

**SOUTHWESTERN UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONFERENCE
ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015**

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Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference

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Southern Region Unitarian Universalist Association

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Lead Executive: Reverend Kenn Hurto, khurto@uua.org

**Annual Meeting
of the Member Societies of the
Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference (SWUUC),
a District of our UUA**

at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of New Orleans, Louisiana
11:00 a.m., April 18, 2015

From our SWUUC Constitution: The purpose of The Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference is to foster liberal religion and to make it effective in the life of the Southwest; to transact business pertaining to the general interest of the churches, societies, or organizations connected with it; to conduct training initiatives and conferences for adults and for youth, to promote the establishment of additional Unitarian Universalist societies in the Southwest and to carry on Unitarian Universalist extension in cooperation with the Unitarian Universalist Association.

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|-------|---|-------------------------|
| I. | Call to Order | Mark Anderson |
| II. | Chalice Lighting and Opening Words | Reverend Mark Walz |
| III. | Roll Call, Delegates, and Certification of Quorum | Patti Withers |
| IV. | Introduction of Staff and Board | Mark Anderson |
| V. | Consent Agenda – Minutes of 2014 Annual Meeting | |
| VI. | New Business | |
| | A. Endowment Committee Resolution | |
| | B. Resolution for Dissolution | |
| | C. Approval of Southern Region Budget 2015-2016 | |
| | D. Approval of Nominating Committee Slate | |
| VII. | Expressions of Appreciation | Mark Anderson and Staff |
| VIII. | Extinguish the Chalice and Adjournment | Audrey Peres |

**Annual Meeting of the Member Societies of
The Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference (SWUUC)
a District of our UUA**

First Unitarian Church; Dallas, TX

April 26th, 2014

I. The meeting was called to order by President Kevin Bolton (First Unitarian Church of Dallas, TX) at 1:00pm.

- Opening Words - the Purpose of the Conference - were read by Kevin Bolton.

The Chalice Lighting was read by Erin Sullivan, Youth Trustee (Live Oak UU Church, Cedar Park, TX).

- The roll call was called by Patti Withers, Vice President/Secretary (Bay Area UU Church, Houston, TX).

A quorum was certified by Patti Withers and Gaye Webb, Treasurer (UU Church of Brazos Valley – College Station, TX), with delegates from 21 voting congregations present.

- The SWUUC Board and Southern Region Staff were introduced.

II. Consent agenda – the Minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting having been previously distributed were approved unanimously.

III. Reports

- Kevin Bolton, President, gave the Report of the Conference: updates on The Orlando Platform and the Southern Region District Boards' meeting at The Mountain in September 2013, as well as announcing the vote of the SWUUC Board to recommend to the Endowment Committee that it make assets in the Endowment Fund available to U Bar U for its needs.
- Natalie Briscoe, Southern Region Congregational Life Consultant: highlighted achievements by various congregations and ministries, emerging congregations, new Welcoming Congregations, and upcoming events.
- Rev. Susan Smith, Southern Region Congregational Life Consultant: invited everyone to 'like' Faithify on Facebook. Faithify is a new crowd sourcing site for UU ministries launching in June 2014.

- James Snell, UUA Trustee: spoke of a GA proposal for the UUA to divest itself from fossil fuels, reworking the rules for emerging congregations to join, and discussed the five emerging congregations in SWUUC.
- Nikole Witt, SWUUW (Southwest UU Women): the next meeting is in San Marcos with keynote speaker Rev. Rebecca Parker.
- Kathy Calhoun, UU Women's Federation

IV. Business

- The 2014-2015 proposed budget was moved by Gaye Webb, seconded by Tom Reid (Community Unitarian Universalist Church – Plano, TX), and approved unanimously.
- The nominating committee report and slate of candidates were presented by Rev. Jonalu Johnstone (First Unitarian Church, Oklahoma City, OK), moved by Rev. Johnstone, seconded by Lee Veal (Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of San Miguel de Allende, Mexico) , and approved unanimously.

Those elected were:

i. Officers:

President: Mark Anderson (Live Oak UU, Cedar Park, TX)

Treasurer: Gaye Webb (UU Church of Brazos Valley – College Station, TX)

ii. Trustees:

Lewis Morris (First Jefferson UU Church, Ft. Worth, TX)

Youth Trustee: Audrey Peres (Bay Area UU Church, Houston, TX)

Youth Observer: Ben Ditmars (First Unitarian Church of Dallas, TX)

iii. Nominating Committee:

Dick Hildenbrand (Community UU Church, Plano, TX)

Ian Grey (UU Church of Oak Cliff, Dallas, TX)

C. Other Business

Proposed Constitutional Amendment:

Article IX - Dissolution Clause (new article)

Article X - Amendments; Add 2014 to list of years

Amendment moved by Erin Sullivan, seconded by Rev. Jonalu Johnstone, and approved unanimously.

V. Expressions of appreciation:

- Kevin Bolton presented the President's Award to Gaye Webb for her grace and professionalism while under considerable pressure dealing with SWUUC financial issues.
- Patti Withers recognized outgoing Board members Kevin Bolton, Rev. Jim VanderWeele (Community UU Church, New Orleans, LA), Carrie Stewart (First Unitarian Church of Dallas, TX), Erin Sullivan, and Erick Ditmars (First Unitarian Church of Dallas, TX).

VI. Friends of the District/Chalice Lighter Program

A. Approximately \$8000 was raised in the last Chalice Lighters' call for the First UU Church of Houston.

B. The SWUUC Board will be the contact for Chalice Lighter requests for the 2014-1015 church year.

VII. Closing Words were read by Margaret Anderson (First UU Church of Austin, TX).

VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 2:33pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Withers, Vice President/Secretary

**SOUTHWESTERN UU CONFERENCE - 2014 ANNUAL MEETING
CONGREGATIONS SENDING DELEGATES**

	SOUTHWESTERN	UU CONFERENCE - 2014 ANNUAL	MEETING	
State	City	Congregation Name	# Min. Del.	# Lay Del.
MX	San Miguel De Allende	UU Fellowship of San Miguel de Allende		1
AR	Eureka Springs	Eureka UU Fellowship		
AR	Fayetteville	UU Fellowship of Fayetteville		2
AR	Hot Springs	UU Church of Hot Springs		
AR	Hot Springs Village	Unitarian Universalist Village Church		1
AR	Jonesboro	UU Fellowship of Jonesboro		1
AR	Little Rock	UU Church of Little Rock		
AR	Mountain Home	UU Fellowship of Mountain Home		
LA	Alexandria	Unitarian Fellowship of Alexandria		
LA	Baton Rouge	Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge		
LA	Lacombe	North Shore UU Society of Louisiana		
LA	Lafayette	UU Fellowship of Lafayette Louisiana		
LA	New Orleans	First UU Church of New Orleans		
LA	New Orleans	Community Church	1	
LA	Shreveport	All Souls UU Church		
OK	Bartlesville	UU Church of Bartlesville		
OK	Edmond	Channing UU Church of Edmond		
OK	Lawton	Unitarian Universalist Church of Lawton		
OK	Norman	West Wind UU Congregation		
OK	Oklahoma City	First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City	1	
OK	Stillwater	UU Church of Stillwater		
OK	Tahlequah	UU Congregation of Tahlequah		
OK	Tulsa	All Souls Unitarian Church		
OK	Tulsa	Hope Unitarian Church		
OK	Tulsa	Church of the Restoration		
TN	Memphis	First Unitarian Church of Memphis		
TX	Abilene	UU Fellowship		
TX	Alpine	Unitarian Universalists of the Big Bend		
TX	Amarillo	Amarillo Unitarian Universalist Fellowship		
TX	Arlington	Arlington UU Church		
TX	Austin	First UU Church of Austin		1
TX	Austin	UU Fellowship of Austin		
TX	Austin	Wildflower Church: A UU Congregation		
TX	Beaumont	Spindletop Unitarian Church		
TX	Belton	UU Fellowship of Bell County		
TX	Brownsville	All Souls UU Church		
TX	Carrollton	Horizon UU Church		2
TX	Cedar Park	Live Oak UU Church		2

