

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SHARON
ANNUAL REPORTS
2010-2011



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Other reports and financial records may be available as attachments at the June 10, 2011 meeting.

Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes- June 11, 2010 Unitarian Church of Sharon

A quorum was confirmed and the meeting was called to order at 7:00 on June 11, 2010.

1. Article 1: To approve the minutes of the 2009 Annual Congregational Meeting held June 12, 2009, and the minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting held May 2, 2010.

Article 1 was approved.

2. Article 2: To accept annual reports by officers and committees.

Article 2 was approved.

3. Article 3: To approve the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 budget.

Article 3 was approved.

4. Article 4: To elect a new slate of officers for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

Committees Voted Directly by the Congregation

Proposed Slate of Officers and Board of Trustees – 2 year terms

President	Philip Conover*	2010 – June 2012
Vice President	Jim Mullin*	2010 – June 2012
Clerk	Kathy Farrell	2009 – June 2011
Treasurer & Chair of Finance Cmte	Bill Fox	2009 – June 2011
Trustee	Julie Armstrong	2009 – June 2011
Trustee	Janet Limke	2009 – June 2011
Trustee	Rory McGregor	2009 – June 2011

Endowment Fund – 3 year terms

Chair	Tom Yeransian (filling an unexpired term)	2008 – June 2011
Member	Valerie White (filling an unexpired term)	2008 – June 2011
Member	Colleen Tuck	2008 – June 2011
Member	Kathy Roth	2008 – June 2011
Member	Pam Baker-Webber	2009 – June 2012

Nominating Committee – 3 year terms

Chair	Lisa Yeransian	2009 – June 2012
Member	Blair Weidig*	2010 – June 2013
Member	Patty Fitzgerald	2008 - June 2011

* indicates a new term

Committees of the Board

Accessibility

Linda Godfrey-Bailey

Buildings and Grounds

Peter Wilson

Finance – Ex-Officio

Bill Fox

Assistant Treasurer

Jim Daylor

Information and Technology

Rick Dumont

Membership

Jean Zaniewski and Terry Fitzgerald

Caring

Pat McDougal

New Space Task Force

Peter Raskin

Personnel

Boon Ooi

Publicity

Brian Cook

RE for Youth

Christine Cavallaro

Social Justice

Mia Joiner-Moore and Gare Reid

Stewardship

Rory McGregor and Bill Peyton

Worship

Tom D'Avanzo

Autonomous Committee

Separate from Congregational Governance and established as a community-congregation Partnership

Meetinghouse Preservation Fund – 3 year terms

Chair – Frank Salvatore

Congregational Member – Fred Bramhall 2009 – June 2012

Congregational Member – Rory McGregor 2009 – June 2012

Community Member – Barry Zlotin 2009 – June 2012

The Treasurer and Chair of Buildings and Grounds also serve as members of the Meetinghouse Preservation Fund.

Article 4 was approved.

Article 5: Any other business needing to be transacted at the Annual Meeting

Beth McGregor proposed a resolution to honor the AIM Committee as follows:

Be it resolved, that the members of the Unitarian Church of Sharon express their gratitude to all who have served on the committee for Accessibility and Improvements to the Meetinghouse, known as AIM, to bring us our new space. They are, in alphabetical order, JackArmstrong (project manager), Joyce Bramhall, Philip Conover, Susan Edinger, Wilbur Edwards Jr., Linda Godfrey-Bailey (chair), Rory McGregor, Melissa Mills, Mare Parker-O'Toole, Joe Rando, Allison Reid, Gare Reid, Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks, Cindy Wilson, and Jean Zaniewski, and the ministers who supported and worked with the committee, the Reverend Patricia Brennan and the Reverend Deborah Cayer.

We honor their leadership in bringing to fruition the congregation's shared vision of creating an accessible, spacious church. This new building will stand for generations to come as a testament to their loving labor for this church and their commitment to making it a welcoming place for all.

Resolution approved.

Meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Kathy Farrell, Clerk

President's Annual Report

The previous few years we focused on expanding our building and securing a settled minister. This year we are seeing the fruits of those efforts. We are thriving. Our staff lead us in excellent worship and programming and care, our committees continue their outstanding work in so many ways, and our finances are healthy. During this time we are blessed with many new members and friends. But with these tremendous successes we also feel the stressors that come with growth. Attendance in our nursery on Sunday mornings has surged, requiring us to hire a second professional helper (in addition to the many volunteers who provide care). The increased use of our building necessitates additional coordination, so we created a Rental/Event Coordinator to oversee uses of the church involving outside guests. The tremendous participation in our Religious Education program tells us that we need to bring on an assistant to our Director of Religious Education, which we hope to do this coming year. Our success is stretching us, and we are responding. We have much to rejoice in.

As your president, I too am thriving and I too am challenged. The collegial spirit and outstanding contributions of so many dedicated people make being your president a snap, but just holding this position calls me to be my best. As I witness the goings-on here and participate with you in planting flowers and serving coffee and planning our future, your example encourages me. You have called me and your trust touches me deeply. It is an honor and a privilege to be your president.

Vice President's Annual Report

During construction, some committees had been quite busy but others had to curtail many of the things they usually do. The construction is effectively over and this has been a year for many of our committees to reestablish themselves in the church community and community in general with new activity.

I've been working with the committee chairs at monthly meetings and it's been enlightening to learn of the many things they do in addition to the things we see happen over the year. I feel that we are back at the healthy committee energy level we saw in the year before the construction began. Some committees like Social Justice are busier than ever with some creative initiatives. Most of the committees would like to do even more.

Take the time to review all the committees' annual reports in this booklet. I think you will be impressed with what they do and with what they did over the year. I also hope you may see one that strikes your fancy. They could all use another member or two (or three).

