



Unitarian Universalist
Urban Ministry

Annual Report
2023 - 2024

189 Years



Thomas Plant, historian and UUUM board member, leads “The Trees of John Eliot Square; A historical perspective walking tour” (May 2023)

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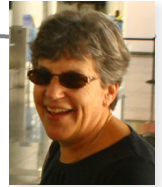
Students from Roxbury Youth Programs on a field trip to a Red Sox game at Fenway Park (April 2024)

OUR MISSION:

**We work across race and place
to dismantle racism
and white supremacy culture
and to advance racial, economic,
and social justice**

OUR VISION:

**We envision a Greater Boston
where all people
live with freedom and dignity,
and have equitable access
to resources and opportunity
to shape the present and the future**



Message from the Chair

Fellow Delegates and Friends of the UU Urban Ministry,

It is good to be together – even if we are meeting virtually – to celebrate you and the work you, your congregations, the Board, staff, and community partners are doing to live ever more fully into our mission and vision. Hopefully our 190th Annual Meeting next May will be in John Elliot Square in our beautifully restored Meetinghouse!

I want to focus this year’s Report on the work the Board itself is doing to live into our role in advancing the mission and vision of the Urban Ministry.

Our Budget, Finance, and Audit Committee, under the thoughtful leadership of Treasurer Tom Roose, revamped Budget reporting processes to help increase financial transparency and support the rest of the Board to meet its fiduciary responsibilities. The committee took two other steps to help align Board practice with mission:

Began to review endowment restriction to help ensure that we can make the most effective use of our investments to advance our mission and vision.

Initiated an examination of our bylaws to ensure that they reflect best practice and afford the organization the flexibility it requires in these times to advance the work we are called to do; in the year ahead, the Executive Committee will broaden the scope to include review of all the bylaws.

At the urging of our Nominating and Board Governance Committee under the able leadership of Lisa Snellings, the Board:

- Co-sponsored with several Boston-area congregations Jubilee Three Anti-Racism Training: Learning Together about Systemic Racism helping make it possible for more than 80 members of congregations and friends to develop a shared analysis of racism; apply this common understanding to the history, culture, and institutional structure of our society; and envision next steps to take action.
- Devoted time at each meeting for Board members to reflect on specific characteristics of White Supremacy Culture as described so thoughtfully in Tema Okun’s updated website <https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info>. Board members reflect together on different characteristics and how they may be showing up in our personal and work lives and at the Urban Ministry in ways that may work against our hopes and dreams for justice and human connection.



RYP students on our Public Art: In and Near Nubian Square Tour (July 2023)

- Adopted revised expectations for Board members that make explicit the connections between Board service and our mission.

Finally, a revived, vibrant Meeting House is crucial to achieving our new mission and vision. The Meeting House Committee has seen the renovation project through to near completion - despite its many twists and turns. Their commitment has never flagged. We thank them: former Board chair Chris Nelson, long-time Board members Marshall Hughes and Carol Lohe, community partners John Ellertson, Chris McCarthy, Reggie Mobley; and congregational partners Andrea Gilmore and Beth Norton.

As the final work is being completed this spring, the Board and Executive Director Rev Mary Margaret Earl are asking the Meeting House committee to expand its membership and focus its attention moving forward on how the space will be used, offering guidance to the Board about policies that will guide its evolution into the community “meeting house” our mission and vision for Roxbury and Greater Boston require.

That effort will be supported by development of a short term “Meeting House Task Force” of interested people from our congregations, the community, and the Board charged with supporting Mary Margaret and Facilities Manager Shamika Harrison as they develop the processes and procedures for making the spaces on campus accessible, attractive, and available for activities and events that will advance our mission.

As they work to advance the exciting and important work ahead, all three of these committees are guided and supported by our very able executive director. Mary Margaret Earl is a “gift who keeps on giving” – and for whom the Board is most grateful.

Working to do our part to breathe life into the Urban Ministry’s vision and mission is a privilege Board members savor. It affords us the opportunity to draw on our own and each other’s reserves of persistence, constancy, and goodwill during these challenging times. As we do so, we are nourished.

We are grateful that you are partners with us in the work of the Urban Ministry. My hope for you in the year ahead is that you, too, will find ways to nourish your spirit through deeper connection with the Urban Ministry – as we open our Meeting House once again!

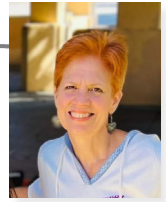
Thank you.



Karla Baehr

Chair, Board of Directors

Report of the Executive Director and Senior Minister



Dear Friends,

Greetings to you as we reflect on the year at the UU Urban Ministry. It has been a time of advancing and leaning into the work we’ve taken up.

On our campus, we near the completion of the final phase of the restoration of our historic Meetinghouse. With the exterior repaired and the landscape restored, we’ve pushed the interior restoration of this elegant space toward the finish.

In our programs and work, we’ve been shifting our work to align with a bold, ambitious mission: building out our youth program; reenergizing our Seeing Me Program for UU youth; re-imagining how congregations will advance our mission.