	SOUTHWESTERN	UU CONFERENCE - 2014 ANNUAL	MEETING	
State	City	Congregation	# Min. Del.	# Lay Del.
TX	College Station	UU Church of the Brazos Valley		1
TX	Corpus Christi	UU Church of Corpus Christi		1
TX	Dallas	The First Unitarian Church of Dallas		4
TX	Dallas	UU Church of Oak Cliff	1	3
TX	Denison	Red River UU Church		
TX	Denton	Denton UU Fellowship		2
TX	Galveston	UU Fellowship of Galveston County		
TX	Garland	Sacred Journey Fellowship		
TX	Georgetown	San Gabriel UU Fellowship	1	
TX	Houston	Emerson UU Church		
TX	Houston	First UU Church of Houston*		
TX	Houston	Unitarian Fellowship of Houston		
TX	Houston	Bay Area UU Church	1	3
TX	Huntsville	Huntsville UU Fellowship		
TX	Hurst	Pathways Church		1
TX	Kerrville	UU Church of the Hill Country		3
TX	Kerrville	UU Fellowship of Kerrville		
TX	Longview	UU Fellowship of Longview		
TX	Lubbock	First UU Church		
TX	Lufkin	Timberland UU Fellowship		
TX	Midland	UU Church of Midland		
TX	New Braunfels	Comal County UU Society		
TX	Odessa	The UU Church of Odessa		
TX	Plano	Community UU Church	2	3
TX	San Antonio	First UU Church of San Antonio		2
TX	San Juan	UU Fellowship of Hidalgo County		
TX	San Marcos	San Marcos UU Fellowship		
TX	The Woodlands	Northwoods UU Church		
TX	Tyler	UU Fellowship of Tyler		
TX	Victoria	UU Church of Victoria		
TX	Waco	UU Fellowship of Waco		

*Includes Thoreau/Stafford and Northwest/Copperfield campuses

Resolution of the Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference (SWUUC) Endowment Committee

Whereas it is the intent of the Board of Trustees of the Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference (SWUUC) to present a recommendation to its delegates of the spring 2015 annual meeting, scheduled for April 18, 2015, to dissolve the legal entity of the SWUUC, and,

Whereas, the current bylaws of the SWUUC require that all assets of the conference be assigned to the Unitarian Universalist Association in the event of dissolution, and

Whereas, the Board of Trustees of the SWUUC wish to ensure the funds in its endowment fund be retained in the geographical boundaries of the SWUUC and be available to congregations with the SWUUC, and not transferred to the UUA,

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Board of Trustees of the SWUUC Endowment unanimously recommends to the SWUUC Board of Trustees that the SWUUC endowment fund, currently invested in the Common Endowment Fund of the Unitarian Universalist Association, be liquidated and the funds be transferred to the Unitarian Universalist Friends Foundation, a 501 (c) 3 organization which owns the U Bar U Retreat and Conference Center located in Kerrville, Texas, and

Be it further resolved that this liquidation and transfer of funds is contingent on the subsequent dissolution of the SWUUC legal entity and will not take place until such dissolution occurs, and

Be it further resolved that the funds so transferred be used for capital improvements to the property of at the U Bar U Retreat and Conference Center located in Kerrville, Texas, and not for operating expenses of the organization.

Resolution unanimously passed by the Board of Trustees of the SWUUC Endowment on November 12, 2014, via electronic vote.

Certified by Gaye Webb
Chair, SWUUC Endowment Committee

Members:

William Daffinee, Community UU Church, Plano, Texas
Josef Kamerling, First Unitarian, Houston, Texas
Kevin Bolton, First Unitarian, Dallas, Texas
Gaye Webb, Treasurer, Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference

Electronic Motion, Second, and Vote

October 31, 2014 – Gaye Webb makes motion to approve resolution regarding distribution of endowment funds in the event of the dissolution of the Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference.

November 2, 2014 – William Daffinee seconds motion.

November 3 – November 12, 2014 – period for discussion, comments, questions; none received

November 12, 2014 – all four members affirm the resolution and vote “yes” on the motion

November 15, 2014 – Resolution to be presented to the SWUUC Board of Trustees

November 15, 2014 - Resolution approved unanimously by the SWUUC Board of Trustees, with many thanks to the Trustees of the Endowment for their work and recognition of the importance and value of U-Bar-U to the SWC.

Resolution for Dissolution

of

The Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference A District of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Be it Resolved that the Board of Trustees of The Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference moves that the attending congregational delegates give full authority to the Board of Trustees to complete all of the legal and other tasks necessary to dissolve the Conference or merge the Conference into a UUA-related entity, on such terms as the Board of Trustees and the UUA may agree.

Plan of Dissolution

of

The Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference A District of the Unitarian Universalist Association

1. Effective of the date of approval of this Plan of Dissolution by the Board of Trustees of The Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference (a nonprofit religious corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas) and the Conference's member congregations, the Plan of Dissolution shall be implemented by the Conference's Board of Trustees or such other person or persons as may be authorized to act for and on behalf of the Board to effect the dissolution of the Conference's corporate status and affairs.
2. The Conference's Board of Trustees, officers, or agents shall file any and all documents of dissolution with appropriate federal, state, and local government authorities, including but not limited to the filing of Articles of Dissolution with the Texas Secretary of State and the filing of appropriate forms with the Internal Revenue Service reporting corporate dissolution.
3. The Conference's Board of Trustees, officers, or agents shall, as soon as practicable following dissolution, return, transfer, and convey any and all of the Conference's property to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (a nonprofit religious corporation) and shall execute any deeds or other documents necessary or appropriate to effect such return, transfer, or conveyance.
4. The Conference's Board of Trustees, officers, or agents shall, as soon as practicable following dissolution, distribute the remaining assets of the Conference, after providing for the payment or settlement of all valid debts or claims against the Conference, to the Unitarian Universalist Association (a nonprofit religious corporation).
5. The Conference's Board of Trustees, officers, or agents shall pay all such fees and taxes and do or cause to be done such other acts and things as they may deem necessary or proper in order to carry out the dissolution of the Conference's corporate status and affairs.