Respectfully submitted
Jim Mullin

ANNUAL REPORT
– FROM JIM ROBINSON –
2010-2011 church year

It is a pleasure and a privilege for me to be your minister. To put it simply, the Unitarian Church of Sharon is a healthy and vibrant congregation. Here are some highlights of the year from my vantage point:

WORSHIP – Mel Springer is a great gift to all of us as is Jennifer Spencer and the Choir (and now a children's choir as well – thanks Forbesy). The entire Worship Committee and all the worship coordinators have done a good job. Average attendance this year on Sunday morning was 82 (compared to 69 last year). The experiment of an evening service was a modest success – the average attendance in the evening was 11.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – The work of Louise Marcoux, the RE Committee, Sue Bolens, and all the dedicated teachers has been fabulous this year. The number of children enrolled has grown and the sense of vibrancy is palpable in all the classes and events.

ADULT PROGRAMS – When I arrived in August 2010, I heard many people calling for more adult programming. We have continued the existing successful programs like Circle Suppers, Goodwill Alliance, MMAS Theatre Group, and added monthly book groups, a movie night, Saturday morning retreat, a weekly meditation group, and (thanks to David Nelson) Conversations at the Meetinghouse (preceded by our First Friday potluck).

SOCIAL JUSTICE WORK – Thanks to the dedication of Gare Reid and Mia Joiner Moore, and the work of the whole social justice committee, our social justice programming has expanded in wonderful ways in the past year – committed to the food pantry, Mainspring Shelter, ESL classes, Partner Church, Brown Envelope generosity, and agreeing to partner with a Unitarian school/orphanage in Uganda.

COMMUNITY CARE AND SPIRIT – The new Building Addition has been a joy to behold and use! (thanks to the AIM committee - chaired by Linda Godfrey Bailey - and thanks to everyone who made the new building possible – with special thanks to Jack Armstrong and Gare Reid). For the running of the church, thanks go to the Board of Trustees (Phil Conover President), all the Committees and their chair persons, to Janet Mayo in the office, to Bill Fox as Treasurer helped by Jim Daylor (Asst.), the Stewardship committee (headed by Rory McGregor), and so many volunteers for making the church run well and reasonably smoothly. Thanks to our website committee (and Rick Dumont and Doug Arnold) for our new church web site. And thank you to EVERYONE for the way we care for one another in times of need and celebrate with one another in times of joy.

This year the membership has grown from around 120 to nearly 150, and the church school has grown at all levels. Building on this successful year, we can continue to grow next year in depth in all areas of the church. Blessed Be! -Jim Robinson

ADULT PROGRAMS

In the past church year we had an active array of adult programs, including:

- +First Friday potluck suppers
- +Conversations at the Meetinghouse (great speakers!)
- +A theatre going group
- +Circle suppers
- +Goodwill Alliance
- +Book discussion groups
- +Movie Night
- +Saturday morning contemplative retreats
- +Weekly meditation group
- +Men's support group
- +Two women's support groups
- +Caregivers Support Group
- +Forrest Church discussion group
- +Two dinners sponsored by the membership committee
- +Prayer group

We are exploring holding a Coffee House (with music) each month, expanding the Circle Suppers to include suppers with children (at an earlier hour), sponsoring a class each season, and occasional forums after Sunday morning service. We are always open to new ideas for programming.

-Jim Robinson

Building and Grounds Committee Annual Report - May 2011

The Building and Grounds Committee is responsible for oversight of the exterior and interior of our Church building, as well as the exterior property. Our budget includes funds for maintenance, repairs, utilities, insurance, annual inspections, snowplowing, cleaning and landscape expenses.

Our committee members this year include Jim Mullin (former chair), Rory McGregor (former chair), Gare Reid (AIM Punchlist Coordinator), Jack Armstrong (AIM Punchlist coordinator and lawn honcho), Wilbur Edwards, Doug Wilber, Ellen Schoenfeld (Memorial Garden sub-committee chair), and Colleen Tuck (rental sub-committee chair). We've been ably assisted with arbor-related projects by Paul Smith. Waiting in the wings for her building manual writing assignment (if I ever get it gathered) is stalwart volunteer Mary Nelson.

We also depend on willing volunteers from the congregation to help out on special projects and yard work efforts. Thanks to the many adults and children that pitched in this year to plant daffodils, spread mulch, cut the lawn, clean the classrooms, shovel snow, organize the kitchen and perform other unheralded chores. Your help is greatly appreciated and very necessary.

Speaking of which, I'd like to hearken back to the "Old Days" with a tale of Sundays past, when we would schedule a Work-n-Worship Sunday event in lieu of a Church service. Congregants would be expected to attend, as able, to move mountains, mulch and mildew while experiencing a touch of the Zen of Historic Building Maintenance. Attendance was generally at levels that we haven't experienced in recent years, when the call has gone out for volunteers. I don't mean to scold, but rather only to encourage new heights of volunteerism! Won't you join us next time when the clarion call sounds for a Blue Jean Sunday!

Our committee's year has been governed by attention to our new building and its systems. Many thanks to Jack Armstrong and Gore Reid for their tireless hours (days, months) spent dealing with the remaining construction issues of the AIM project, as well as their coordination of the Cell Tower antenna installation. The congregation owes them many thanks for their expertise, availability and willingness to chase down the last of the AIM punch list items.

Some ongoing committee efforts include:

- Tracking utility expenses for the new building and sanctuary.
- Gathering information and experience on our new HVAC systems, elevator, appliances, and sound / video systems, with the ultimate goal of creating a Building Use Manual that will gather all the needed info in one place.
- Ellen Schoenfeld has developed a master landscaping plan that will be implemented in the months to come. It includes a new look for the very front of the property, as well as a new exterior announcement board and other tasteful signage. Please also read her Memorial Garden Annual report.
- Efforts are underway to create a Housekeeping subcommittee that would oversee kitchen and cleaning supplies, scheduling and organization. If interested, please let us know (and to be clear, it's not doing the cleaning, but executive management of the cleaning, so CEO types set forward).

