- A special meeting to discuss Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates.
- Laurie Brooks held Cakes for the Queen of Heaven.
- The UU Christian Fellowship again held the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services as well as the Bible Study.
- A new Yoga class was started.
- A Small Group Ministries survey was taken to see if new members are interested in joining a group.

Hopes and Plans

We are planning to focus on the Faith Development of BuxMont through spiritual, ethical, and education programs, and include more of the members of the congregation in the faith development programs that we sponsor. We will sponsor an online small group ministry and a leadership training class, while continuing other classes and groups. We are looking into ways we might generate revenue by offering our class to those outside of BuxMont.

Caring Team

No Chairperson

Coordinated by Sara Forney, Susie Hook, Jane Turkel, with Rev. Kevin Jagoe.

Members

The coordinators do most of the work of the Caring Team. Rev. Kevin organizes his own pastoral and caring contacts with congregants, often with consultation back and forth with coordinators. One of our subgroups, *Caring Notes Writers*, also includes occasional participation by Jean Bellavance, Tracy Bleakney, Dena Condon, and Julie Kimmel. Another subgroup is the *Caring Corner*, which sends cards to congregants most weeks. There is wide congregational participation in signing cards. In addition, *ad hoc* groups develop as needed for short-term needs like preparing meals or medical rides. Most of these involve help from Fellowship women, usually of retirement age.

Purpose/Mission

To recognize and respond to the Joys & Sorrows in congregants' lives and to their needs in times of illness or challenging circumstances.

Highlights of the Year

Began monthly meetings with minister in October to discuss outreach details. In mid-January, we started using a *Caring Connections Tracker* spreadsheet designed by Rev. Kevin in consultation with the lay coordinators. In the *Tracker* we try to notate all non-confidential interactions with congregants, including dates, contact information and type of interaction. After less than 4 months, we had recorded more than 225 interactions. The *Tracker* can be sorted by date or by name to enable us to follow ongoing situations such as serious illness or death in the family.

Hopes or Plans for Next Year

Continuing with our new patterns.

Concerns

It is not easy to cover every Sunday with a Caring Notes Writer. We would welcome more volunteers. Availability of an audio file for Joys & Sorrows makes it possible for anyone who can play such a file to participate. This is a great way to get to know people better. If you would like to join the Caring Team, email caring@buxmontuu.org or talk to Rev. Kevin or any of the three coordinators—Sara Forney, Susie Hook and Jane Turkel.

Children and Youth Religious Education Committee

Chair

Anne Scull

Members

Heather Burke, Lisa Chippendale, Judy Elinow, Margaret Henley, Carol Myers, Micki Vielle

Purpose/Mission

- To teach the meaning and importance of the Unitarian Universalist principles
- To encourage respect and compassion for a variety of different people and different lifestyles
- To give our children awareness of and respect for many different faiths
- To foster a commitment to social action
- To help our children become independent thinkers
- To encourage personal spiritual exploration

Highlights of the Year

We were successful in moving from our previous "Board" status to a committee structure, enabling newcomers to join our committee throughout the year. Our revised program structure for classes and age groups was well received and our Youth Group skillfully presented a service on

“Individualism.” Our committee members willingly stepped up throughout the year to fill in when our DRE needed extra support, especially with the “Free to Believe” program. We successfully fought many “horcruxes” this year through our “Harry Potter and UU” program. Our nursery care provider, Madeleine, has been a wonderful addition to the Fellowship.

Hopes and Plans for the Near Future

Our plan is to offer “Coming of Age” again, meaning we will enter into our third year of curriculum rotation. We continue to look for ways to support families and hope to provide more connections with families outside of a Sunday morning. We also welcome Madeleine into the role of lead teacher in our Pre K/K group and transition our nursery to trained youth leadership.

Concerns

None at this time.

Communications Committee

Chair

Dena Condron

Members

In flux

Purpose/Mission

To facilitate communication between BuxMont members and with the community at large.

Highlights of the Year

The committee continues to manage bulletin boards in the social hall, including a monthly ‘BuxMont Happenings’ board, located conveniently across from the visitors’ table in order to offer visitors a glimpse of all that happens at the fellowship. Several press releases about BuxMont events and personnel were published in local papers. BuxMont’s official Facebook page is regularly updated with postings and events.

Hopes and Plans for the Near Future

The committee is working to grow its membership in order to have consistent support in communication tasks. We would like to complete the website upgrade begun about a year ago.

Concerns

We are always interested in the best way to communicate information about BuxMont to the membership and the wider community.