As I look to the year ahead, rather than new endeavors, I imagine a sharp focus on all that we have taken up.

This is the season to fulfill our commitments.

Meetinghouse: We expect this summer, the bulk of the extensive work on our 1804 Meetinghouse will be completed. A disabled accessible ramp and new front doors will be the last pieces in place.

This year saw challenges in this building work, including discovery of deteriorating roof trusses and a decayed front sill. These required engineering solutions and extensive planning from our construction team, as well as additional fundraising. We successfully addressed both of these issues, and raised in total approximately \$3 million.

Now, as we move to completion, we must ensure this elegant structure – named a Boston Landmark last year – is full of life that serves our mission, and is sustainable. In the year ahead we will create a task force to develop systems for running a cultural event venue, and charge a committee with advising on the events and activities within the space.

History Committee: This past year, we partnered with the Roxbury Historical Society to create a community-led committee that would advance the work of the enslavement report that we published last year. This report identified people who had been enslaved by members (and ministers) of First Church Roxbury. The committee has identified several goals:

Continued

- Making this history visible within the restored Meetinghouse
- Learning more about the lives of those who were enslaved
- Giving Roxbury young people tools to learn their own genealogy

This spring, we were awarded a grant from the Harvard Reparative Partnership Program to advance our work and research.

Congregations and Task Force: A task force of delegates, UUUM staff and board continued reimagining how member congregations can help advance our mission, and we convened regional meetings in Wellesley and Lexington to learn more. We hired a congregational partnership consultant – the Rev. Tricia Brennan – to help us build a new program in which we are a connector between congregations and the important work happening in Roxbury. We are now piloting a “circle of support” for partner businesses and organizations where UUs can make a difference for racial, economic and social justice.

Seeing Me in the World: This year we relaunched our Seeing Me program, which had quieted during COVID. This program welcomes UU youth from Greater Boston, and from around the country, to come to UUUM and Roxbury and learn our UU history and about the work we do here. This year, we’ve reimagined the program as one by youth for youth and it is now being led by RYP. We have 8 youth groups planning visits this spring, and our member congregation in Newton is hosting a meeting highlighting our work with religious educators from around the country.

Tours: This summer we will continue to offer tours of UUUM and our neighborhood, including: the Trees of John Eliot Square; Public Art; Education in Roxbury; and Economic Impact tours. We continue ensure tours offer education to visitors that advances our mission – to dismantle racism and white supremacy culture, and to advance justice – and have a positive and welcomed impact on the community.

Every step of the work this year – our Meetinghouse restoration, our partnership and congregational work, our programs – happen because our churches and friends and supporters like you walk with us. Thank you for all you have made possible, for the transformation you have believed in, for all the support you have given.

I look forward to continuing this journey with you in the year ahead, as we lean in and live into the commitments we’ve made

Onward, and in faith,



Rev. Mary Margaret Earl

Executive Director and Senior Minister

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Benevolent Fraternity of Unitarian Churches *d/b/a The Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry*

May 25, 2023

Meeting remotely, via Zoom

The meeting was preceded by music and images from recent UUUM programs and events.

The 188th meeting of the corporation was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Karla Baehr as Chair of the Board of Directors. She then introduced Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, Executive Director and Senior Minister, who gave an invocation that honored our gratitude for the creativity, perseverance and courage that gives life to the work of UU Urban Ministry year after year. She stressed that this is a time of reimagining: reimagining our work in community by forming partnerships with other organizations so that we follow more often than we lead; we listen and amplify. We reimagine our programs, to bring them into alignment with our mission, and we reimagine our relationship with our congregations and our delegates in order to determine how they can help us live more fully into our mission. She then introduced Shamika Harrison, Director of Facilities.

Ms. Harrison talked about the many ways that our community partners have made use of our building and grounds over the last year, and presented a short film by Dream Collaborative, the minority owned local architecture firm that has been working on the design of our meetinghouse restoration. Ms. Harrison also shared that all are invited to the upcoming celebration of the new landmark status of the First Church in Roxbury which will take place in the peace garden on June 8th.

Rev. Earl introduced Bithyah Israel, Community Engagement Coordinator for the Arts and Sciences who discussed the tour program and presented a portion of a documentary she filmed which honors the elders of the Highland Park neighborhood.

Rev. Earl introduced Peter Tam, the UUUM’s Director of Programs. Mr. Tam reported that RYP had served 23 young people throughout the academic year, that Renewal House was at full capacity with 5 families in residence, and that the Believe in Success program, which has graduated 120 survivors of domestic violence, will cease operation after graduating this last cohort. Instead, the UUUM and its community partners will examine how to best meet the program needs of residents in our proximate neighborhood. He gave special mention to Christine Dickerson and Elise Lemons, Believe in Success program staff, for their hard work and their ability to adjust to on-line programming during the pandemic.

Next, Mr. Tam introduced Maria Padilla, Shelter Manager at Renewal House, who reported that the shelter had received a grant that enabled them to replace much of their furniture, both in the common space and in the office. In addition, they are planning more activities for shelter guests, and have kept the shelter predominantly COVID-free.