Thanks for the privilege of chairing B&G this year. Come join the fun,
Peter Wilson

Meetinghouse Memorial Garden

Annual Report 2011-05-17

The Memorial Garden, located on the Depot St. side of the church is a quiet place of remembrance. As a place of memorial, we spread the ashes of loved ones who are gone from our lives in the tear drop of the weeping cherry. The garden provides us a place to meditate and contemplate, to slow down and become mindful, to become peaceful, to celebrate and be grateful.

Inside the Sanctuary there is a Memorial Plaque, to which we have added Irving Post and Ira Grey and Susie Gray. We miss them. Thank you to Susan Ettinger for taking on this project.

We are in a new phase with our garden. The building project disturbed the side near the building with two results. We relocated plants, many to the rain garden area. And this created additional space in the garden that is perfect for a small patio which we plan to use as a mindfulness and meditation chapel area. Next year we hope to finalize the design and build this space. We have one contribution of \$100 for this project.

The building project and the cell tower project disrupted other areas of the garden. These are in the process of being restored. The old septic system, under the fake rock, is no longer operational. New drainage has been established to take water away from the sides of the building in the location of the room with cell antennae equipment.

Winter snows broke two of our benches. We will replace these according to a new master plan.

The Summer months will require some attention to watering and weeding as usual. This Spring we will do our annual weed and mulch of the area.

Funding the MHMG:

For Name on plaque and spreading of ashes----\$250.

For Name in book of remembrance-----\$50. All proceeds go to maintain garden.

The Meetinghouse Memorial Garden committee wishes to find others interested in helping maintain the peace and tranquility of this garden. Whether or not you have gardening experience, volunteering to weed, prune and maintain this garden feels special. We are also looking for someone to administer the funding aspects of the garden.

Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks, Chair/ MHMG is a sub-committee of Building and Grounds

Caring Committee Annual Report

The Caring Committee's work continued in concert with Rev. Jim Robinson throughout the year phoning, visiting, writing, and responding with support from our UCS community to our USC community. Church members responded generously to support the committee's work by cooking, driving, and helping in many other ways. Requests for assistance were sent out via phone, e-mail and/or list-serve. A list is being developed of member volunteers who may be called upon to help others as they are able at a specific time of need.

The Caring Committee gathered over 20 participants for the 2nd annual Memory Meal in early January hosted by Lucy Bailey. A Care Givers Support group led by Susan Edinger met monthly to share concerns and lend support. The Committee purchased white tablecloths that can be used by the community for important functions. The committee will help coordinate Memorial Services for members of the church. 2010-2011 was a challenging and rewarding year.

The committee seeks new members.

The Committee members are: Lucy Bailey, Joyce Bramhall, Louise Chereski, Pat McDougal, Melissa Mills, Lynn Mortimer, and Mary Nelson. Submitted by Mary Nelson, Chair

I.T. Committee and Website Committee Report
May 15, 2011
Submitted by Rick Dumont, Chair

After a busy 2009, the IT committee had a quieter year in 2010/2011. Our focus was mostly on issues with settling into our new space. Over the year we

- Provided support for minister and office staff for computer hardware and software issues;
- Configured and maintained the database software (Church Windows);
- Maintained church e-mail addresses and discussion groups;
- Installed telephones and maintained phone software.

Thanks to Julie Armstrong and Brenda Wilbur for their hard work throughout the year. Special thanks to Jack Armstrong for audio recording the services and installing and maintaining the projector in Program Space B. And thanks to Jack and Gare Reid for their tireless work with electricians completing lingering work on the phone lines.

The main focus of IT's work in 2010/2011 was the creation of a website committee. The website committee worked diligently throughout this time and unveiled a new website in May 2011. New features of the site include minister and DRE blogs, on-line registration for RE classes, sermon podcasts (digital audio recordings), and links to our new Facebook and Twitter pages.

Thanks to all committee members including Doug Arnold, Brian Cook, Patty Fitzgerald, Mary Flaherty, Brad Larson, Mary Nelson, Edele Panessidi, and Mare Parker-O'Toole. Special thanks to Doug for configuring much of the behind-the-scenes controls of the site and for his wonderful photography.

Membership Committee

The 2010-11 church year saw a healthy increase in the church's membership, thanks in large part to the Rev. Jim Robinson's steady outreach to newcomers, supported by the congregation's warm and welcoming atmosphere.

The committee's annual count in January found the membership roster had grown to 137, after starting the year at 123, and by mid-May the count had risen to 147, with more anticipated by the end of the church year in June. Some increase in the congregation had been anticipated, based on the completion of the AIM addition, the renovated vestry and kitchen, and the arrival of Rev. Robinson as permanent minister, but the growth has exceeded most expectations.

Based on the steady influx, the committee held several welcoming ceremonies for newcomers during church services in the fall and in the spring, to formally introduce them to the congregation and have them sign the membership book. The committee's annual dinner for new members -- including some from last year, when the work on the vestry prompted the event's cancellation -- drew more than 60 participants, including church trustees and officers, committee chairs, and family members.

Another highlight was the in-house completion of a new photo directory, thanks to the design and organizational skills of Doug Arnold and a dogged campaign, led by committee co-chair Jean Zaniewski, to track down and snap photos of members and friends for the book.

As part of the committee's regular duties, we conducted the annual census for the congregation's Fair Share contribution to the Unitarian-Universalist Association.

At services each Sunday, a committee member served as a special greeter for visitors, ready to answer questions about the church and its programs, and introduce them to the minister and to members with similar interests. Visitors were also asked to sign the guest book, and the greeters sent follow-up postcards inviting them to become involved in the congregation.