Decorating (Sub-Committee of Sunday Service Committee)

Chair

Karen Anderson

Members

Micki Vieille, Donna Spangler, Krys Sherman, Loretta Turner, Carol Myers, Marion Trollope, Susie Hook

Purpose/Mission

To provide floral arrangements and other decorations for the Sanctuary, Social Hall, and Lobby for Sunday services, memorial services, special events, and celebrations.

Highlights of the Year

Ingathering, Ordination/Installation of Reverend Kevin, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Stewardship Kick-off, Flower service. Creating special arrangements requests with donated funds to celebrate or honor members' families.

Hopes and Plans for the Near Future

To reorganize our storage spaces, encourage new members and train them in flower arranging, sponsor a fall workshop for members to create a take home arrangement.

Concerns

The decorating storage is on 3 floors: attic, nursery closet, closet in RE group room downstairs. This makes it very difficult to access and work with materials. Our committee members are becoming less able to carry things up and down stairs or access the attic. Some other centralized storage will be needed.

Denominational Connections**Chair**

David Marshall

Members

David Marshall

Purpose/Mission

Provide connections for members and guests with other UUs both locally and across the country; provide resources for BuxMont from the Greater Philadelphia Cluster, UUPlan, Central East Region of the UUA and the UUA; provide financial resources to BuxMont from Chalice Lighters.

Highlights of the Year

Pat Infante from the Central East Region led a congregational workshop on goal setting with our new minister; Rick Williams from UUPlan led a service on political action for UUs in Pennsylvania.

Hopes and Plans for the Near Future

The hope is for BuxMont to contribute to the new Annual Program Fund based on new guidelines based on our annual expenses.

Concerns

Committee needs to better communicate to the congregation the benefits we receive from the UUA and its constituent organizations and congregations.

Dinner Group (subcommittee of Membership)

Chair

Jeannie Bellavance, coordinator

Purpose/Mission

The Dinner Group Program was designed to develop closer bonds with Fellowship members and active friends in a more informal social setting while having great fun and good food at the same time!

Highlights of the Year

Thirty-three people signed up to join during the second year of the Dinner Group Program. Two people also signed up as substitutes. There were 4 groups of 8 or 9 people. Again, Carol Cotton wanted to be included in this program. She received permission from her residence, Manor Care Health Services, to be a hostess for the entire season. Other groups met in participants homes. Each group planned its own dates and times.

Hopes and Plans for the Near Future

The dinner groups were successful. The program will continue in the 2019-2020 church year. Information and sign-ups will be available in the August and September Liberal Voice, the Friday E-Voice and on the BuxMont webpage.

When the BuxMont webpage is updated there should be a link for the Dinner Group Program which could replace the outdated one for Circle dinners. This page could contain all the information about its mission and forms for sign-up that could be accessed or sent to the coordinator.

Concerns None at this time.

Endowment Committee

Chair

Tom Thomas

Members

Dick Irwin, Greg Sturn, Mike Sherman, Gary Breen, Al Becker, Elaine Barkan, Ed Youtz

Purpose/Mission

To increase BuxMont's endowment by encouraging BuxMonters to join the Heritage Society, comprised of everyone who has included BuxMont in their estate plans or given directly to the endowment activity.

Highlights of the Year

- We held two Will Writing seminars presented by Greg Sturm
- Began work on updating the Heritage Society plaque in the Social Hall
- Held our first ZOOM meeting

Hopes or Plans for the Near Future

- Continue ZOOM meetings
- Develop ways to recognize Heritage Society members
- Hold more Will Writing seminars
- Update or replace the plaque
- Have a regularly changing entry in the E-Voice
- Make a few presentations to the congregation.

Concerns

The committee needs new enthusiastic and creative members. This is a great way to contribute to the long-term future of the Fellowship.

Gaia's Rainbow on the Neshaminy

Chair

Tammy Ciampoli

Members

No formal membership. About 25 people maintain regular contact through social media.

Purpose/Mission

Gaia's Rainbow on the Neshaminy provides a safe and supportive space for Pagan and Earth-based support and education. We conduct eight seasonal and mid-seasonal celebrations called Sabats each year. In addition to sabats, we also hold Full Moon Rituals, which are gatherings that utilize lunar power and spiritual technologies (magick) to raise energy and help manifest wishes and positive outcomes in the lives of the participants. It is the mission of Gaia's Rainbow to offer a multicultural variety of pagan faiths and to offer participants opportunities to experience faiths in a capacity commensurate with their expertise or comfort level.

Highlights of the Year

- Ritual implements and tools are now organized and available in the Fireside Room closet. If there is an emergency or change of plans with a celebrant, there are basic ritual items available to conduct a Sabat. There are also folders containing a basic Full Moon Ritual outline available to utilize if any celebrant requires it.