Mr. Tam then introduced RYP program participant Francisco Landeverde, who presented a video he made about his father's immigration journey to the U.S. from El Salvador. His journey to escape war in his home country and to seek better opportunities for his family has been an inspiration to Francisco and an example of how far hard work and perseverance can take someone.

Next, Rev. Earl introduced Monique Marshall Veale, Director of Special Projects, who reported on the third year of our virtual webinar series called Community Conversations. These conversations are designed to highlight some of the issues plaguing Boston's BIPOC residents, with this year's series concentrating on closing the racial wealth gap. Ms. Marshall Veale asked all meeting attendees to do their part by supporting BIPOC-owned commerce, restaurants and community-based organizations. A compilation video of this season's Community Conversations followed.

Before the business portion of the meeting began, Rev. Earl thanked the UUUM staff for its dedicated, creative and difficult work and invited meeting attendees to echo her appreciation for the staff in the Zoom chat. She then turned the meeting over to board members Karla Baehr (Chair), Tom Roose (Treasurer) and Carol Lohe (Nominating Committee). Ms. Baehr and Ms. Lohe thanked Rev. Earl for her brilliant and inspired leadership and the rest of the staff and program participants for making the organization what it is.

Ms. Lohe then presented the nominations for Delegates-At-Large for the coming year, for two new board members, and for next year's Nominating Committee. The roster for Delegates-At-Large consisted of Ms. Marcia Butman, Mr. Peter Coccoluto, Ms. Kayla Drumgold, Rev. John Hickey, Mr. Marshall Hughes, Mr. Brian Keith, Ms. Jean Krasnow, Ms. Marisa Luse, Ms. Christine Nelson, Mr. Thomas Plant, Ms. Nishayla Porter, Mr. Doug Poutasse, Mr. Tony Rodriguez, Mr. Tom Roose, and Ms. Lisa Snellings. Upon a motion to vote on this slate from Ms. Lohe, which was seconded by Mr. Roose, the motion carried unanimously. Next, Ms. Lohe presented for nomination to the UUUM Board current members Rev. Dave Egan, Rev. John Hickey and Ms. Jean Krasnow, and new member Mr. Thomas Plant. After a motion by Ms. Lohe and a second by Mr. Roose, the motion carried with one abstention. Lastly, Ms. Lohe presented the slate for the Nominating Committee for the 2023/2024 fiscal year (a one-year term), consisting of Rev. Hickey, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Lohe, Ms. Luse and Ms. Snellings. After a motion to vote from Ms. Lohe which was seconded by Mr. Roose, the motion carried unanimously. Ms. Baehr next introduced our treasurer, Mr. Roose,

Mr. Roose first reviewed the FY 23 actual revenue and expenditures vs. the FY 23 budget. There was a \$79k shortfall in revenue, but this was offset by expenses that came in \$186k less than anticipated, resulting in a positive position of \$107k in net revenue. Next Mr. Roose presented the proposed breakeven budget for FY 24, reflecting anticipated revenue and expenses of \$2,305,192, which is essentially the same as our FY 23 budget. Mr. Roose also reported that our endowment investments, which were valued at \$18.3M in April, 2022 are now valued at \$16.7M due to market fluctuations. While this is a material decline, \$16.7M is still enough to generate the income draw that we have budgeted for the FY 24 budget. Mr. Roose concluded by introducing Rev. Egan, to present the Congregational and Delegate Engagement Task Force report.

The task force collected data from 33 congregations via surveys by individuals, and focus groups with church lay leaders and clergy. Their work was guided by asking the following questions:

How can member congregations be more fully engaged in helping the UUUM fulfil its mission?

How can the UUUM better support congregations in their racial justice work?

From delegates, we learned that few congregations have a formal process for selecting delegates, with the vast majority volunteering for the role. Delegates see themselves as ambassadors to the UUUM, disseminating information about events, and raising awareness. Lay leaders and clergy were queried about the possibility of instituting more formal procedures for electing/appointing delegates, but this was not viewed as practical, due to the fact that it could require by-laws changes, and nominating committees already have a full plate trying to fill other volunteer slots on church committees, etc. One suggestion was for the UUUM to offer "best practices" for delegate selection rather than imposing requirements. Overall, the mission of the UUUM was seen as much stronger in its emphasis on anti-racism and economic justice, but the specific ways that the UUUM is carrying out its mission weren't as well known. There were smaller groups of parishioners within congregations with a strong sense of connection to the UUUM, but overall it was felt that congregations as a whole do not have a broad knowledge of the organization.

Lay leaders and clergy were asked about two pilot programs that are being considered to more fully engage congregations in helping to carry out the UUUM's mission: Roxbury Tours and Pro-Bono Consulting for BIPOC-owned businesses. Both received a very positive response, though possible barriers could be a reluctance to travel into the city, the fact that some congregations are still in recovery-mode from COVID, and being generally spread too thin with other social justice activities. Suggestions were to add an economic empowerment component to the tours, by encouraging participants to make purchases at BIPOC owned shops and restaurants, and to make very specific asks for consultancy needs.