The Membership Committee will be continuing its efforts to encourage the congregation's growth in the new year.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Farrell, Susan Merriam Jones, Elaine Price, Jim Schulz, Lisa Yeransian, Cindy Wilson,
and cochairs Jean Zaniewski and Terry Fitzgerald

Religious Education Committee
Annual Report
2010 – 2011

With great anticipation and excitement, the RE program kicked off in our wonderful new space. Supply closets, shelving units and space, oh my! Much thought has gone into the ease of storage and retrieval of RE supplies. The DRE held orientation and training sessions so that all volunteers would be familiar with the new building. This effort has helped to make the Sunday morning program run more smoothly and effectively.

This has proved to be important because the program has faced some new challenges this year. Some of these challenges come under the heading of “growing pains”. With the addition of a new building and an outstanding new Minister, we have seen consistent visitation and growth in the RE classes. We are elated to see this growth and acknowledge that it puts an increased demand on our Director of Religious Education. Taking into account the continued growth of the program and the number of hours worked by the DRE, the RE committee believes hiring an assistant to the DRE would be an effective use of funds. This would free up the DRE to do the professional work that she does best. A budget to this end is awaiting approval.

Additionally, the RE program has increasingly become aware of the need to welcome and include children with special needs and at the same time, support the volunteer teachers in those classrooms. It goes without saying that this is not a unique concern of the Unitarian Church of Sharon. Indeed, religious organizations and institutions everywhere are becoming aware of this need. The DRE continues to search for, and has found, some resources within and outside the congregation to aid in this effort.

The committee was able to re-implement favorite programs that were unable to take place last year due to the AIM construction. Our Halloween Old Timey event and the Make and Take craft fair were held and fun was had by all! The Pysanky egg decorating took place and sessions were held for a variety of ages including the Senior Youth Group and the Junior Youth group.

The Youth groups have had a full, fun and interesting year. Youth Cons, retreats, inter-faith meetings, community service and fellowship have filled their calendar. Another Service Learning trip is in the works for next year and planning is underway.

Just prior to this church year a hiring subcommittee was thrilled to finally hire a wonderful nursery care provider. Unfortunately, soon after, she had to abruptly end her employment due to circumstances outside her control. After a second round of interviews proved unsuccessful, we were fortunate to find a replacement through congregational connections. She has been a very able nursery care provider. However, due to growth and some other factors, nursery staffing has been challenging to say the least. Large numbers of infants and toddlers needing care on a weekly basis has necessitated additional staffing in the nursery. Despite a call to the congregation, it has often fallen to RE committee members to serve as additional staff in the nursery. The RE committee sees this as an important issue for the congregation and now believes that hiring another person to assist in the nursery is necessary. A request to do so has been put forth to the appropriate individuals.

With the support of the minister and the approval of the Board of Trustees, the committee has granted a Sabbatical for our Director of Religious Education. The Sabbatical is expected to take place in early 2012. Also, evaluations of the Director of Religious Education and the Youth Coordinator are set to take place in the next month.

Finally, the committee worked with a liaison from the website committee. Exciting new changes are taking place in the area of technology at the Unitarian Church of Sharon and with many thanks to the IT committee, the RE committee and the DRE are jumping in with both feet. Our DRE took part in a professional development Social Media seminar and will soon have her very own BLOG. Additionally, the RE committee launched it's very first online registration, (with the tremendous support of the IT committee).

This committee meets monthly and utilizes yahoo groups and email as a primary means of communication. Portfolios or grouped tasks are held by individual members and remains an effective means of operation.

After a number of years on the committee and two as chair, it is with mixed emotions that I step down and leave this incredibly capable and special group of individuals. I am confident they will continue to do outstanding work in supporting the RE program and the families of the Unitarian Church of Sharon.

Chair – Christine Cavallaro
Dia Cheney
Rebecca Kinraide
Erin Cassidy-Lunman
Ken Olum
Kate Parker-Otoole
Alison Reid
Glen Rivard
Karen Zelevinsky

Annual Report from the Director of Religious Education

The highlights of this year’s religious education program include the joy of developing a productive collaboration with our new minister, Rev. Jim Robinson, and the fantastic growth of our religious education program.

Participation:

Enrollment: Ages birth through Grade 8: 76 children High School: 15 youth

Leadership: teachers (24 adults, 2 youth), assistants (5 adults, 5 youth)

Groupings: Nursery and 4 Classrooms

Curricula by Groupings:

<i>Group</i>	<i>Fall</i>	<i>Revels</i>	<i>Winter</i>	<i>Spring</i>
Preschool	Chalice Children	The Barn	Chalice Children	
Kindergarten			Our Whole Lives	Moral Tales**
Grade 1				
Grade 2	Moral Tales**	Wheel of the Year/ Rhythm & Texture*	Reaching out to our Community: Food Pantry*	Love Connects Us**
Grade 3				
Grade 4	Toolbox of Faith**	The Story: Hummingbird		
Grade 5				
Junior Youth	Compass Points	Santa Lucia	Compass Points	

*Indicates curriculum developed and tested this year

**Indicates Tapestry of Faith curriculum.

Over the past year, the RE program has begun using more Tapestry of Faith curricula. These UUA-developed curricula are available at the UUA website. Adapting the lessons for our use takes time. These new lessons have generally been well-received.

Growth: While we were under construction in 2009-2010, our enrollment remained stagnant. As much as I was alarmed by this development, I have since learned that most congregations see a 25% to 40% drop in enrollment during a building project. So our lack of growth in 2009-2010 was actually a tremendous success. That lack of growth was particularly evident in our preschool-Kindergarten group. By Spring 2010, attendance in this group averaged 2. In Spring 2011, attendance is averaging 12.