- More participants are seeking celebrant roles, and/or are expressing an interest in joining the Fellowship as a result of their positive experiences with Gaia's Rainbow.
- Greater online presence. Thanks to the assistance of Fellowship members who are more technology-proficient than me, we are able to post timely announcements of events in more popular and visible forums such as e-voice and on-line calendar.
- Our February 2 Imbolc ritual featured a chant to raise energy for the Philadelphia Eagles. And they won the Super Bowl the next day!

Hopes and Plans for the Near Future

I have been compiling copies of past rituals for some time, and I would like to eventually organize them into eight Sabat folders. This will provide emergency, substitute or novice celebrants with a choice of outlines to guide them in leading a ritual.

Gardens

Chair

Susie Hook

Members

Historically, we are a hands-on working group, not a planning or discussion group. Frequent workers in the past year included: Rick Anderson, Dale Crosier, Melissa Egbertson, Ken Hall, Susie Hook, John Hook, Lynne Nugent, Nancy Overton, Harry Rothwell. Occasional or newer participants have included Bill Hines, Aaron Mulder, Sean Mulder, Caelan Mulder. Martha Wrigley contributes effective homemade deer spray.

Purpose/Mission

To maintain and develop the gardens and grounds of the Fellowship's approximately 3-acre site. This does not include parking lot issues, except we do some weed control.

Highlights of the Year

Independent gardeners have specialty areas. Dale Crosier maintains the tee-bed out by Street Road on a regular and dependable basis. Nancy Overton keeps the gardens around BuxMont's entrance looking beautiful. Harry Rothwell specializes in wildflower plantings and some pruning in the Detention Basin Wild Garden. Harry also maintains bird houses and bird feeders. Overall, our many new trees and native shrubs, planted in 2009, are doing very well. It is hard to believe that they started as small restoration-size twigs. Another accomplishment, with Board of Trustees assistance, was removal of dead ash trees (emerald ash borer) along two property lines.

Hopes and Plans for the Near Future

Susie hopes that we won't have as much rain as in the past 12 months. She is considering converting the lower Celebration Garden island bed to wetland plants only. We may try to move to more chopped leaf mulch and less bark and wood chips. Susie is hoping to install umbrella sockets in the lawn so that people can sit in the shade after services or hold meetings out of doors in relative comfort. Another ambition is to continue plant labeling.

Concerns

The almost unceasing rain last year left low-lying lawn and planting beds constantly flooded. The lawn-mowing service damaged the grass and got stuck. We tried to compensate with volunteer hand-mowing, but some areas were too wet for any mowing. This was the wettest year in 40+-year memory according to a very long-term BuxMonter.

In the detention basin and perimeter areas, we struggle constantly with invasive plants. These include lesser celandine, oriental bittersweet, ampelopsis vines, Canada thistle, and various woodies like autumn olive, privet, wineberry. Some exotic ornamentals have escaped too. Beavers are back, and they may gnaw any unprotected shrubs and trees. Keeping plant protection cages closed but not too tight, and weeding in cages, are challenges.

There are still many dead ash trees along the creek. We are anticipating that these will eventually fall into the creek and are not likely to endanger people or cars, but personal injury is a possibility. We have no current plans to have a tree service deal with these dead ashes.

We do not have enough physically fit/younger gardeners, especially for mulching. For gardeners, Lyme disease/tick prevention is a serious health concern, along with poison ivy.

Library (Sub-Committee of Sunday Service Committee)

Chair

Jeannie Bellavance

Members

Stephanie Wardwell, Claire Schulz

Purpose/Mission

The mission of the library is to support our Fellowship as a resource that will allow members to find information on a variety of topics such as spirituality, philosophy, life style, diversity, social concerns, Unitarian Universalism, and other religions.

Highlights of the Year

The Library Catalog is now on-line with Tiny Cat, an on-line service for small libraries, so it is much easier for members to check what books are owned by the Fellowship.

Patrons can access the catalog from any device that has internet capability, including laptops and cell phones. The link is <https://www.librarycat.org/lib/buxmontlib>. There is also a direct link on the library web page and in the Friday E-Voice.

During the fall renovations, the Library bought new shelves, which gave more space for the growing collection. Rev. Susan Rak donated several books from her personal collection. The committee wishes to thank Rev. Susan Rak and our members for the generous donations to our Library.

Throughout the year the committee updates the collection, weeding out duplicate titles and titles that no longer serve our Library's mission. These books will be available to Fellowship members and friends at the annual book sale in early June.

