

Memories and Milestones



60th Anniversary Update

April 2008- April 2018

By Erin Renfroe

Minister: Rev. Dr. Julie Kain (2006 – 2018)

Presidents:

2008-09: Jack Wolverton
2009-10: Carol Trotter
2010-11: Laurie Winterberg
2011-12: Carol Hemmye
2012-13: Marylee Donnelly
2013-14: Marylee Donnelly
2014-15: Rose Jansen
2015-16: Lesley Ortiz
2016-17: Audrey Preston
2017-18: Kate Wolverton

In Memoriam (2008 and after):

Lillian Doucette (2008)
Donald Bullock (2008)
Bonnie Ortiz (2008)
Rev. Roy D. Phillips (past interim minister) (2008)
Clarence Johnson (2009)
Joe Dunayer (2009)
William Goggins (2009)
Christopher Myers (2009)
Mary Catherine Longsworth (2010)
June Barrett (2011)
Rev. Steve Stock (past minister) (2011)
Eleanor Johnke (2011)
Hulda Carastro (former member) (2012)
Marjorie McLendon (2012)
Richard "Bo" Davison (2012)
Ron Berthelot (2012)
Marjorie Cutchen McLendon (2012)
Mary Shaw (2013)
Penny Barney Long (Church Founder) (2013)
John Rowland (Honorary Lifetime Member) (2014)
Frank Wood (2015)
Byron Trotter (2016)
Gerry Eddy (2017)
Jennifer Heath (2017)
Priscilla Lamore (Honorary Lifetime Member) (2017)

Social Justice Programs:

Bridges to Circles poverty initiative
5th Sunday Share the Plate offerings
Blood Drives

Angel Food program
Books for Prisoners
LGBT community support
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parade participation
Support for the Water Defenders protesting the Dakota Access Pipeline

Clara Barton Sisterhood Inductees

Barbara Goggins (2015)
Billye Cutchen (2018)

In the months following the 50th Anniversary of UUCP, the U.S. as a whole saw a massive economic downturn, but our members stayed true to their pledges. 2008 saw a successful pledge drive and 100% of pledges in the 2008-09 fiscal year were paid in full.

May 2008: A new Long Range Plan (2008 – 2013) was adopted at the Annual Meeting. The plan was developed over a series of workshops during January, February, and March.

2008 saw the beginning of the 5th Sunday Share the Plate tradition that continues today.

The shooting at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist church in Knoxville, Tennessee were a difficult time for some in our congregation, as memories of traumatic violence affecting our own congregation were renewed. UUCP took up a generous donation for the UUA fund to assist the Knoxville congregation.

Also in 2008, the Church formed a Church Growth Study Group. A review of financial tasks resulted in the Ways and Means Committee becoming the Finance Team we know today, with the responsibilities of the Treasurer, bookkeeping, fundraising, and financial oversight spread out among more people than before.

Fall 2008 brought a campaign to purchase more of the maroon chairs we are still using today. Most of them were purchased in honor or in memory of someone special to the congregation member who donated for their purchase. The next time you're in the sanctuary, take a look at the brass plaque on the back of the chair in front of you.

Hugh Ed Turner worked to replace the air conditioning/heat pump units that were stolen in September. The theft represented a lost of over \$14,000 to the congregation. The insurance covered some of the cost, but the congregation was forced to borrow from the Charitable Trust to cover the expenses.

The first Pensacola Peace Festival was held on November 15, a community-wide event in Bayview Park meant to further our Social Justice theme for the year, Peacemaking.

The Church was awarded a Chalice Lighters Grant, which enabled Bob Gerold to update the church's website.

The Emergency Preparedness Team developed a phone tree as a way for members to keep in touch during and after an emergency or natural disaster, and to make getting assistance to those who need it easier.

At the beginning of 2009, a new optimism was palpable in the congregation despite ongoing economic woes in the greater community, in no small amount due to the inauguration of Barack Obama as the United States' first African-American President.

A new alarm system was installed in January after the thefts in Fall 2008. Spring saw the First Annual Family Weekend Campout at Big Lagoon State Park, organized by Kate Wolverton and Lisa Hudson, beginning a tradition that has lasted ever since.

Planning began for RE Groups, a way to offer small-group learning opportunities for adults after the service. The congregation could choose among three adult offerings as well as one multi-generational activity. As the church year kicked off in September, the service was moved to 10:00 a.m. for the first time, to make room for the new after-service programming.

Also in 2009, the *Light* went to a primarily electronic format, a way to combine environmental and fiscal responsibility.

In winter 2009, Bob Gerold oversaw the church going completely wireless, with Wi-Fi signal available throughout the church.