Our growth in enrollment has been remarkable in other ways. This is the first year I can remember in which we enrolled new participants at every age level – nursery through Senior Youth Group. It is great to have such spacious program spaces to welcome these new participants.

Growth in our nursery population has also been remarkable. Gone are the days when the task is suitable for a single provider. It is not unusual to have 6 very young children in the Nursery on Sunday morning.

Special programs:

The Our Whole Lives (OWL) comprehensive sexuality education program was offered for children in grades 1-2, 5-6, and 7-8. OWL 1-2 was offered as part of the Sunday morning program. OWL 5-6 was offered in eight 1.5 hour sessions held on Sunday afternoons from January through March. OWL 7-8 was offered in fourteen 3.5 hour sessions held on Sunday evenings from November through March.

This was the first time that OWL 5-6 was offered as a congregational collaboration with the Canton and Foxboro congregations. Nineteen youth participated. The classes were divided into two groups, each led by two teachers. Canton and Foxboro provided 3 of the 4 trained teachers for OWL 5-6.

OWL 7-8 has traditionally been a collaboration between the Canton and Sharon congregations. This year Foxboro joined the collaboration. For the first time, classes met at the Unitarian Church of Sharon. Nineteen youth participated. Canton and Foxboro provided 2 of the 4 trained teachers for OWL 7-8.

Program support:

Teacher training was provided to all teachers and assistants in September and April. Each teaching team also received at least one team orientation to curriculum and group dynamics. I accompanied 4 teachers from our church to a Ballou-Channing District-sponsored training on Creating Beloved Community for All Children.

Moving in:

High priority has been given to settling into the RE office and storage closet. The RE Committee has been actively involved in this effort. I have also enlisted the support of a professional organizer to help me develop plans for various aspects of office organization. The processes of organizing materials and rationalizing storage are underway. A system for making RE supplies easily accessible to all teachers has been planned and is in the process of being implemented.

Information Technology:

I've been exploring ways to share information online. Teachers now develop and maintain their team schedules on google docs. I am in the process of posting a regularly updated inventory of the RE closet via google documents. I also have begun using online scheduling tools to calendar meetings.

Professional development:

Social media in Religious Education -July 2010, March 2011;
Religious Leadership - January 2011, February 2011;
Inclusion of all children in classroom and congregational life - February 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Marcoux, Director of Religious Education

ANNUAL REPORT 2011 -- YOUTH COORDINATOR

It was a full year for the thirteen youth involved in Senior Youth Group this year! They again enjoyed a trip to Purgatory Chasm in the fall, the Haunted Hollows in Mansfield, shopping for Gifts for Kids, fundraising for ATRAVES, collecting school supplies for Cradle to Crayons, and volunteering at Rosie's Place. They had a blast cooking for the Pancake Breakfast, and their collaboration was amazing as they created the Youth Service.

The youth clearly value the relationships built by attending Interfaith Action meetings once a month. They met at 5 different Churches and Temples in Sharon, hosted 2 Interfaith meetings at UCS, and enjoyed youth led discussions about family expectations, food traditions, holiday rituals, the Israeli and Palestine conflict, and love and altruism. These were great discussions! The youth also anchored their personal beliefs as they stretched to explain our UU Principles and share their own faith traditions.

The senior youth also expanded their UU world by attending CONS this year. They attended three weekend long, district wide, youth conferences in Barnstable, Duxbury, and Rockland -- and they are looking forward to more next year!

Five youth attended Small Group Ministry for Youth sessions. They deeply valued the opportunity to listen to each other as they worshiped together on the first Sunday morning of each month. We were fortunate to have Rebecca Reid as the facilitator.

There were 7 youth involved in Junior Youth Fellowship events, which included a fire pit and games at church, the Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular, making fortune cookies, bowling, pysanky, and the annual district wide Junior Con in Duxbury. Still to come this spring is making lunches and a tour of Main Spring House.

The highlight for both groups continues to be the annual overnight Retreat at Cedar Hill. The youth talk, laugh, cook, worship, play games, walk the beach, and just enjoy being together. It is a special weekend, and it is booked again for next fall.

Talks have begun about another youth to trip to Nicaragua in June of 2012. Stay tuned ...there are currently 7 youth interested, and the adventure continues!

Rebecca Reid and Samantha Salvatore are the Youth Group's graduating seniors this year. They each have a special place in the group, and we will miss them.

Huge thank yous to Dan Huse and Gare Reid for being advisors again this year. Their energy and commitment are invaluable.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Bollens
Youth Coordinator

Rental Committee

2011 Annual Report

Committee Members: Julie Armstrong, David Nelson, Pat McDougal, Colleen Tuck
Rental Coordinator: Valerie White

The Rental Committee was formed in the fall of 2010 to develop policies, procedures and rental rates for the church. We agreed that the purpose of renting church facilities was to fulfill the tradition of the Meetinghouse as a public space by sharing it with individuals and organizations with views that are compatible with our own. Consistent with that goal, we established a fee structure that would allow for the administrative costs and ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the building for this purpose.

After several meetings and discussion with the Board of Trustees, the Rental Committee developed comprehensive policies for use of the building; a procedure designed to relieve the Church Administrator of most rental tasks; and rent rates for members & friends, non-members, and non-profits. We recommended that a person be hired, on an hourly, as-needed basis, to manage all aspects of the rental process except managing the checks. The Committee decided that, for this year at least, we would limit rentals to the sanctuary, vestry and kitchen.

In December, Valerie White agreed to serve as the Rental Coordinator. Her responsibilities include meeting interested parties to view the space, enter rentals on the calendar, coordinate payment with the Administrator and sexton services with Vasco, and manage any rental issues that arise. She also follows up with renters to gather feedback on facilities and ensure that any repair costs caused by the renter are deducted from the security deposit.