In terms of enhancing congregations’ financial engagement with the UUUM, changes such as increasing the \$250 dues, adding a tiered approach that recognizes congregation size and overall resources, or an “honor congregation” program were not well received. Most congregations are very involved with racial justice work, with book discussions and study groups, as well as community-based collaborations. The UUUM can be a vehicle for this work by offering congregations the opportunity to invite Rev. Earl to preach, to sponsor Community Conversations, to plan events for UUUM programs, to raise funds, and to donate talent, equipment and holiday gifts. Clergy suggested that the UUUM could be a resource for helping congregations reach out to their local BIPOC communities, by encouraging deeper reflection, by offering education about how congregations might examine their own enslavement history, and by promoting change in practices which perpetuate white supremacy culture. Lastly, it was suggested that the UUUM could provide opportunities for youth across congregations to come together for Roxbury tours and other racial justice-oriented programming. Another take-away was that all three groups of stake-holders very much appreciated the opportunity to exchange information and learn from one another, and expressed the hope that there would continue to be such opportunities.

Ms. Baehr thanked the Congregational and Delegate Engagement Task Force, especially Rev. Catherine Cullen who co-chaired the Task Force with Rev. Earl, and will be leaving the area and stepping down from the board to pursue other interests. Ms. Baehr also thanked the delegates for electing Mr. Plant to the board, and announced that the UUUM is co-sponsoring, along with several member congregations, a three-day intensive training in October called Jubilee Three. The training is designed to help UUs develop a shared analysis of racism and its individual, institutional and cultural manifestations, and to apply this common understanding to the history, culture and institutional structure of our society and to envision action steps locally. Details of this training will follow.

Before giving a benediction, Rev. Earl gave a shout-out to MVP Vinnie Myles, Director of Development, for planning, shepherding and handling all aspects of the annual meeting, including its technology! Rev. Earl’s benedictory message concluded “I will see you at 7:51 pm”.

Respectfully submitted by Annie Stubbs on behalf of Ms. Baehr and Ms. Porter.

Budget Report

	May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024			May 1, 2024 through April 30, 2025
	FY 2024 Budget	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Variance	FY 2025 Budget
Revenue				
Individuals	555,000	464,376	(90,624)	555,000
Congregations	100,000	95,097	(4,903)	100,000
Board of Directors	50,000	50,949	949	50,000
Sponsors*	107,000	31,614	(75,386)	78,000
Grants	294,252	193,027	(101,225)	294,252
Government Funding	461,000	520,272	59,272	461,000
Rental Income	15,000	2,063	(12,937)	15,000
Interest and Miscellaneous	0	136	136	0
Total Revenue	2,304,691	2,154,973	(224,718)	2,278,021
Expenses				
Renewal House	453,164	556,770	103,605	588,007
Administrative Expenses	249,284	286,329	37,045	273,319
Roxbury Youth Programs	446,003	345,742	(100,261)	424,884
Believe in Success	279,207	141,853	(137,354)	0
Development	278,847	239,966	(38,881)	281,126
Community Engagement	226,526	210,034	(16,493)	300,830
JEC Administration	371,660	374,280	2,620	409,856
Total Expenses	2,304,691	2,154,973	(149,718)	2,278,021
Operating Income	(722,439)	(797,439)	(75,000)	(724,769)
Investment Draw	722,439	797,439	75,000	724,769
Net Operating Income	0	0	0	(0)


**Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry
Board of Directors
2023 - 2024**

**Executive Committee of
the UU Urban Ministry Board**


- Ms. Karla Baehr, *Chair*
 Ms. Nishaila Porter, *Vice Chair*
 Ms. Marisa Luse, *Clerk*
 Mr. Tom Roose, *Treasurer*

Directors of the UU Urban Ministry

- Ms. Marcia Butman
 Rev. David Egan
 Rev. John E. Hickey
 Mr. Marshall Hughes
 Mr. Brian Keith
 Ms. Jean Krasnow
 Ms. Carol Troyen Lohe
 Mr. Thomas Plant
 Mr. Doug Poutasse
 Mr. Tony Rodriguez
 Ms. Lisa Snellings



In Memory of Tony Rodriguez
 A champion for justice
 and a great friend
 1951 - 2023



**Report of the Nominating Committee
189th Annual Meeting
May 23, 2024**

The Nominating Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry is pleased to present the following slate of candidates for at-large delegates for election at the Annual Meeting:

Delegates at Large

Delegate term to expire in 2025

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Ms. Marcia Butman | Ms. Ruby Jordan-Borges | Mr. Thomas Plant |
| Mr. Peter Coccoluto | Mr. Brian Keith | Ms. Nishaila Porter |
| Rev. John E. Hickey | Ms. Jean Krasnow | Mr. Douglas Poutasse |
| Mr. Marshall Hughes | Ms. Marisa Luse | Mr. Tom Roose |
| Rev. Chris Jablonski | Ms. Christine Nelson | Ms. Lisa Snellings |