Spring 2010 brought renovations to the sanctuary, thanks to Jack Wolverton, Jay Butcher, and Charlie Tow. A wall was torn down which opened up the space, more chairs were added, and a new chancel platform was built, and the projection screen was up in time for the Annual Meeting in May. After a year of slumping pledges, the budget drive brought a sustainably balanced budget.

In September 2010, a new Children's Religious Education program was launched with an expanded cooperative approach, utilizing a network of volunteers. The program was called WAY Cool Sunday School, with WAY being an acronym of the names of the classes: Wanderers (pre-K through 2nd grade), Adventurers (3rd through 6th grade), and Youth Pathfinders (7th through 12th grade). The goals of the program were: Multi-generational community building, strengthening Unitarian Universalist identity, and to increase visible participation of young people in Sunday services. The tradition of one multi-generational Sunday service was begun at this time.

Changes in the sanctuary included the installation of a multi-media projector in the ceiling (thanks to Charlie Tow, Jack Wolverton, and Jay Butcher), and a revamp of the sound room (thanks to Byron Trotter). Charlie Tow installed new sink fixtures in the kitchen and women's restroom.

Fall and Spring campouts continued, as did our usual rotation of potluck lunches, Coffee House concerts, Women's Spirituality Circle, and monthly Senior Lunches (soon to become known as LUUnch BUUnch).

The UUCP Facebook page went live in the fall of 2010, and the church switched from SunTrust Bank to PenAir Credit Union, who offered more economical fees as well as membership to members of our congregation.

A Facilities Improvement Task Force began a comprehensive facilities and functionality review. The group, under the leadership of Nancy Hagman, would later adopt the acronym FIG: Facilities Improvement Group. By fall, they had initiated plans to renovate the sanctuary, including updates to the sound, lighting, paint, carpet, and overall beautification, and a separate funding drive was begun.

2011 saw a momentous event in UUCP's history: The founding of Infusion, a rock/jazz fusion band whose members include UUCP stalwarts Thom Botsford (saxophone) and Jack Wolverton (percussion). Infusion has been and remains a source of fun and fundraising, the unofficial beat of UUCP.

2011 brought the inception of another UUCP tradition: Sunday Sweets. Dubbed "Second Sunday Sweets" at the beginning, the first delicious treats were offered up in March of that year.

Despite a lackluster 2011-12 Budget Drive, UUCP sent financial assistance to the UUSC to help with disaster relief after the earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

Eleanor Johnke died on April 1, 1997 at the age of 97. Eleanor and her husband, Bruno, were among the first members of the Pensacola Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. They both led long and storied lives and her loss was felt deeply. A memorial service was held for Eleanor at the church.

In May 2011, Flo Fulwiler, a founding member of UUCP, was inducted into the Clara Barton Sisterhood of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Association. The Clara Barton Sisterhood honors UU women aged 80 and over to recognize their contributions to the life of our religious association and their greater communities.

2012 brought healthier financial times, as the gains/losses reports in the *Light* grew less grim. In March, Bob Gerold began a video project, interviewing church members on why they were Unitarian Universalists. The video would make its premier at the Open House in April 2013, and would eventually be posted on the UUCP website as a way to introduce prospective newcomers to the church and Unitarian Universalism.

At the 2011 Annual Meeting in May, the congregation voted to revise the Bylaws to include having the building be open every Sunday to offer a service or other appropriate meeting. This was envisioned as a way to place in institutional memory our congregation's desire to be a full-service church throughout the year.

2012 brought new prosperity to the church, with the budget drive exceeding its goal of \$132,000 in pledges. The sale of donated land parcels allowed the Board to pay off all building loans from the Charitable Trust.

UUCP became a part of the newly formed UUA Southern Region, and in September, Sarah Stubbs became the Coordinator of Children's Religious Education. A dedicated and knowledgeable professional, Sarah has been and still is a great asset to the church's rising generation.

In April 2013, the sanctuary renovations were done, including the addition of pendant lights and café tables in the foyer. The church was opened to the community for an Open House on April 14, in celebration of the accomplishment.

At the Annual Meeting in May, Priscilla Lamore was given Honorary Lifetime Membership, and UUCP voted to join the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Florida. This organization would soon become UU Justice Florida, the name by which we now know it.

In November 2013, the founder of our church, Penny Barney Long, passed away after a long and creative life. At UUCP's November 17 Sunday Service, the day after Penny's memorial in Kansas City, Dolly Berthelot lit a candle of commemoration and gratitude. For more information about the founding of the church, see the 50th Anniversary history book, *Memories and Milestones*, written by Dolly Berthelot with the assistance of Barbara Goggins.