Since the implementation of the new procedures in January, as of May 15 there have been 4 rentals (including 2 concerts) with 4 pending (3 concerts and an opera). Six potential renters have made inquiries.

Valerie reports that “most love the facilities; many feel they can’t afford them” but has not heard complaints that our rates are comparatively too high. There have been no complaints about the facilities themselves or problems with the rentals. She, Janet and Vasco are developing a smooth working relationship.

Our Treasurer reports that rental income from July, 2010 through December 31, 2010 was \$1,398.60, including income from last summer’s 1776 performances. Between January 1 and May 9, rental income was \$1,950, with expenses of \$194.00. The Sexton’s compensation is paid directly to him by the renters. With that report, and keeping in mind our agreed-upon purpose, the Rental Committee is reviewing the rental rates for the next church year.

The Board of Trustees, Buildings & Grounds Committee and Rental Committee agreed that the Rental Committee shall be a sub-committee of B&G, with the Rental Committee Chair attending B&G meetings.

UCS Social Justice – Annual Report 2010-2011

This was an exciting year for Social Justice at UCS. With Rev. Robinson's leadership, we spread the message that everyone at UCS is a member of the Social Justice Committee and some of us serve as the steering committee to plan the social justice activities and initiatives. And with his help, the Social Justice steering committee was able to coordinate with the Worship Committee and implement a monthly social justice theme in our worship services that tied with the "Brown Envelope" offerings as well as political engagement activities.

This year UCS raised more funds through the "Brown Envelope" offerings than in previous years. Through these funds, we donated towards hunger, homelessness and human rights as well as towards UUSC relief efforts in Pakistan and Japan. Additionally, we launched the Shopping For Justice program to raise more funds to address hunger and homelessness as well as maintain the Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolate sales.

Further, UCS deepened our relationship with Father Bills & MainSpring this year. We not only prepared 100 lunches each month for MainSpring house in Brockton and sent them much-needed linens and toiletry items, but we funded and served three dinners and provided homemade desserts.

We were delighted that Rev. Erika Demeter, Levente and their children were able to visit us in December from our Partner Church in Transylvania. We raised funds to support their visit as well as hosted several activities during their stay. Special thanks to Colleen and Paul Tuck for sharing their home with the family.

Lastly, we promoted UUA's "Standing On the Side of Love" campaign and sold t-shirts to wear at future social justice events and show our support human rights for LGBT and immigrant people.

"Brown Envelope" Offerings

The Social Justice Committee is grateful to report that as of May 1st a total of \$10,740.26 was donated to the following organizations and causes through "Brown Envelope" offerings received and supplemented with Fair Trade sales profits:

MainSpring Lunch and Dinner Supplies	\$2025.77
Centro Presente	\$532.00
UUA Association Sunday	\$137.55
UUSC Pakistan Relief Efforts	\$700.00
Partner Church Council	\$955.16
Gifts for Kids	\$420.56
Stoughton/Sharon Food Pantry	\$300.00
Ecumenical C. Food Pantry Norwood	\$300.00
Canton Helpline Food Pantry	\$300.00
Foxboro Food Pantry	\$300.00
Walpole Community Food Pantry	\$300.00

(list cont.)

Central Asia Institute	\$1242.71
Standing on the Side of Love	\$359.26
UUA-UUSC Japan Relief Fund	\$832.76
ATRAVES	\$959.49
Minister's Discretionary Fund	\$1,000.00
Rosie's Place (SYG Lunch program)	\$75.00
Alternatives Community & Environment	tbd
GLSEN	tbd
UUA/UU-UNO LGBT Uganda Fund	tbd

Total as of May 1st	\$10,740.26

Shopping For Justice

After conducting a survey of the congregation in January, we launched the Shopping For Justice program at the end of February. Through this program, the church buys gift cards in bulk from local grocery stores (Shaws, Stop & Shop and Hannafords) with a 5% discount off of their face value. Members and friend of UCS buy them at full price, using checks and cash. The 5% profits will be used by the SJC to fund efforts to end hunger and homelessness in the region. From February 27th through May 8th, the Shopping For Justice program has raised over \$1,000, based on sales of over \$20,000 worth of Gift Cards to the congregation. Thank you to all who have participated in this new program. And, thank you to Kate Parker-O'Toole for preparing the awesome signage for this program.

Fair Trade Sales

The popularity of Equal Exchange's coffees, teas, chocolates and other goodies has continued to help fund a number of Social Justice projects. This year so far, we have purchased over 20 dozen bags of coffee - most popular? ground Decaf; and a whopping 660 bars of chocolate! The clear favorite was the new Caramel Crunch with a pinch of Sea Salt (over 100 bars sold and still going strong), with Mint in second place (thanks to our regular mint buyer). Because of the new summer service schedule, we hope to continue to offer these items for sale, and may therefore not have to resort to our traditional Annual Going Out of Business Sale in June. Special thanks to Dia Cheney for coordinating our purchases with Equal Exchange and to the Reid family who faithfully make the sales each Sunday. And, thanks go out to everyone who supports the social justice action of the church by the simple means of buying fairly traded goods – we are helping to change the world, one bean at a time.

Sharon-Stoughton Food Pantry Collection

This year a new collection box was installed to collect can food donations for the Sharon-Stoughton Food Pantry. In January, a special "Fill the Box" campaign combined with the "Brown Envelope" offerings provided a surge in support for five local food pantries during the winter months of the year when the need is the greatest. We would like to thank Colleen and Paul Tuck for regularly delivering the collections to the pantry.