**Southern Region UUA
Proposed Budget
July 2015 - June 2016**

	2014-2015 Budget	2015-2016 Proposed Budget
Income		
GIFT	574,483	570,000
UUA APF Grant	137,624	130,000
UUA APF Shared Staffing	349,047	357,000
Program Fees & Registrations	150,000	150,000
Congregational Consulting	6,000	7,500
Interest/Investment	1,000	0
Donations	1,000	1,000
Total Income	\$1,219,154	\$1,215,500
Expenses		
Administrative	12,400	9,500
Equipment & Maintenance	4,628	3,000
Insurance	6,000	0
Telecommunications	10,000	10,000
Bookkeeping, Technical & Web Services	52,700	25,000
Audit & Professional Services	7,000	10,000
Board, Governance & Transition/Legal	30,600	5,000
Stewardship	2,000	0
Admin Salaries, Benefits & Payroll Expense	146,214	150,000
Congregational Life Salaries & Benefits	663,313	675,000
Admin Professional Expense	10,000	12,000
Congregational Life Professional Expense	105,000	105,000
District Workshops & Programs	125,000	150,000
Program & Committee Expenses	9,000	21,000
Gifts & Caring, Program Grants	5,100	7,000
Congregational Peer Consulting	30,199	33,000
Total Expenses	\$1,219,154	\$1,215,500
Net Income	\$0	\$0

**Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference
Proposed Slate of Candidates from the Nominating Committee
February 2015**

The Nominating Committee submits the following nominees to be elected to the designated positions at the SWUUC 2015 Annual Meeting:

- Carrie Stewart (First Unitarian Church of Dallas), Vice-President/Secretary (2015-2017)
- Ben Ditmars (First Unitarian Church of Dallas), Youth Trustee (2015-2016)
- Rev. Mark Christian (First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City), Ministerial Trustee (2015-2017)

Continuing in their current terms are:

- Mark Anderson, President (2014-2016)
- Gaye Webb, Treasurer (2014-2016)
- Lewis Morris, Trustee (2014-2016)

Nominees were not sought for the following positions, anticipating the likelihood of the dissolution of the district at this meeting. Should the vote to dissolve fail, the new Board of Trustees will appoint for these positions:

- Nominating Committee (3 positions) (2015-2017)
- Youth Observer (2015-2016)

Respectfully submitted,

SWUUC Nominating Committee, consisting of:

- Ian Grey, Unitarian Universalist Church of Oak Cliff , Dallas, TX
- Dick Hildenbrand, Community Unitarian Universalist Church of Plano, TX
- Jonalu Johnstone, First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City, OK
- Dane Nielsen, Unitarian Universalist Village Church, Hot Springs, AR
- Daniel Polk, First Unitarian Church of Dallas, TX

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF NOMINEES

Carrie Stewart

As the Owner and Principal of One World Consulting, Carrie has served various communities and organizations in their quest for greater understanding, and inclusion of diverse individuals. A lifelong UU, Carrie has been a child, youth, member and friend of 13 congregations in 5 districts. She currently serves as a SWUUC and Hallelujah Region Smart Church Consultant specializing in anti-oppression, conflict transformation, compassionate communication and leadership and is a DBLE Staff member. She also serves as a member of the UUA Board of Trustees Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee and the Allies for Equity Steering Committee. Additionally, she holds PTA Executive Board and Officer positions at her children's schools and is President of the school district PTA Council. She holds a bachelors degree in American Studies from Smith College, and a masters in Communication from Rutgers University. Carrie and her spouse are the parents of two, third generation UU's in Colleyville, TX where they enjoy movies, theater, music, Saturday Night Live, travel (especially to water), and their two dogs.

Reverend Mark Christian

The Reverend Mark W. Christian has served the First Unitarian Church of Oklahoma City since 2001. Mark's call to serve "The 1UC in OKC" was a homecoming as four generations of his family have been members there dating back to 1940. Mark's first experience of religious leadership was in the Junior LRY at First OKC in 1971. Reverend Christian received a Bachelors of Arts in Communications from Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant, Oklahoma (1979) and a Master of Divinity--Magna Cum Laude--from Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Oklahoma (1997). He interned at All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa 1996-97 and served the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces, NM (1997-2001) before returning to Oklahoma City. Mark has won preaching awards from the UU Sunday School Society and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. He previously served on the SWUUC Board as a lay person. Rev. Christian has held numerous leadership positions in our faith tradition including, President of Channing UU Church in Edmond, OK, President of the Mountain Desert chapter of the UU Minister's Association, Secretary of the Executive Committee of the UUMA and Ministerial Settlement Representative for the UUA. He has served on the board of the local Interfaith Alliance, United Nations Association of Oklahoma City, the Midtown OKC Redevelopment Corporation and on the credentialing review panel for the Clinical Pastoral Education program at Integris Baptist Hospital. Mark is married (he met his wife, Linda, as a young adult at First OKC) their son, Scott, was active in YRUU both at First OKC and in SWUUC. Mark plays guitar, mandolin and sings in a duo that performs as "Toulouse T'Care Americana String Band." Mark identifies First OKC's strong youth program--particularly Camp Murray--and his work to bring congregation ally based community organizing--IAF affiliate VOICE--as his most significant accomplishments in ministry.

Ben Ditmars

Ben Ditmars is a third-generation Unitarian Universalist, and has been a child, youth, or member at Live Oak UU, First UU Church of Austin, Pathways Church, and is currently YRUU member and Church Member at First Unitarian Church of Dallas. Additionally, he is a charter camper at UBarU Summer Camp, and since middle school has been a Jr. Counselor as well as a camper there, holding staff jobs at Sr. High Camp. He also attends all District Youth Rallies, Camp Murray in Oklahoma, and the UUA General Assemblies in Fort Worth, Charlotte, Phoenix, Louisville, and upcoming in Providence.

Ben is a junior at Colleyville Heritage High School enrolled in AP classes and advanced Art courses. He contributes service hours to the Community Ambassador Scholar program. Ben is a member of the National Art Honor Society and the HS Ecology Club. He enjoys music, movies, and video games.

District Presidents' Report – Feb. 18, 2015

The past 12 months have been transformational for the Southern Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Drawing inspiration and wisdom from the words of those who came before us to shape the revolutionary ideas that emerged from the 2010 Orlando Platform – with roots in the 1648 Cambridge Platform – we are in the process of implementing structures that match our theology.