Candidates for the Board of Directors

Board term to expire in the year in parentheses

I. Candidates currently serving on the UUUM Board of Directors

- | | |
|---------------------|--------|
| Ms. Marisa Luse | (2030) |
| Ms. Nishaila Porter | (2030) |

II. New candidates to the UUUM Board of Directors

- | | |
|------------------------|--------|
| Rev. Chris Jablonski | (2033) |
| Ms. Ruby Jordan-Borges | (2033) |

Nominating Committee

Committee term to expire in 2025

- Mr. Marshall Hughes
 Ms. Marisa Luse
 Ms. Lisa Snellings

Respectfully Submitted,

- Rev. John E. Hickey
 Mr. Marshall Hughes
 Ms. Carol Troyen Lohe
 Ms. Marisa Luse
 Ms. Lisa Snellings

Board of Directors Candidate Biographies

The following are being nominated as candidates for election to the UU Urban Ministry Board of Directors:

Ms. Ruby Jordan-Borges

Ruby Jordan-Borges grew up in Roxbury and went to the John D O'Bryant High School and during that time attended the UU Urban Ministry's Roxbury Youth Program (RYP) from 2015 to 2019. She went to UMass Lowell and studied Environmental Science, with two minors in Sociology, Climate Change & Sustainability. She graduated in 2023 and now works at Boston Public Schools as a George B Cox Fellow with the program Teacher Cadet, which focuses on recruiting high school students of color to serve in the teaching field.

Rev. Chris Jablonski

Rev. Chris Jablonski has served First Church Unitarian Universalist in Belmont since August of 2018. He is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist who grew up at the Framingham UU church. Before Belmont he served the Portsmouth UU Church as co-minister with his wife Lauren, and before that he was the Minister of Religious Education at the UU Church in Berkeley California. Chris is a fly fisherman and lover of wilderness, a beaming father of three amazing kids, Ben, Jack and Aliyah, ages 16, 14 and 8. He is also blessed to be the spouse and beloved of an incredible person, also another UU Minister, Rev. Lauren Smith who serves the UUA as the Director of Stewardship and Development.

Program and Department Reports



Roxbury Youth Programs

Roxbury Youth Programs (RYP) has made significant strides in the past year, marking a strong resurgence from the challenges posed by the pandemic. With increased support from various funding sources, including the City of Boston's SuccessLink Program and the Boston Private Industry Council, we've expanded our capacity, now serving a total of 30 young people. Our commitment to youth development is evident in the success of our various internship programs, providing valuable opportunities for personal and professional growth.

In particular, our Learning Artist Internship, supported by the SuccessLink Program, has engaged 15 youth who have demonstrated remarkable attendance and dedication. Collaborating with our Community Artist Internship, our students have worked together with local actor Naheem Garcia to create a meaningful presentation for our end of year celebration. Meanwhile, our Career Exploration Internship remains an integral part of our efforts to provide diverse pathways for our participants.

Drop-in hours continue to serve as a vital resource for youth by offering assistance with school-related projects and homework, while fostering a sense of safety and community within our facility. We've also successfully organized various events throughout the year, from holiday celebrations to educational workshops and movie nights. Notably, our alumni networking events have provided opportunities for past participants to reconnect and share their experiences.

Despite challenges such as being short staffed, we remain committed to addressing the evolving needs of our youth and enhancing their overall experience. Our partnership with organizations like SuccessLink and Boston PIC have been instrumental in providing financial support and facilitating programmatic initiatives. Moreover, the dedication of our staff with additional support from PULSE interns from Boston College ensure the delivery of high-quality programming and support services to our participants.

Looking ahead, we are excited about our upcoming end-of-year showcase, which will highlight the achievements and experiences of our youth. Additionally, recent initiatives such as the "Seeing me in the World" sessions



RYP students working on an art project led by Teaching Artist, Elsy Almeida (January 2024)

led by RYP Career Exploration Intern Sofia Taborda and the RYP Takeover of Community Conversations underscore our commitment to empowering young voices and fostering meaningful engagement with relevant issues.

Roxbury Youth Programs will continue to create amazing opportunities for the youth of our community, and we are grateful for the continued partnership and dedication of our stakeholders in helping us do so.

Reggie Walker
Youth Programs Manager

Renewal House

Since our last reporting we have added a Housing Case Manager and five Relief Staff to our team. We are still continuing to grow our team to allow us to have staff available when other staff can not make their shifts. This gives us the ability to provide the 24-hour coverage that Renewal House needs. We have also serviced nineteen guests in our shelter and successfully housed a family during this time. This family came to us from the Dominican Republic. A safety plan was given to the mother when she called us via the Safelink hotline for survivors. The mother was successfully able to leave her home in the Dominican Republic and come to the U.S.. She was immediately housed in Renewal House upon her arrival. Aid was given to the family such as food, clothing, and transportation. We also connected her with SNAP benefits and job search services along with housing services. The family was offered a unit and we provided them furniture, such as beds, mattresses, chest of drawers, linens, cookware, and a dining room set. Now, the family is thriving.