MainSpring House Lunches and Dinners

Volunteers of all ages each month joined together during Coffee Hour to prepare ten monthly batches of 100 lunches for MainSpring house in Brockton (and we are considering adding lunch making dates over the summer, in conjunction with the summer worship services). Thank you to all who rolled up their sleeves, washed their hands and participated in the lunch making effort. Special thanks go to Wilbur Edwards for regularly delivering the lunches to MainSpring house. In May, the Junior Youth Group took the lead in preparing the lunches, and then delivered them to Brockton, where they had a meal at the facility, got a tour, and had time to meet and interact with clients of the various programs.

In addition, volunteers served three dinners and provided baked desserts for well over 100 MainSpring house clients. Many thanks to all who provided desserts, and to the following folks who joined SJC members and served the dinners: Susan Allison, Patty Fitzgerald, Karen McHugh, Peg Moran, Elaine Price, Laurie and Ray Wallace and Eric Zaniewski.

English for Speakers of Other Languages

After completing 18 hours of training with the Literacy Volunteers of Stoughton/Sharon, Janet Schmidt and Alice Springer worked together to lead an ongoing Saturday morning ESOL conversation class for 5-10 local adult immigrants from a variety of language backgrounds. Some of the participants have lived in the Sharon area for many years and some have recently arrived in the area. We are pleased to be able to help meet the needs of immigrants in our community by hosting this class at our church.

Welcoming Congregation

In the month of June, UCS celebrates being a UU Welcoming congregation and our LGBT pride through participation in the Boston Pride Parade and in our own Rainbow Sunday worship service. Thank you to those who shared ideas and helped coordinate these activities.

Uganda School Program

This spring we have begun an exciting new effort to support a struggling school and orphanage being run by a Ugandan UU minister in a destitute region of that country. Joining with eight other UU churches in the USA, and coordinated through the UUA's Partner Church Council, we will fund expanding programs and enhanced health and nutrition efforts for this community in need. This is a new, multi-year commitment for the UCS, and while its launch is currently mired in Ugandan politics and outbreaks of violent attacks on homosexuals, we are hopeful that this program will grow in the years to come and provide the UCS with a deeper connection to a community half a world away. Stay tuned.

Social Justice Steering Committee Members for 2010-2011

Rev. Jim Robinson, Janet Limke, Beth McGregor, Sue Mooney, Lynn Mortimer, Licia Rando, Janet Schmidt, David Schoenfield, Ellen Schoenfield-Beeks, and Mia Joiner-Moore & Gare Reid, co-chairs.

For more information, please contact the Social Justice steering committee at justicecommittee@uusharon.org.

ANNUAL REPORT - STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE
May 12, 2011

The Stewardship Committee members included Rory McGregor – Chair, Fred Bramhall, Pat McDougal, Bill Peyton. Bill Fox, Treasurer, has attended most of our monthly meetings.

The annual pledge campaign was conducted during the month of March, starting with the mailing of an information packet to all members and friends. Prior to this time, the Finance Committee solicited proposed budgets from all operating committees in order to set a financial target for the campaign. Testimonials were presented at the Sunday worship services in early March by individuals who explained why giving financially to the church was personally important. The campaign was conducted over a 2-week period from March 13 to 27. The pledge form was in the information packet that had been mailed out along with instructions on how to fill it out and return it to the church. There was a celebratory luncheon on March 27 after the morning worship service to formally conclude the campaign and thank all for their pledges.

The Stewardship Committee followed up with all who did not submit a pledge during the month of April. Summary of pledge campaign results included 87 out of 90 solicitations being returned by members and friends. Total amount pledged equals \$201,000. This represents a 9% increase over the amount of \$184,000 pledged the year before. The pledge campaign goal had been set at \$210,000, based on funding all new and existing programs proposed by all committees. The Board of Trustees makes the final recommendation on which programs to fund and presents this at the annual meeting in June.

The Stewardship Committee worked with the Treasurer to approach individuals/families who had not fulfilled pledges from the prior fiscal year (2009-2010) which concluded on June 30, 2010. The amount outstanding totaled about \$15,000. The amount collected in this fiscal year was about \$6,500. This bottom line is that \$8,500, or 4.6%, of all pledges were not fulfilled. This is close to the 5% amount that the UUA suggests be set aside for the budgeting process.

Outstanding pledges for the original 3-year AIM campaign are due by June 30, 2011. The Stewardship Committee will follow up with individuals/families who do not complete payment as scheduled. The outstanding pledges total \$33,000 at present.

Treasurer's Annual Report to the Congregation
Fiscal 2010-2011

Detailed financial reports for the fiscal YTD July 1, 2010 to May 31, 2011 as well as the proposed budget for the fiscal year July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 will be emailed to members before the Annual Meeting. Hard copies of these reports will be available at the meeting.

This has been a busy year for the Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer, Jim Daylor. Some highlights:

1. Both of us have become reasonably proficient with the financial software package, Church Windows. I am beta testing on my home computer, their module, Donations, which will replace the present Contributions module.
2. Jim's and my term of office ends this June 30th, but we have agreed to extend them for a year. The intention is for Jim to take over as Treasurer after that, however he will not have the time available that I have to devote to the job, so the Finance Committee is exploring ways to provide additional support to Jim, very likely with paid staff. This will represent a major expense item in the fiscal 2012 -2013 budget.
3. The Finance Committee, comprised of three former Treasurers; Susan Allison, Peter Raskin, and Tom Yeransian, along with Jim and me, have met monthly through the year. This committee has the responsibility (Bylaws Section 9.2) of overseeing the financial activities of the congregation, managing and holding in trust all gifts, trust funds and investments (except those otherwise delegated). Minutes of these meetings are available.
6. For the fourth year in a row, Tom and Peter have conducted the audits required by the Bylaws (Section 10.1) and have submitted their reports to the Congregation.
7. Monthly financial statements have been provided to the Board of Trustees (and to others) for both the operating and the AIM accounts. Special reports have been provided to others requesting them.
8. Financial statements showing pledges and payments made by each contributor have been distributed for each fiscal quarter. In addition, 2010 calendar year statements have also been provided.
9. Tom Yeransian has worked with the church's insurance agent to provide property coverage for the increased coverage of the newly expanded facilities. Other policies include General Liability, Automobile, Worker's Compensation, Umbrella, Crime, and Director's and Officers' liability.
10. The 3 year AIM Capital Campaign comes to an end June 30 this year. Pledges totaled \$1,054,309 with contributions received as of April 30, 2011 of \$1,022,088. This leaves \$32,221 in unfulfilled pledges due in the next two months.
11. The 4th year AIM Capital Campaign running from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 raised additional pledges of \$205,270 of which \$95,957 has been prepaid, leaving \$109,313 to be paid by June 30, 2012.
12. The unfulfilled pledges total \$141,534 (\$32,221 + \$109,313), plus \$64,392 in the AIM money market account total \$205,926. Subtracting the estimated authorized expenditures to complete the project of about \$58,000 leaves about \$148,000, which after repayment of the loan, would leave a positive balance of about \$30,000. This however assumes no shortfall in pledge fulfillments.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Fox