Those structures include:

- **Enhanced linkage**, including more frequent and purposeful communication, between congregations and our Unitarian Universalist Association Board of Trustees, to ensure a stronger voice in governance;
- Establishment of a **Regional Advisory Council**, to provide formal and regular discussion between lay leaders, religious professionals, Southern Region staff and our UUA Director of Congregational Life, to ensure our operations and programs are serving our needs;
- Forming and strengthening **Clusters** and **Networks**, made up of congregations working in covenant with other congregations with a shared geography or shared interests;
- Designating **Elders** – wise leaders of any age – who are deeply grounded in Unitarian Universalism and who, in shared ministry with our staff and other religious professionals, help make congregational connections.

In implementing these structures, the four District boards and our UUA Congregational Life staff look to develop deep relationships that lay a foundation and can serve as a model for a strengthened Unitarian Universalism among our more than 30,000 members in 218 congregations in 12 states, Mexico and the Virgin Islands. The relationships that we have cultivated already and expect to grow transcend geography, and provide a blueprint for how our faith can make a difference in the world.

Discovering the value of new connections led to re-evaluating historic relationships and the roles of governing boards in each of our Districts. We previously ended co-employment of our staff and moved to a consolidated budget for the region, leaving few governing responsibilities. We put aside our own district ends so as not to duplicate our UUA ends, which are developed by trustees we all elect at General Assemblies.

Since a September 2013 meeting at The Mountain of the four boards, staff, our UUA Moderator Jim Key and our UUA Director of Congregational Life Rev. Scott Tayler, we have spent much time in discussions that affirm the importance of Districts as collaborative ministries pulling congregations together. Now, we are proposing our congregations move forward with the next step.

At each of our four District Annual Assemblies this April, we will be asking for our congregations' approval to dissolve our District governance.

Should our congregations approve dissolving District governance, here's what we envision the Southern Region of the UUA will look like going forward:

- Congregations will recognize their own elders, who can serve at a congregational, cluster, regional or even national level. Elders can serve Unitarian Universalism on boards or councils, as consultant, teachers or small group leaders. They can represent the larger Association at ceremonial events, joining as one strong body to evangelize the South for Unitarian Universalism. A regional Council of Elders working in shared ministry with staff will help congregations recognize and celebrate elders and identify opportunities for service. Elderhood provides greater opportunities for our members to deepen their understanding of covenant and faith and enter into shared ministry.
- Congregations will think beyond their own walls and join with others of similar size, or in close geographic proximity, or facing similar challenges and opportunities, to work for justice, to worship, and to create new paths for spiritual exploration and growth. The basis for this behavior can be found in the idea, expressed many ways by many faiths, that we love our neighbors as ourselves, and the understanding that we are stronger together than we are alone.
- Our Unitarian Universalist Association will manage the financial administration of our funds through a restricted funds process and a Covenant of Understanding, defining the rights and responsibilities of both our UUA and the Southern Region. An interim Fiduciary Oversight Committee will work with UUA staff to provide oversight in finances and staffing levels for two years.
- Our Southern Region Staff will work in shared ministry with congregations, elders, clusters and other constructs that serve to further the faith.

- Our UUA Board will be accountable to the member congregations of the Southern Region through congregational participation and voting at the UUA General Assembly, with our UUA Trustees conducting deliberate and regular Linkage outreach to congregations in the Region. This Linkage work already has begun. UUA Trustees and designated volunteers conducted lengthy one-on-one interviews with lay leaders and ministers of 100 congregations about how we gather at General Assembly and how we govern as an Association, with additional input sought through an online survey distributed nationwide. Trustees will use feedback received in the process they have undertaken to ensure governance is more democratic and effective.
- Our UUA Director of Congregational Life will call on an advisory council of eight regional leaders to provide input to the Southern Region staff about program priorities and goal setting and to assist in assessment of programming impact.

The work we do is grounded in covenant, deep promises to each other made in faith, which has enhanced the efforts of our District boards, our District Presidents and our Congregational Life staff as we agreed on how we wanted to be together.

Our four District presidents, who met by telephone bi-weekly, began our gatherings with check-ins so that we could better understand each other, including how deeply the desire to grow Unitarian Universalism ran through our core; that imbued us with the trust to call – and be called –back into covenant when we got off course.

Our District Presidents also met face-to-face two times during the past year – joining the Congregational Life staff for part of their retreat in Austin, Texas in September 2014, and at the District President’s Association in Boston, Mass. in November 2014.

Many of our District Board Members also built relationships across geographic lines as they worked on Regional task forces, focused on Elders, the Democratic Process and Communications.

District trustees participated in a joint meeting of the District boards in late January, to get a first look at and provide input into the information we presented during a series of webinars in February and March. In these webinars, we outlined a vision for how the Region will function going forward and we listened deeply to

the questions and wisdom of our lay leaders, religious professionals and congregational members.

With the proposed regionalization of our four Districts, we will be able to better use our time, talent and treasure to grow recognition and reach of Unitarian Universalism throughout the South, making a faithful difference in our world.

Respectfully submitted,

Margie Manning, President, Florida District

DeAnn Peterson, President, Mid-South District

Denise Rimes, President, Southeast District

Mark Anderson, Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference of the UUA

On behalf of our District Boards of Trustees



Southern
Region



Report of the Lead Executive for the Southern Region – Unitarian Universalist Association

The Reverend Kenneth Gordon Hurto
Spring 2015

We Are Building a New Way

Envisioning the New Way:

In his 1852 novel, *The Blithedale Romance*, Unitarian Nathaniel Hawthorne recollected his experience some years earlier as part of Brook Farm, an experiment in utopian, communal living west of Boston. He trenchantly noted:

We were of all creeds and opinions, and generally tolerant of all.... We were... agreed as to the inexpediency of lumbering along with the old system any farther. As to what should be substituted, there was much less unanimity.

Over five years ago, District Leaders, inspired by then UUA Moderator Gini Courter and our current Moderator, Jim Key, were challenged to look back nearly fifty years and to ask whether Districts were the best way for our UUA to serve congregations. In December 2010, nearly 60 Board leaders from the Florida, Mid-South, Southeast and Southwestern Districts, plus field and UUA staff, met to consider the question. They agreed that the old system was no longer serving us well. They crafted the *Orlando Platform*,¹ a blueprint calling for cross-District collaboration as a substitute. Soon thereafter, the field staff began serving the entire Region and the District Presidents met to coordinate the implementation of a collaborative ministry.

In September 2013, the four Boards² and staff met again to review what had been learned. All agreed that reducing the size of the Boards and the sharing of staff and programs proved economically more efficient and opened ways to a more broadly-shared ministry. No longer constrained by District boundaries, the focus shifted to congregation-to-congregation sharing based on geographical clusters, to creating new affinity-interest based configurations independent of location,³ and to state-wide networks of social witness. Our small staff offered their talents throughout the Region while each remained in the role of “primary contact” for 30-35 of our 216 congregations.

In the midst of these changes, the Boards (because we are bold!) agreed to a request from the UUA *Stewardship & Development Office* to pilot a project named **GIFT** (*Generously Investing in Tomorrow*),⁴ GIFT does away with separate appeals for Fair Share gifts for the District and the UUA Program Fund. Instead, a single **Ask** supports both our UUA and the Region. GIFT relies not on a membership “head tax;” rather, it asks for a percentage (7%)⁵ of a congregation’s operating expenses. Although it has been a challenge for some (not all) of our congregations to increase their combined District/UUA giving to that level, all agree this is a more equitable and covenantal approach to funding our overall ministries.