Other families that are in Renewal House are also doing well. I made the decision to focus heavily on short-term and long-term goals and milestones with the guests. While conducting weekly case management meetings, we made sure that actions based on previous week's goals were taken. This was implemented to change the current case managing objective from meeting the needs of the guests, to meeting needs and counseling centered around long-term independent sustainability. The goal is to empower and to prepare the guest while in shelter to become not only financially independent, but emotionally independent. I am pleased to announce that the strategy seems to have been effective and all of our families are either working or in school.

Renewal House also hosted a visual art exhibit centered around domestic violence called "Beauty for Ashes". I envisioned this idea to provide a way for our donors and supporters to hear the stories of the survivors in the shelter in a way that protected their confidentiality. The event was a success - and impactful. We were pleased with the support and feedback we received from other organizations and event attendees.

We have also done needed maintenance in the shelter including the repair of fixtures, wall and cabinet repairs, painting, and other needed work. We are also in the process of updating computer systems and outdated equipment.

Marie Padilla
Shelter Manager

Community Engagement


The following report highlights the key achievements, initiatives, and partnerships of Community Engagement during the past year. We are proud to share our progress and contributions toward fostering meaningful connections and collaborations within our community.

The goal of the Community Partnerships Manager role is to strengthen the relationships between community stakeholders and residents and Urban Ministry congregations through leveraging resources and creating opportunities to help advance small businesses and community organizations within Roxbury and surrounding communities.

1. **Increased Community Engagement:** The community engagement team has been hard at work connecting with various community leaders and organizations in an effort to bring new programming to UUUM.
2. **Strengthened Partnership:** The community engagement department has been able to foster new ways on how to strengthen and support our current partnerships with Louis D, Brown Peace Institute, DeeDee's Cry, City Life/Vida Urbana, and Paige Academy. We have created ways to help bring support to those community organizations through our congregation hubs of support that we are developing.
3. **Impactful Events:** Throughout the year we have been able to help successfully organize some events on campus with our valued partners. Some examples include; Betsy Taylor conducting four financial literacy workshops with students in our youth program, annual Patriots' Day breakfast, DeeDee's Cry Annual Toy Drive, Community Fall Festival, coat distribution, and food distribution that attracted a diverse audience and promoted community empowerment.
4. **Community Feedback:** We are looking for ways to implement mechanisms for gathering and analyzing community feedback to inform decision-making and program improvement efforts.

Community Engagement remains committed to fostering a connected, empowered, and inclusive community. We are grateful for the support of our partners, stakeholders, and community members in achieving our shared goals. Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunities to further enhance our impact and make a positive difference in the lives of those we serve.

Curtis Santos
Community Partnerships Manager



Dave Harrington, delegate from Theodore Parker Church (right), joins us for a community event in the peace garden led by Boston-area artist Daniel Callahan (left). (June 2023)

Facilities


Over the past year facilities continued the day to day operations to ensure the upkeep of our beautiful campus and facility. We have focused on prepping for the operational and functional components for the opening on the Meetinghouse. As the year before, I have been meeting weekly to discuss the status and progress of the Meetinghouse, communicating with the contractors and overseeing the ins and outs of the building.

We are committed to playing an active role in ensuring our facility and greenspace remain accessible to our neighbors, community organizations and partners. UUUM has created a space for connection, arts, history, conversations, and built partnerships. Our hopes are to also create this space of connection in our historic church. Facilities continue to work on developing a strategic plan to create a space that will encourage community engagement by raising awareness through conversation, music, theater and announcement.

During the end of the year, we welcomed Reginald Creighton to the Facilities team. Reginald is our part time, Facilities and Grounds Assistant. Reginald assist in ensuring we create and maintain a welcoming, safe, equitable, and inclusive environment in building and on the grounds. Rosemary Santiago, our new Facilities and Support Staff Member, assist weekend events to allow groups to access or space during the weekends. Rosemary also provides back up transportation for the RYP program. Reginald, Rosemary, and Bryan McCray, Chef and Kitchen Manager, have worked closely with me to update the facilities, ensure hospitality, support events, and creating ideas to meet the needs of the community and UUUM staff.

The work of this past year and years ahead, is how we live into our new mission and vision statement and the commitment in ensuring operational and administrative needs are met. What a joy it brings to envision the many opportunities our wonderful, beautiful spaces at UUUM can offer us, the community, neighbors, partners, program participants, congregations, and organizations.

Shamika Harrison
Director of Facilities



A worker repairs a window from the front entryway of the Meetinghouse; A view from the balcony of the box pews during restoration work (February 2024)

Development and Communications

This report is written with gratitude for those who supported the work and mission of the Urban Ministry during the past year. Thank you.

As you have read in each of the reports written by my colleagues, our programs are doing great - and necessary work here in Roxbury.

We continue to expand the opportunities we offer Boston high school students in our youth program. We are committed to being a partner in Roxbury and beyond. This means bringing the strength and dedication of those in our 46 member congregations to support our partner organizations.

It means that when we say in our mission statement that *we work across race and place to dismantle racism and white supremacy culture and advance racial, economic and social justice*, we know we can't achieve that alone.