Hopes or Plans for the Near Future

Our hope is that members of the congregation will continue to use our growing collection for personal and spiritual growth.

Membership Committee

Chair

None for 2018-2019

Members

Brian Rothkopf, Howard Barkan, John Miller, Karen Anderson, Karen Reever, Rev. Kevin Jagoe, Ruth Aschmann, Sara Forney, Susie Hook, Susan Schultz

Purpose/Mission

The committee's duties include

- Ensuring visitors are greeted and welcomed. Follow up with visitors.
- Guiding visitors along the pathway to membership (in coordination with minister)
- Keep BuxMont's demographic data current.
- Check in with people whom we haven't seen in a while.

Highlights of the Year

- Created visitors' information packet, handed out by Welcoming Ambassadors with helpful information for the new visitors to get to know BuxMont a bit.
- Ensured that a Membership Committee person staffed the Welcoming Ambassador area each Sunday, to sign visitors in, answer their questions and help make them feel welcome at BuxMont.
- Coordinated and solicited BuxMont members and friends to volunteer as Sunday Morning Greeters at our front doors.
- Reviewed Member and Friends list, contacted those people who haven't seemed to be participating in a while, and updated the membership list accordingly. This included a review of, and letters sent to members who were not meeting their financial obligation per our bylaws. As a result, the status for 23 people was changed from Member to some other status (e.g., Friend, Former Member, etc.).
- Worked with Stewardship Committee on identifying and refining those people who should be solicited for pledging.

Hopes or Plans for the Near Future

We hope to do an even better job in welcoming visitors and keeping in touch with those people whom we don't see often. We will strive to check that newer people are acclimating well to our BuxMont community. We hope to keep in contact with all of our membership during the year.

Concerns

None

Peace & Justice

Chair

Tracy Bleakney

Members

Andrea Barto, Tracy Bleakney, Gio Bradley, Dena Condron, Kellianne Elker, Alicia Ford, Sara Forney, Bill Hines, Bodhi Jag, Dick Johnston, Jeanne Kane, Martin Kaplan, Donna Laing, Pat Lathrop, Rosemarie Monaco, Erin Mulder, Carol Myers, Valerie Profit, Karen Reever, Alexis Reilly, Harry Rothwell, Claire Schultz, Celia Sharp, William Talvitie, Tom Thomas, Micki Vieille, Mimi Volker, Joy Weatherill, Jack Wilkerson, Betsy Winter Hall

Please note, many of these people either cannot or do not come to meetings but like receiving information about what is going on in Peace and Justice.

Purpose/Mission

The mission of the BuxMont Peace and Justice Committee is to uphold the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism by supporting economic, environmental, and social justice issues, locally, nationally and globally through education, advocacy and action.

The Peace and Justice Committee, in giving witness to Unitarian Universalist values, seeks to lead, inspire, and collaborate with members of our congregation and outside individuals and groups in the area of social justice.

Highlights of the Year

Peace and Justice has a number of ongoing commitments including: Apartment Partners, the Split Plate Project, Doylestown Food Pantry donations, and support of ending gerrymandering, a UU-PLAN initiative.

Tracy Bleakney was approved as Chair in March, 2018.

This year we are proud of:

- August retreat including a visioning exercise led by Rev. Kevin leading to a number of changes of priority.
- Chief among these was identifying the need for listening and learning sessions, open and clear decision-making, with specific focus on time and resources.
- The Jack and Rosemarie Schieber Memorial Immigrant Scholarship was awarded to two students at Bucks County Community College who both sent us gracious thank you notes. This fund was a split-plate recipient for September.
- Split-plate recipients were identified for the church year chosen with respect to identified themes.
- Collaboration with RE on increasing donations to the Doylestown Food Bank.
- Thanksgiving basket for Apartment Partners; Christmas gifts for several of our Apartment Partners family members. Apartment Partners was the split-plate recipient for October.
- Xan Xoi, author of But What Can I Do? came to BuxMont on 10/8/18 and led a discussion.
- A Justice Town Hall was held after the service on 10/28 from 12-2 to find out what P & J issues BuxMonters are already involved in individually.
- Rosemarie Monaco and Bill Hines came forward as liaisons to UU-PLAN.

- Nationwide Vigil Against Gun Violence held on 12/11/18 in conjunction with Marlene Pray from Code Orange.
- Adoption Rights Campaign speaker Anne Martin-Montgomery spoke on 1/29/19 from 7-9 PM. UU-PLAN is willing to endorse the organization but we have not heard back from her.
- A six-session “A People So Bold” video and discussion group was held in January and February in the Fireside Room.
- Three POWER listening sessions were held at BuxMont in March 2019. Twenty-six people completed lengthy questionnaires that were counted for POWER.
- Fair Districts PA forum organized by Rosemarie Monaco held on 4/9/19 from 7-9 PM. On 4/11/19 eight BuxMonters attended the organizing meeting for POWER at the Langhorne United Methodist Church. We look forward to interfaith dialog and joining arms to work for Peace and Justice!