Now Is the Time for a New Way:

Now, this month, the Boards ask congregational delegates to boldly craft a new way of being together — as a single, cultural and program ministry known as the **Southern Region — UUA**. Five years of reflection, trial (and a few errors), and trust-building have led the four Boards unanimously to recommend the disincorporation of Districts as governance/business entities.⁶

Over many months, your Boards have crafted a **Covenant of Understanding**⁷ with our UUA that captures the spirit and intent of a new way of being together and providing services to our congregations going forward.

None thinks we have utopia, but we have great faith in a new way that:

- Calls for our lay leaders to work together as wise leaders, guided by our UUA Congregational Life Consultants and a *Council of Elders*.⁸ These “elders” will leverage staff capacity to strengthen the formation of clusters as the primary means of inter-congregational cooperation.
- Ensures direct connection with our staff and our UUA through a new *Advisory Council*,⁹ with lay and religious professional volunteers from each District. They will advise the UUA Director of Congregational Life, *Scott Tayler*, and the Region’s Lead Executive to ensure the efficacy of our field services, the responsiveness of staff to congregational needs, and to assist the UUA Board of Trustees in their linkage work.
- Makes all our staff UUA employees with full benefits.
- Transfers business operations (financial and personnel management) to our UUA.
- Secures the Region’s assets in a General Reserve fund whose purpose will be to support the ministries of the Southern Region. Each District will appoint a representative to a Fiduciary Oversight Committee to ensure our interests.

The hope, the promise of these recommendations is to provide more talent, volunteer and paid, to nurture our congregation’s well being and to increase the impact of Unitarian Universalism in the Region. Full details of the plans, including a *Frequently Asked Questions* document, are on our web site.

I urge your support of the Board’s recommendations.


Southern Region Finances

The Region’s financial reports are reported elsewhere by the Treasurers. The bottom line for FY2013-14: we had predicted a modest deficit but ended the year ahead of where we began.

	FY13/14 Actual	FY13/14 Budget	Variance in \$	Variance from expectation
Income	\$1,203,653	\$1,267,210	-\$63,557	95%
Expense	<u>\$1,154,247</u>	<u>\$1,292,363</u>	<u>-\$138,115</u>	89%
Net	\$ 49,406	\$ -25,153	\$74,558	

Our surplus was mostly the result of tight cost controls throughout the year. We were not surprised but still disappointed that the first year of GIFT yielded ~\$31,000 less than we had hoped.¹⁰ For this year, FY2014-15, we have planned for a balanced budget of \$1,219,154 income and expenses.

FY2013/14 was the first year of a truly integrated budget (rather than four separate budgets). The Region’s finances were professionally reviewed by an auditing firm in the fall of 2014; these reviews indicated our books accounted for all monies.



As of 31 March, 2015, our preliminary Balance Sheet indicates total assets of \$528,500 and total liabilities of \$333,841. The District Boards have directed the staff to merge or liquidate various internal liabilities (totaling approximately \$112,963 at this time) to simplify our structure. With approval of the SWC's delegates, the SWC endowment will be transferred to U-Bar-U. Funds we have been holding for other Unitarian Universalists groups will be disbursed back to those entities. Chalice Lighter funds currently on hand will be disbursed to recipient congregations or credited to upcoming calls. All remaining assets/equity as of 6/30/2015 will be invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund, with the caveat that those monies may be used only for Southern Region programming.

Next year's draft budget, FY2015/16, anticipates \$1,215,500 for income and expense. This assumes our overhead will decrease by about \$30,000 with the transfer of our financial operations to the UUA. Those savings will be re-allocated to new program ministries

Each February 1st, congregations file certification details to our UUA. This year's data again note that the Southern Region is growing modestly: 1.2% to 30,818; this represents a 13% growth rate over ten years. Regrettably, our UUA totals declined for the fifth straight year, to 156,620. Children's Religious Education enrollment reflects the same overall pattern.

Southern Region Field Staff Team

Our professional field staff provide most of the direct UUA service to our congregations. The team's work is guided by the UUA Board's *Ends*, the Congregational Life group's "*Three I's — Innovation, Impact, & Interconnection*," District Boards' oversight, and our team's work plan. All members serve the Region as needed. For the first time in three years, we have had a stable field staff complement of seven consultants.


With *Glenn Johnson's* retirement, we closed the SED office last summer; thus, all four District office operations now have been brought together into the Orlando, Florida office, superbly managed by *Jessica Curren*. A huge benefit of consolidation has been up-grading *Kathy Charles* to just over ½ time as our meeting logistics planner and *Christine Purcell* full-time as our Communications/IT Specialist. A staff roster is below.

Our Region's field and administrative staff serve two overall goals: to strengthen Unitarian Universalism in the South, and to provide leadership development to congregations and emerging "beyond congregation" networks. In addition to direct work with leaders and on-site engagements, the staff offer a number of events, usually with a host congregation or at a cluster gathering, or at "camp" settings.

These are our every year offerings:

- The Dwight Brown, the Southern Unitarian Universalist, and, with 2015, Smaller Congregation *Leadership Experiences*, typically, are held in August.
- Each July, we offer four *Convocations* of Presidents, one in each District.
- Additionally, we offer "*Toolbox*" weekend trainings in the Fall and Spring
- *Start-up workshops* with Boards and new professional religious leaders take place throughout the year.

The UUA Congregational Life field staff are "deep generalists," with very broad capacities. Each year, there are emerging needs and opportunities for which we provide one day or weekend events — covering everything from worship to youth programming, from stewardship to board retreats, from conflict management to social witness, and so on.



At a more personal level, we provide consultation for congregations facing transitions in religious professionals, for congregations in conflict, and direct support to religious professionals and lay leaders. Routinely, we teach best practices for stewardship training and consultation, growth management, governance and congregational assessment. The staff team presents at cluster gatherings, supports the District Boards, and fulfills assignments from the UUA.

When we cannot do something, we most certainly know where to find someone who can. In addition to our team, we have many *Smart Church* trained consultants and other UUA staff to call upon. So, congregational leaders, we urge your participation in the many program offerings around the Region. Please, call often and long before you think you need help (particularly around conflict).

All this detail serves one goal: Strengthening our work together. Since our origins, our faith has been a reforming ministry, ever seeking a better way to promote human dignity, respect for persons and our world.

In a time of great change and high anxiety, too often, we learn of horrid injustice arising out of greed for power, blatant hatred, racial bigotry or fear of difference. The call of our times often feels daunting.

However, we are a bold people. We have, can, and will stand on the side of Love. Thank you all, good leaders for your witness and dedication. With deep appreciation for our congregations, their leaders, and our shared ministries, I thank you for this opportunity to serve.