Throughout the past year, I've had the pleasure of working with two Career Exploration Interns from our youth program, Funmi Ogungbemi and Sabrina Stewart. They have helped manage our social media communications, have researched and created a new section of the UUUM website that explores the history of First Church in Roxbury, and have brought their perspectives to numerous written communications shared with our community this year.

The Career Exploration Intern role is a new this year, and speaks to our commitment to expanding opportunities for the young people in Roxbury Youth Programs.

It is support from people like you that make this possible.

Admittedly, it was a challenging year for fundraising. But I am confident that together, we will have a strong year of support in FY2025.

In the year to come, the Urban Ministry is committed to expanding this work, and furthering our ambitious mission and vision—working everyday to make both a little more real.

I look forward to continue working with you, our supporters, member congregations, foundations, and other, to further this work and our shared commitment to social justice.

Vinnie Myles
Director of Development and Communications



Our Career Exploration Interns (left to right): Funmi, Sabrina, Sofia, and Sarah-Simone (February 2024)

Supporting Member Churches Financial Gifts

\$10,000 and over

First Church in Chestnut Hill

Follen Community Church

First Parish Church in Weston

\$1,000 - \$9,999

First Parish of Arlington

First Church in Belmont

First Church in Boston

First Parish in Cohasset

First Parish in Concord

First Parish in Lexington

The First Parish in Lincoln

First Parish in Milton

First Unitarian Universalist
Society in Newton (FUUSN)

First Parish Church in Norwell

Old Ship Church (First Parish in
Hingham)

UU Church of Reading

The Unitarian Church of Sharon

First Parish in Sherborn

Theodore Parker Unitarian
Church

Winchester Unitarian Society

Up to \$999

Arlington Street Church

First Parish in Bedford

First Church in Boston

First Parish in Brookline

First Parish in Cambridge

First Parish in Canton

First Church and Parish in Dedham

First Parish Church in Dorchester

First Parish in Framingham

UU Church of Greater Lynn

Harvard UU Church

First Church Unitarian in Littleton

First Parish Church Medfield

Melrose UU Church

First Parish Church of Scituate

First Parish Church of Stow and
Acton

First Parish of Watertown

First Parish in Wayland

UU Wellesley Hills



Aerial photo of First Church in Roxbury, courtesy of Joe Turner (November 2023)

Contributing Foundations, Organizations, and Non-member Churches

Anonymous (3)	Massachusetts Service Alliance
Boston After School & Beyond	Mayor's Office of Arts & Culture - Boston Cultural Fund
Bushrod H. Campbell and Adah F. Hall Charity Fund	Polly Thayer Starr Charitable Trust
Cabot Family Charitable Trust	Priscilla Endicott Charitable Foundation
Casa Myrna	Russell Colgate Fund
Christ Episcopal Church, Needham	Sacajawea Charitable Foundation
City of Boston	SuccessLink (City of Boston)
Edward Kane and Martha Wallace Family Foundation	Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock
The Fuller Foundation, Inc.	Valley Unitarian Universalist
The Isaac Munroe Foundation for Children	
Linden Ponds UU Fellowship	
Mass Humanities	
Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance	

Member Churches and Delegates 2023-2024

<u>Arlington</u> First Parish Church of Arlington Lois Fine Maryglenn Vincens	<u>Cambridge</u> First Parish in Cambridge Cushing Giesey
<u>Bedford</u> First Parish in Bedford Cecile Mercado Robert Schmalz	<u>Canton</u> First Parish in Canton
<u>Belmont</u> First Church in Belmont Michael Collins David Deese Sean Westgate	<u>Chestnut Hill</u> First Church in Chestnut Hill Sally Baker Carol Lohe Dr. Ludy Shih
<u>Boston</u> Arlington Street Church Jon Ellertson Julia Simon Rev. George Whitehouse	<u>Cohasset</u> First Parish in Cohasset Mary Parker Nancy Robertson
Community Church of Boston	<u>Concord</u> First Parish in Concord Leslie Fisher Rebecca Winborn
First Church in Boston Grace Gregor Rev. Stephanie May	<u>Danvers</u> Northshore UU Church
King's Chapel Amanda Pickett	<u>Dedham</u> First Church & Parish in Dedham Paquita Bass Howard Ostroff Susan Sennott
<u>Brookline</u> First Parish in Brookline Karla Baehr Madeline Fine	<u>Dorchester</u> First Parish Church in Dorchester Laura Maltby Bruce Shatswell

Duxbury

First Parish Church in Duxbury

Shirley Jenkins
Donna Savicki

Framingham

First Parish in Framingham

Lauren Fawell
Julie Porter

Harvard

First Congregational Church of Harvard

Ted Johnson

Hingham

Old Ship Church

Davalene Cooper
Lisa Sawyer
Dianne Walcott

Lexington

First Parish in Lexington

Jane Beswick
Connee Counts
Teresa Jacobson

Follen Church

Catherine Collins
Tempe D. Goodhue
Gray Watson

Lincoln

First Parish in Lincoln

Alice DeNormandie
Gary Taylor

Littleton

First Church Littleton

Medfield

First Parish Church Medfield

Rev. Dave Egan
Margaret Rolph
Nicole Silvestri Hall

Melrose

Melrose UU Church

Milton

First Parish in Milton

Mary Blanchette
Dottie Pitt
Rev. Lisa Ward

Needham

First Parish in Needham

Vicky Makrides
Marianne McGowan

Newton

First UU Society in Newton (FUUSN)