The year ended with the first of many Infusion Holiday Blowout parties.

Work on a new Long-Range Plan for 2015 – 2020 began with the new year in 2014. In May of that year, torrential rains flooded Pensacola and surrounding areas, with many congregation members suffering hardship and substantial loss of property. The first test of the Emergency Preparedness plan was, in its strange way, a success, with members assisting each other to alleviate damage and begin recovery.

The Annual Meeting brought a unanimous vote to replace the church roof, at a cost of up to \$70,000. A fundraising drive brought \$36,000 in donations and pledges by November 2014; the rest was borrowed from the Charitable Trust. The finished product was deemed money well-spent, with new solar lights in the office and conference room, repainted ceilings, and a sound roof for years to come.

The congregation also voted to support The UUA's Action of Immediate Witness endorsement of the resolution to move to amend the Constitution of the United States that corporations are not persons and money is not speech. Several members of UUCP remain active in this effort today.

In November 2014, member Alan Nitzman began "Coffee and Conversation," an informal discussion group that meets before Sunday services.

2015 saw the unanimous adoption of the new Long-Range Plan, under which we are still governed. The text is available on our website. In May, Minister Julie Kain completed her doctorate with the United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and become the Rev. Dr. Julie Kain, a source of pride to the entire congregation.

In June 2015, Rev. Julie returned to Seville Square during Pensacola's PRIDE Festival to co-officiate the mass wedding with Rev. Dr. Jim Merritt of Metropolitan Christian Church. For the first time, the weddings were legal.

During deliberations over the Long-Range Plan, it was decided that the church had evolved enough to need a new, concise mission statement; succinct, easy to remember, and a contemporary reflection of who we are and what we are about as Unitarian Universalists in greater Pensacola. In Fall 2015, a team was assembled to begin crafting

it, and the new mission statement was passed at the Mid-year Meeting in January 2016:
To celebrate diversity, strive for justice, and inspire love.

December 2015 saw the debut of a new Christmas Tree, much easier to assemble and put up than the old one had been. The white stars, crafted by Victor and Hannelore Musial, had a shiny new home.

In January 2016, thanks to an anonymous donation of funds to the church, Melissa Ardoin obtained facilitator training and certification for the OWL (Our Whole Lives) program in Montgomery, Alabama. It was the first step toward implementing the program at UUCP. At this writing, OWL is a growing part of UUCP's mission, involving the education not only of our own young people, but those in the greater community. Dedicated Facilitators Lauren Anzaldo and Emma Mulvaney have worked countless hours to raise funds, get training, and organize and teach the program. We look forward to even more growth in the years to come.

Spring brought repairs to the fence on the south end of the church property, which had developed quite a lean. Buz Ryland, Gerry Donnelly, Hugh Ed Turner, Jay Butcher, Scott Satterwhite, Michael Newcomb, Mark Beyerl, Audrey Preston, and Whitie Tjossem did the job, saving the church a couple thousand dollars.

UUCP entered the Amazon Smile program, whereby customers of Amazon can designate UUCP to receive a small percentage of their purchases. This program, to date, has raised about \$50 a quarter for operating expenses.

2016 marked ten years that Rev. Dr. Julie Kain had served as Minister of UUCP. A New Orleans/Mardi Gras-themed reception was held on September 25, 2016, to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of her ministry. She was presented with a proclamation in recognition of her ten years of excellent service by four members of the original search committee that her to UUCP, signed by all the current members of the Governing Board.

The Presidential election of 2016 brought tremors of uncertainty to the congregation and the greater community, as well as to many in the nation, as a candidate with stated values directly antithetical to our own UU values was elected. One response, used nationwide, was the wearing of a safety pin, a signal to minorities, immigrants, women, and members of the LGBTQ community that the wearer was an ally and advocate for their rights. Many members of the congregation wore them in the months that followed.

In late 2016, UUCP decided to become a teaching congregation and host an intern minister for 9 months as she completed her UUA credentialing. Intern ministers are typically paid a stipend, and the Board cobbled together funds from the Minister's discretionary funds and a small loan from the Trust to complement the UUA grant we were awarded for the other half of the expenses. Sara Green was a graduate of Vanderbilt University who grew up in New Orleans and planned on returning to the Southeast for her ministry. She came to the congregation in January 2017, and in addition to delivering a few messages on Sunday morning, she initiated the first Friday Night Live

in February. Despite a hopeful start, Sara Green's tenure became marked by miscommunications, misunderstandings, and at times, conflict. As she eventually attempted to renegotiate her Internship Agreement in a way that would not allow her to successfully fulfill the terms, the agreement was terminated in June. Unfortunately for the budget, the UUA grant was cancelled, leaving the church in debt to the Trust for the \$2,000 borrowed to pay her stipend.