Kenn

The Reverend Kenneth Gordon Hurto
Lead Executive, Southern Region — UUA

The Congregational Life Southern Region Staff Team 2015

Natalie Briscoe, Austin, TX ♦
nbriscoe@uua.org (south and west Texas)

Kathy Charles, Houston, TX ♦
kcharles@uua.org (event planning, logistics)

Jessica Curren, Orlando, FL ♦
jcurren@uua.org (member services, financial administration)

Connie Goodbread, Palm Harbor, FL ♦
cgoodbread@uua.org (southern Florida, South Carolina)

The Reverend Kenneth Gordon Hurto, Ft Myers, FL ♦
khurto@uua.org (team lead, large congregations of Region)


Maggie Lovins, Pensacola, FL ♦
mlovins@uua.org (Georgia, northern Florida)

Kathy McGowan, Durham, NC ♦
kmcgowan@uua.org (North Carolina, southern Virginia)

Christine Purcell, Knoxville, TN ♦
cpurcell@uua.org
(communications, website)

The Reverend Carlton Smith, Holly Springs, MS ♦
csmith@uua.org
(Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama)

The Reverend Susan Smith, Shreveport, LA ♦
ssmith@uua.org (northern Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas)

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- 1 The full text of the *Orlando Platform* can be found at:
<http://www.uuasouthernregion.org/resources/orlandoplatform.html>
 - 2 The grand experiment set in motion in Orlando moved forward thanks to the dedication of your Boards of Trustees from each District. Lest we be remiss and convey that the current state of affairs suddenly emerged, I call your attention to the roster of past leaders. Untold hours and immense talent have made possible moving out of an antiquated and lumbering system. With gratitude, here's the list of past leaders:
<http://www.uuasouthernregion.org/gratitude.html>
 - 3 The advance of audio & visual teleconferencing has opened up new ways of relating. Affinity-clusters are composed of congregational leaders with similar interests or needs. A most successful, working model is the routine meeting of congregational Presidents from our largest congregations. Statewide legislative ministry is another. The staff will support bringing together those groups who have common aspirations regardless of where they are physically located.
 - 4 **GIFT** details, including answers to that pesky “how do I calculate operating expenses,” will be found here: <http://www.uuasouthernregion.org/stewardshipgift.html>. We have been immeasurably supported in the “GIFT roll-out” by UUA Congregational Stewardship Network consultant *Bill Clontz*, of Alexandria, VA. See his excellent counsel about GIFT and Stewardship in general on our website at:
<http://stewardshipfortherestofus.blogspot.com>
 - 5 It was not a careful study, but I did a quick perusal of other denominations. I found many using the same approach as GIFT, with Asks ranging from 5% (Disciples) to 10% (Episcopal, Methodists).
 - 6 The Boards emphasize that going out of business does not mean the end of Districts. Each of these historic groups has a unique culture, identity, and ways of relating. The intent is to lift up and affirm those particularities in program and service delivery as time goes along.
 - 7 The **Covenant of Understanding** spells out in detail how transferring District operations into the UUA management structure will work. It seeks to be clear while adaptable to what we learn during implementation. Our UUA, founded in 1961, has never done this before; hence, we expect the spirit and intent to be the most important part of this, with an understanding that things may not work quite as envisioned in the document.
Readers may like to know that this *Covenant* has been approved by all four District Boards, by me, the Region’s Lead Executive, and UUA Board Moderator *Jim Key*. It also has been vetted and approved by our UUA Administration — including President *Peter Morales*, Chief Operating Office, *Harlan Limpert*, Treasurer & Chief Financial Officer, *Tim Brennan*, Comptroller *Karen Wheeler*, Director of Human Resources, *Rob Molla*, and Director of Congregational Life, *Scott Tayler*.
 - 8 An explanation of the Council of Elders and how it will work is found here:
<http://www.uuasouthernregion.org/resources/pathtoeldership.html>
 - 9 The Region’s Advisory Council team will be staffed by:
The Reverend Ann Marie Alderman, Greensboro, NC Erin Sullivan, Austin, TX
Jill Austin, Murfreesboro, TN The Reverend Mark Walz, Dallas, TX
Jennifer Carver, Tallahassee, FL The Reverend Mark Ward, Asheville, NC
Marguerite Mills, Nashville, TN The Reverend Deanna Vandiver, New Orleans, LA
 - 10 It should be noted in passing that our current income expectations reflect no increases in District or Regional funding since 2008 — the year of the Great Recession. District Fair Share requests (ranging from \$19 to \$23/member) through 2012 had not been increased since 2006. The 7% **GIFT Ask** reflects the historic overall support of the four Districts; it does not include any increase in expectations. That we have been able to do this results directly from the efficiencies of scale found in the move toward a Regional structure.



Southern
Region



Southern Region Program Highlights 2014 – 2015

Our four Districts had a surprising number of events in this last year. While not everything, here are some highlights of our collaborative ministries:

Regional

- Presidential Convocations
- Two Leadership Experiences
- Support & consultation to the Boards regarding Regionalization
 - Working group task forces: *Communications, Democratic Process, Elderhood, Fiduciary Oversight & Governance*
- Completion of *Elderhood Council Design*
- Appointment of *Regional Advisory Council*

The Florida District

Ministerial Transitions

- Venice — Reverend Khleber M.Zandt
- Naples — Reverend Tony Fisher
- Buckman Bridge, Orange Park — Reverend Jack Ford
- Marion County — Reverend Janet Onnie
- Jacksonville — Phillip Baber, Consulting

Cluster & Other Program Events

- Bradenton — Unitarian Universalist & Growth workshop
- Fort Myers — Stewardship workshop
- Stuart — Mission & Covenant workshop
- 1st Orlando, FL — “Freeing the Giant Within” workshop
- St. Augustine — Evolution weekend
- Annual Choral Festival
- Annual Women’s Retreat
- West Central Revival

Board Policy work

- Development of Regional Youth Safety Policy

Milestones

- Marion County, FL — 30th Anniversary
- Tallahassee, FL — 11 of 22 member congregations participated in the 8th Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry in Florida hold Legislative Action Day

Thanks to our Board members

- Margie Manning, Harvey Heckes, Chris Reid, Sarah Ritzman, Al Tweedy*

PO Box 560246, Orlando, FL 32856 | P 407.894.2119 | E sr@uua.org | WEB www.uuasouthernregion.org



The Southeast District

Ministerial Transitions

Chapel Hill, NC — Reverend Thom Belote
Beaufort, SC — Reverend Kevin Tarsa
Glen Allen, VA — Reverend Amy Russell
Brunswick, GA — Reverend Jane Page, consulting
Asheville, NC — Reverend Tandy Scheffler, ordination
Raleigh, NC — Reverend Mary Frances Comer, ordination

Cluster & Other Program Events

Eno River, Durham, NC — Living Legacy Project "Now Is the Time" Racial Justice Conference
Raleigh, NC — 2nd Mass Moral March on the Capitol
The Mountain, Highlands, NC — (SUULE) Southern Unitarian Universalist Leadership Experience
Spartenburg, SC — Unitarian Universalist Leadership
Glen Allen, VA — Tidewater Cluster "Generations Working Together" workshop