Kevan Hartshorn
Alta Hodges
Pat Rohan

Norwell

First Parish Church in Norwell

Peggy Kitchenham
John Wallace

Quincy

United First Parish Church in Quincy

Reading

UU Church of Reading

Marianne Bezaire
UU Church of Reading *cont.*
Anne P. Mark

Scituate

First Parish Church of Scituate

Kate Glennon
Jennifer McGonagle Dzedzic
Carol Sullivan-Hanley

Sharon

Unitarian Church of Sharon

Alison Reid
Gare B. Reid

Sherborn

First Parish in Sherborn

Stow

First Parish Church Stow and Acton

Lisa Fagerstrom
Katherine Weeks

Swampscott

UU Church of Greater Lynn

Waltham

First Parish Church in Waltham

Watertown

First Parish of Watertown

Wayland

The First Parish in Wayland

Lea Anderson
Susan Crowley-Bechtel

Wellesley Hills

UU Society of Wellesley Hills

Tricia Johnson
Elaine Mittell
Joan Parrish

West Roxbury

Theodore Parker Church

Jennifer Bottomley
David Harrington
Posy Walton

Weston

First Parish Church in Weston

Georgia Foote
Jean Masland
Nancy Vescuso

Winchester

Winchester Unitarian Society

Patty Cameron
Rev. Heather Janules
Gordon McIntosh

UU Urban Ministry Delegates

Our delegates serve as ambassadors - bringing the work of the Urban Ministry to our member congregations.

They truly help to make all that we do possible. For that, we say

Thank you!



Work begins to repair and restore one of the twin stairways in the entranceway of the Meetinghouse (February 2024)

UU Urban Ministry Team May 2024

Leadership

Rev. Mary Margaret Earl *Executive Director and Senior Minister*

Community Engagement & Special Projects

Monique Marshall Veale *Director of Special Projects/HR Advisor*

Curtis Santos *Community Partnerships Manager*

Roxanne Clarke *Special Projects Assistant*

Development & Communications

Vinnie Myles *Director of Development and Communications*

Rev. Tricia Brennan *Congregational Partnerships Consultant*

Annie Stubbs *Donor Relationships Manager*

Facilities

Shamika Harrison *Director of Facilities*

Reginald Creighton *Facilities and Grounds Assistant*

Bryan McCray *Food Services Manager*

Finance

Jayanthi (Jay) Ganapathy *Finance Lead*

Joseph Butler *Finance Assistant/Bookkeeper*

Renewal House

Marie Padilla	<i>Shelter Manager</i>
Arianna Agosto	<i>Relief Staff</i>
Lillian Calderon	<i>Relief Staff</i>
Kenya Diaz	<i>Relief Staff</i>
Doris Gilliam	<i>Relief Staff</i>
Ayan Hassan	<i>Relief Staff</i>
Mihret Kasaye	<i>Relief Staff</i>
Nikki Penney	<i>Housing Advocate</i>
Ashley Platt	<i>Relief Staff</i>
Ann Taylor	<i>Relief Staff</i>
Marie Carmel Tunis	<i>Overnight Advocate</i>
Ruth Worrede	<i>Relief Staff</i>

Roxbury Youth Programs

Reggie Walker	<i>Youth Programs Manager</i>
Elisania (Elsy) Almeida	<i>Teaching Artist</i>
Kim Nelson	<i>Bus Driver</i>

Empowering Youth. Expanding Opportunity. Partnering in Community.

Every dollar donated to the UU Urban Ministry helps fuel our mission and transform lives.

Your donation will help equip high school-aged young people with skills in leadership, self-efficacy, and creativity through a lens of Roxbury community history and social change.

Your donation will help fuel engagement work that creates shared space for learning and reflection, addresses the issues facing our community, and counters traditional narratives of Roxbury.

Your donation will help provide safe, confidential shelter, and healing services to those fleeing violence.



Mail a Check

Please mail your check to:

UU Urban Ministry
10 Putnam Street
Roxbury, MA 02119



Matching Gifts

Many companies match or double donations. Check with your employer to see if they have a payroll deduction giving program. Designate UUUM as your charity of choice.



Questions

If you have any questions about making a gift to the UU Urban Ministry, contact:

Development Office
development@uuum.org
(617) 318-6010

Make a gift to the UU Urban Ministry through our website or by using your Venmo account.

Use the QR codes below to support our mission and work.



Thank you!



A view of the Meetinghouse interior from the pulpit. The first two rows are being removed to increase performance space. (March 2024)

“

If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time.

But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.

– Lilla Watson



10 Putnam St.
Roxbury, MA 02119

www.uuum.org