At the mid-year meeting in January, the congregation voted to ordain Maggie Lovins as a Community Minister with the Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola. Maggie had been unable to complete her ministerial education and credentialing due to health issues, but her previous work with the UUA and with our church led most congregation members to support her becoming a minister in her mission to bring UU values to the greater community. She was ordained on April 9 at UUCP, in a ceremony attended by UUA Southern Region staff members Connie Goodbread, Kenn Hurto, and Carlton Elliott Smith; her friends, family, and many congregation members.

The 2017-18 budget drive fell about \$17,000 short of needed pledges. A "second ask" helped make up some of the shortfall. Charlie Steed and Rose Jansen oversaw the re-design of the church's website, using a template purchased from the UUA. The template made the site easier to update as well as making it more accessible on mobile devices.

In June of 2017, Rev. Dr. Julie Kain announced that, in the best interest of her ministry, personally and professionally, and in the best interest of the church, the 2017-18 program year would be her last with UUCP. This news sent huge ripples through the congregation, with some celebrating it, but most left a bit adrift by it. Eleven (twelve, by her last day) years of strong leadership from Rev. Julie left church lay leaders scrambling to remember how to go it alone as the transition year began.

At the Annual Meeting in May 2017, UUCP decided to sign the UUA/UUSC Declaration of Conscience as a congregation. Many members had signed it previously as individuals, affirming our commitment to UU values in the face of increasing hostility and discrimination in the nation in the months following the inauguration of the new Presidential administration.

Over the summer, Rev. Bob Eddy, Minister Emeritus, used the funds donated in memory of his late wife, Gerry, to purchase an antique Tibetan singing bowl for the sanctuary. It produces a deep, resonant sound, in contrast to the higher-pitched bowls used in the past. The fund also covered the expenses related to a mosaic created by Kate Wolverton at the request of the 60th Anniversary Committee. The mosaic was hung on the outer wall of the church and revealed and dedicated on January 28, 2018 in honor of the church's 60th Anniversary year and in memory of Gerry Eddy. The flame of the chalice in the mosaic was completed by members of the Governing Board during the retreat day that began the 2017-18 program year.

The church switched to a new software platform to track pledging and giving, SimpleChurch, which also provides an online directory and calendar.

Jack and Kate Wolverton designed a new logo to be screen printed on shirts as part of an effort for more visible church presence at the various community activities attended by members. Kate has held several screen printing events and the logo now adorns shirts, hoodies, and tote bags.

Madailein Anzaldo-Satterwhite raised funds to purchase new, energy-efficient lighting in the church building, with her Fifth Sunday "Share the Plate" selection (won at the Silent Auction) and as part of her Girl Scout activities. Jay Butcher oversaw the installation of the new lighting.

At the beginning of 2018 the Governing Board adopted the Guidelines for Healthy Electronic Communications developed by the Committee on Ministry. These guidelines were put in place in an effort to maintain right relations in the age of social media and instant communications.

The kitchen renovation, funded years ago by an anonymous donor and held by the Trust, was finally planned out and begun in January, with Buz Ryland acting as project manager. A team of volunteers packed up the old kitchen, and over the course of almost four months, the entire interior was demolished to the foundation. New plumbing and electrical was installed, as well as new gas lines for the range. The result was a shiny new commercial grade kitchen, fully inspected and certified. The kitchen will make its official debut on the night of the 60th Anniversary celebration dinner, April 14, 2018.

During this time, a small change to the ladies' room became a complete overhaul as one thing led to another. Also in April 2018, members of the congregation who identified as female had a restroom with new tile, paint, toilets, sinks, dividers, and fixtures.

Meanwhile, the ministerial transition proceeded. A rocky first meeting, fueled by uncertainties and a wide range of questions, led to the formation of a transition team: Carol Trotter, Penny Featherstone, and Jack Wolverton, who facilitated the education of the congregation on our options moving forward and guided us toward the best choice for us. The Board called a Special Meeting of the congregation on March 18, and a vote was taken. The congregation's choice was for the Board to pursue interim ministry. At this writing, the Finance Team is wrestling with putting together as generous a budget as possible for the application and search process after a lackluster pledge drive. The final budget will be presented to the congregation at the Annual Meeting on May 6, by which time the interim application and interview process will be all but complete.

Events seem to be rushing forward; we go into our 60th Anniversary celebrations with a sense of change and uncertainty, balanced out by optimism and the sure foundation of our covenant with one another. The next few years will be an adventure as we find our forward, but surely, the spirit that has sustained the bonds of our congregation since its earliest days will hold true all the way.