Milestones

Providence, RI — Jim Key, Beaufort, SC, leads first UUA General Assembly
Richmond, VA — Dedication after major renovations

In Loving Memory

Norfolk, VA — Death of Reverend Jennifer Slade

Thanks to our Board members

Denise Rimes, Peter Kandis, Martin Bauer, Kathia Shiba, Larry Meisner


The Mid-South District

Ministerial Transitions

Tuscaloosa — Reverend Fred Hammond
Montgomery — Reverend Lyn Hopkins
Atlanta — Reverend Duncan Teague, ordained
Metro North, Atlanta, GA — Reverend Kim Palmer, ordained
Dahlonega & Marietta, GA — Reverend Charlotte Arsenaault, ordained
Macon, GA — Reverend Cassandra Howe

Cluster & Other Program Events

Bay County, Panama City, FL — "Play-Shop" on LGBTQ issues
Oxford, MO — Living Legacy Project & College of Social Justice 50th Anniversary of Mississippi Freedom Summer
Westside Knoxville, TN — Compassionate Communications workshop
Decatur, GA — LREDA Conference
Marietta, GA — "Stewardship for Unitarian Universalists"
Gallant, AL — 1st Multi-Track weekend: Stewardship, Faith development in Film, & for youth, 'Gathering in Gaia's Garden' workshops
Birmingham, AL — Arc of Justice Conference, 50th Anniversary of Selma to Montgomery Marches
1st Church, New Orleans, LA — Conference hosted by Center for Ethical Living, DRUUMM (Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural)



Ministries) and ARE (Allies for Racial Equity). "Healing the Waters:
Decolonizing Our Communities and the Climate Movement"

Congregational Celebrations and Milestones

Clarksville, TN — New sanctuary
Tuscaloosa, AL — 60th Anniversary
Oak Ridge, TN — New building
Huntsville, AL — New building
Marietta, GA — New building
Athens, GA — 60th Anniversary

In Loving Memory

Birmingham, AL — Death of Dorrie Fuchs

Thanks to our Board members

DeAnn Peterson, Jill Austin, Bob Day, Christine Freeman, Natalie Bigord

The Southwestern Conference

Ministerial Transitions

1st Church, Dallas, TX — Reverend Beth Dana
Live Oak, Austin, TX — Reverend Joanna Crawford called to Live Oak UU Church
UUFellowship, Houston, TX & Thoreau Woods, Huntsville, TX — Rev. Tony Lorenzen
1st Church, Austin, TX — Reverend Chris Jimmerson, ordination
Fayetteville, AR — Reverend James Parrish
Georgetown, TX — Reverend Mark Skrabacz
Corpus Christi, TX — Reverend Phil Douglas, retires

Cluster & Other Program Events

Denton, TX — (DBLE) Dwight Brown Leadership Experience
Heart of Texas Cluster, Austin, TX — Extended Leadership Experience
Sequoia State Park, Hulbert, OK — (SWUUSI) Southwest UU Summer Institute
Glen Rose, TX — SWC Fall Conference, "Love Reaches Out"
Lubbock, TX — West Texas Cluster, Annual Gathering
Little Rock, AR — Arkansas Cluster initiates statewide legislative ministry
Oklahoma City, OK — Launch of new West OK Cluster
Austin, TX — OWL Training
Dallas, TX — NTUUC *Standing on the Side of Love* Conference

In Loving Memory

Amarillo, TX — Passing of Gary Shack, Long-Time Elder

Milestones

- Austin, TX — Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry Legislative Action Day involving 27 congregations.
- Benton County, AR — Applying for UUA Membership
- Turley, OK — The Welcome Table missional community now part of UUA pilot program for recognition of non-traditional Unitarian Universalist ministries

Thanks to our Board members

*Mark Anderson, Reverend Mark Walz, Gaye Webb, Lewis Morris, Patricia Withers,
Ben Ditmars, Audrey Peres*

**Southern Region UUA
Balance Sheet
As of June 30, 2014**

CURRENT ASSETS

Bank Accounts

SWC Checking	38,644.07
MSD Checking	22,918.64
MSD Chalice Lighter Checking	1,006.54
FLD Checking	18,446.93
FLD Money Market	112,598.59
SR Checking	300,908.08
Total Bank Accounts	\$494,522.85

Investment Accounts

SWC UUA CEF	149,976.61
MSD UUA CEF	31,458.83
SED UUA CEF	77,865.42
Total Investment Accounts	\$259,300.86

TOTAL ASSETS

\$753,823.71

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Payroll Liabilities	4895.56
Chalice Lighters	74226.22
SWC Audit Accrual Fund	7,500.00
FLD Growth Reserve Fund	14,402.24
FLD Leadership Reserve Fund	262.09
FLD Program Consultant Reserve	16,028.59
Florida Fund Endowment	23,931.87
SED Association Sunday Return	12,469.04
FLD DE Discretionary	410.07
FLD Annual Assembly Reserve	4,079.68
FLD Racial Justice Reserves	117.67
FLD Disaster Relief - Wider Community	10,965.84
FLD Disaster Relief Fund	3,932.75
FLD Witness for Justice Fund	1,865.25
MSD Mississippi Fund	4,013.63
MSD Anti-Torture Grant	1,500.00
MSD Severe Storm Fund	770.00
MSD UPI Program Fund	6,746.86
MSD Rome GA Dissolution	1,911.83
SED Bending the Arc	1,676.84
SED Laurel Amabile Fund	500.00
SED Youth Gathering Grant	118.75
SED Youth Trustee Fund	1,000.00
SED 2014 Racial Justice Conference	7,000.00
SWC CYA Scholarship Fund	544.00
SWC Friends of the District Fund	4,521.89
SWC CEF Endowment	149,976.61
SR Event Scholarship Fund	10.68
Affiliate FLD Southwest Cluster	2,552.02
Affiliate SED Living Legacy Pilgrimage	28,585.84
Affiliate SED Civil Rights Vets Gathering	2,826.66

TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES

\$389,342.48

EQUITY

Organizational Equity	315,076.12
Net Income	49,405.11

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

\$753,823.71

Southern Region UUA
Budget vs. Actuals: Southern Region - FY14 P&L
July 2013 - June 2014