Hopes or Plans for the Near Future

- Continue collaboration with POWER.
- A group of BuxMonters will participate in the New Hope Celebrates Pride Parade on May 18th carrying a new banner to be used at P & J rallies and events.

Concerns:

Collaboration with RE did not occur as hoped.

Sunday Morning Committee

Chair

Michael Knapp and Melissa Egbertson

Members

50 registered volunteers: 10 Veggie people (3 new people), 21 Coffee/Donut/Clean Up people (4 new people), Usher number varies.

Mission/Purpose

To provide a welcoming environment for social interaction after the Sunday Morning Service, including food and drink.

Highlights

- Regular Support: Sign-Up Genius organization of the volunteers is going fairly smoothly. We currently assign Coffee/tea and refreshment setup, Veggie supply, Clean Up, and Donut Pickup.
- Assigning donut pickup separately has allowed some new volunteers to help out with that or with the Coffee/tea duty.
- Dave Haggard and Brian Rothkopf usher every 1st Sunday.
- We send out Sign-Up Genius requests weekly to our larger group of volunteers to fill the other ushering slots.
- The Ambler Small Ministry Group fills all the slots for the 5th Sundays.
- We are currently using tap water to prepare the Coffee/tea as water quality has improved.

Hopes and Plans for the Near Future

We are fortunate to have some new people join our volunteers this year and we hope that they find the experience fun and rewarding. We really appreciate their help and enjoy their company!

Concerns

We are running into some increasing difficulties communicating with our volunteers. The use of email appears to be decreasing in favor of texting, and as a result people are missing or not seeing reminders or new information. We have decided to purchase a month-by-month subscription to Sign Up Genius (an upgrade from our current free plan). This paid plan (\$99, Silver) allows us to send 150 texts a month in addition to free texted reminders. We hope this plan will also be useful to other BuxMont groups who use SignUp Genius.

Our ushers are juggling many jobs and sometimes the attendance records are not filled out. As a backup, we have asked the Finance Committee person overseeing the counting of the collection to remind the ushers to get an attendance total as a backup. This has helped assure we at least have an attendance total on several Sundays.

We have purchased a new coffee pot, but it seems to percolate very slowly. We are investigating.

Sunday Services Committee

Chair

Melissa Egbertson, Shaie Dively

Members

Laurie Brooks, Nancy Bruce, John Hook, Jerry Johnson, Dick Johnston, Harry Rothwell, Deborah Sheesley, Bill Talvitie, Tom Thomas and friends Martha Wrigley ,Tim Tibble, and Julie Kimmel

Mission/Purpose

To create meaningful lay-led Sunday morning programs for our congregation that offer insight and differing points of view in a spiritual context. Through spoken words, music, and movement, our services share lifelong journeys of growth, wonder and healing in a safe and caring environment.

Highlights of the Year

July 2018-June 2019 Total 26 Lay led services		
<i>Summer/Fall 2018</i>	<i>Holidays</i>	<i>Spring 2019</i>
10 services July-Sept 3	1 service New Years First Light	9 services Jan - June
4 services Sept-Dec	2 services Easter Week: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday	

Of the above 26 services, 5 were outside speakers on diverse topics, including Richard Williams "UUPLAN", Jenny Isaacs Immigration Rights Action "Immigration", Rabob Alma "Get to know a Muslim", Caroline Boudreaux "Miracle Foundation", Sarada Chiruvolu "Enlightenment through Meditation". The Youth Group provided one service.

Retreat

We held a retreat at Tom Thomas' house in August 2018, shortly after Rev. Kevin's arrival. Our administrator, Beverly Vitek, also attended.

We really appreciate Rev. Kevin's planning ahead and providing us with his service dates early on; as a result we have also been able to plan ahead. This had made life easier for everyone. We currently have services planned through the beginning of Sept 2019.

Hopes and Plans for the Near Future

We hope that people who have not recently participated in the Sunday Service Committee will join and help us to diversify our speakers, coordinators and topics, because....

Concerns

Several committee members have passed away, have left or will be leaving the committee; as a result we are relying more and more on fewer members to do the services. In the coming year we plan to invite more outside speakers. We need ideas from the congregation about outside speakers they would like to see. We can invite people you have seen before, or you can send us new ideas.