	Actual	Budget
INCOME		
GIFT Income	543,107.89	574,483.00
APF Grant	137,624.00	137,624.00
UUA Shared Staffing	333,783.65	342,203.00
Program Registration Fees	160,339.30	200,000.00
Marketplace Sales	4,062.25	
Other Program Income	2,130.00	
Congregational Consulting Income	9,382.29	6,000.00
Interest Income	2,866.25	1,900.00
Investment Income	6,747.33	
Donations	262.30	5,000.00
Other Income	3,347.76	
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,203,653.02	\$1,267,210.00
EXPENSES		
General and Office Expense	10,059.77	15,400.00
Equipment and Leases	4,745.68	4,628.00
Insurance	6,399.42	6,000.00
Telecommunications	9,700.60	15,600.00
Contracted and Other Services	47,619.03	68,700.00
Taxes	100.00	
Board and Governance Expenses	49,482.02	48,100.00
Stewardship Expenses		3,000.00
Administrative Staff Salaries	134,138.28	123,578.00
Congregational Life Staff Salaries	622,268.65	650,307.00
Administrative Staff Professional Expense	5,281.71	10,000.00
Congregational Life Staff Professional Expense	103,458.92	105,000.00
Payroll Expense	5,675.20	8,959.00
District Workshops and Programs	136,608.14	175,000.00
Committee Expenses		9,600.00
Gifts and Caring	2,196.49	5,400.00
Congregational Consulting Expenses	16,514.00	43,091.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,154,247.91	\$1,292,363.00
NET INCOME	\$49,405.11	(\$25,153.00)

Southwest LREDA Chapter Annual Report 2015

The purposes of the Southwest Chapter of the Liberal Religious Educators' Association include

1. encouraging knowledge of LREDA
2. encouraging the use of LREDA Good Offices people
3. supporting each other
4. supporting all Southwest Conference religious educators
5. encouraging all conference congregations to have professional religious educators
6. encouraging the conference congregations to support religious educators in becoming members of LREDA
7. creating more awareness of religious education and its importance
8. encouraging each other in continuing education and career enhancement
9. working with the Conference Board and the Conference Religious Education Committee to ensure excellent religious education
10. working with the Southwest Conference Chapter of UUMA

Our chapter meets regularly to discuss needs of religious educators in our district and how we might address them as a chapter.

In February of 2014 we hosted our first-annual midwinter conference for district religious educators, and our second annual this year, in February 2015. The conference is a continuation of the annual midwinter conference traditionally planned and hosted by the southwest district.

The southwest district supported our efforts by transferring to us monies that had previously held by the district for scholarships for religious educators.

A subcommittee is currently working on a best practices handbook for rallies .

Representatives from the SW District asked if our chapter would take over the selection of the Veridan award, which has been awarded to a religious educator for excellence in service to the denomination. We have agreed, and a subcommittee is now working on this.

We approved the training of a new LREDA Good Officer for our district – Kathy Smith, Director of Religious Education at Community Unitarian Universalist Church in Plano, Texas.

We developed a document to be given to new religious educators in our district. The document lists essential connections and resources for new religious educators.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheri Phillabaum,

SW LREDA Chapter Chair

SWU UW Report for Southwestern UU Conference 2015

In March of this year over 200 UU women gathered in San Marcos, TX for the 29th Annual SWU UW Conference. From as far away as Michigan UU women came together for a “girls only” weekend to learn, share, pray, grow, celebrate ourselves and each other, be inspired and have fun. In 1987 SWU UW held its first conference and has convened yearly since that time. Conferences are usually held in late February or early March and are highlighted by well-known national and international keynote speakers and musicians as well as a wide variety of workshops and high quality products from vendors.

SWU UW strives to keep its week-end conferences affordable and offers scholarships for those women who qualify. Responsibility for conference planning has alternated between various women’s groups in locations throughout the district thus increasing the creative energy of the conferences. Seven years ago SWU UW served as one of the launch organizations for the 1st Int’l. Convocation of UU Women. That group will hold its 3rd Convocation in 2017 in Pacific Grove, CA.

Recent conferences:

- 2015 – San Marcus, TX: “Our Sacred Springs”, Keynote: Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker
- 2014 - Tulsa, OK: “The Power of Story”, Keynote: Kelli McLoud-Schingen
- 2013 - Corpus Christi, TX: “Making Waves on a Sea of Change”, Keynote: Kimberly Dark
- 2012 - Clear Lake City, TX: “Exploring the UUniverse of Women’s Spirituality”, Keynote: Rev. Meg Barnhouse
- 2011 - Dallas, TX: “Generation Nexxt” Keynote: Rev. Tamara Lebak
- 2010 – Dallas, TX: “In the Name of Love”, Keynote: Gini Courtier

In addition SWU UW has a history of making charitable donations to other non-profits. SWU UW has donated to Heifer Int’l., micro-loans for women through the Village Banking Group, and Chalice Lighters. For the past several years SWU UW has donated a significant amount of any post-conference profit to the charity of choice of the host city’s convener. These include Bay Area Turning Point, Metro Ministries, the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation, the San Marcos River Foundation and the New Braunfels Parks Foundation.

Southwest UU Women (SWU UW) is an active and vibrant organization within the Southwest District of the Southern Region of the UUA. The SWU UW Board of Directors represents the women of over 70 churches and fellowships covering most of Texas, all of Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and Memphis, TN.

As a non-profit organization SWU UW supports women through worship, learning, leadership, community and social justice. SWU UW discusses women's issues, explores feminist theology, promotes friendships and celebrates the diversities that make us unique women on our individual spiritual paths. A member organization, SWU UW is open to all UU Women and exists to serve the following purposes:

- To bring UU women into closer acquaintance, cooperation and fellowship through the annual SWU UW Conference and other UU events;
- To sponsor the annual SWU UW Conference to be held within the Southwest area;
- To deepen the religious life of women, particularly those of the Southwest District;
- To promote the formation of new women's groups in churches and fellowships;
- To develop women leaders to be a strong and effective voice;
- To educate our members on social issues especially those related to the status of women;
- To foster greater social justice through long term systemic change at the local, national and international level.

For more information on Southwest Unitarian Universalist Women check out our website at www.swuuw.org. Plan to join us in Lawton, OK in 2016 as we celebrate our 30th anniversary!

Submitted by 2015 SWU UW Board:

President - Karen McGinnis

President Elect - Debbie Cannatella

Past President - Nikole Witt

Treasurer - Marissa Fehler

Secretary - Celeste Kennedy

Directors at Large - Jeannie Lewis, Katie Womack, Mary Overton, Darcy Roake

**Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry
2015 Report for Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference**

We now have 27 congregations in our coalition. [Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry](#) (TXUUJM) organized the historic, first ever UU Legislative Action Day Feb. 17 at the Capitol. Over 100 UU's from across the state from across the state answered the Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry's call to come to the Capitol to make our UU values known to our elected officials at a time when it is more important than ever. We were part of state and national news coverage. You can see stories on our FB page.

In more than 125 meetings with elected legislators and staff, groups of our leaders and clergy made clear how our UU principles guide us on important issues relating to access to health care, reproductive justice, and income inequality.

In partnership with other progressive interfaith organizations across our state, TXUUJM was a major sponsor of a marriage equality press conference that drew 250 participants to the Capitol steps and brought needed attention to major LGBTQ issues of discrimination. Golden "Standing on the Side of Love" T-Shirts were all over the hallways of our State Capitol that day. And legislative staffers around the Capitol were Googling "Unitarian Universalist."

Submitted by Rev. Chuck Freeman, Executive Director, TXUUJM