May 2011 - SURVEY OF CONGREGATION - 54 Respondents

SECTION 1 – EVALUATION FEEDBACK

Please check the appropriate boxes

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Opinion
How would you rate the quality of:					
The Sunday worship services			5	49	
The sermons			5	49	
The music			2	52	
The quality of the RE program for children			6	30	18
The quality of the RE program for youth		1	5	22	26
The quality of the RE programs for adults			18	17	19
The social justice work of the church			19	33	2
Our sense of community/fellowship			9	45	
The administration of the church		1	16	30	7
Performance of the minister			4	50	

Please give us any feedback, compliments, constructive criticisms , new ideas etc. for any of the areas listed above:

REMEMBER TO INTEGRATE NEWER MEMBERS ... YEAR ROUND SERVICES IMPORTANT ...
IMPROVE THE PLAYGROUND...MORE HANDS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE...MORE UU CONTENT IN RE CLASSES...
MORE LAY PARTICIPATION IN SERVICES...LOUISE AND JIM A GOOD TEAM...EVENING SERVICES ARE GOOD...
CHURCH GOING IN RIGHT DIRECTION...MUSIC SOMETIMES A PERFORMANCE AND NOT WORSHIPFUL...LET'S
SING FEWER HYMNS...WE NEED BETTER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN COMMITTEES...TOO MUCH SOCIAL JUSTICE
FOCUS...GOOD THAT YOUTH HELP WITH RE CLASSES...WE NEED MORE RE INFORMATION GIVENTO NON-PARENTS

Section II – Survey Questions

Growth in membership - Which statement do you most agree with:

I think that growth in membership should occur organically without a special focus - 22 votes

I think we need to be intentional and plan for growth in membership - 28 votes

Are you satisfied with the present spiritual/philosophical balance in the Sunday worship services?

Circle one: YES - 52 circled yes
NO - 1 circled no
UNDECIDED - 1 circled undecided

If you circled NO or UNDECIDED, we invite you to tell us what changes you would like:

MORE RELIGIOUS HUMANISM IN SERVICES
DON'T LIKE THE OCCASIONAL CHRISTIAN HYMNS

What do you think about our name? Which statement(s) do you most agree with:

I think we should keep our current name (Unitarian Church of Sharon) __25__

I think the name needs to include the words Unitarian Universalist __13__

I think we need to replace the word church with another word __5__

Other suggestions : SAY "IN" SHARON RATHER THAN "OF" SHARON....PLEASE DON'T USE THE WORD "SOCIETY"...UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION IN SHARON...I LIKE THE HISTORY OF OUR PRESENT NAME... OUR NAME NEEDS TO BE MORE REGIONAL

What do you think about the names of our rooms? Which statement do you most agree with:

I think we should keep our current names (vestry, library, program spaces A, B, and C, office) __25__

Through an open, democratic process we should pick more inspiring names for these rooms __26__

III. Sanctuary Questions - Please check your response in the appropriate box

How would you rate
the importance of:

	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	UNDECIDED
A handicap accessible pulpit	16	26	8	4
A raised pulpit/stage area	30	17	4	3
Sitting in pews (versus high quality padded chairs)	14	12	22	6
Having the minister/speaker from a raised platform	27	21	5	1
Seeing the children during Time for Children	15	24	13	2
The direction the congregation is facing on Sunday morning	13	15	14	10

Please offer any comments or suggestions you have on any of the above issues:

KEEP THE CURRENT DIRECTION OF THE PEWS...IMPROVE PEWS BUT KEEP THEM...CHANGE THE PLACEMENT OF THE CHALICE...IMPROVE HAND HELD MICROPHONE...MAKE SURE IT IS EASY TO GET IN AND OUT OF THE PEWS...I LIKE THE CHILDREN ON THE STAGE...I WANT HIGH QUALITY CHAIRS...I LIKE THE CIRCULAR ARRANGMENT OF PEWS LIKE AT CHRISTMAS TIME...DON'T PUT THE KIDS ON THE FLOOR

IV. Your new ideas

What topics would you like to see covered in up-coming worship services?

WORLD RELIGIONS...RELIGIOUS HUMANISM...UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM...PAGAN/CELTIC RITUALS...
UU RESPONSE TO WORLD EVENTS...THEISM COMPARED TO HUMANISM...ENVIRONMENT...
UNHEALTHY POLARITY IN US POLITICS...HEALTH DECISION MAKING ISSUES...US CONSTITUTION...
BIBLE...ISLAM...SPIRITUAL PRACTICES...SPIRITUAL VALUES...

Are there any new social, educational, or spiritual programs (for adults or children) which would like to see at the church?

CLASS ON ISLAM...MORE HANDS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE...WEEK DAY DAYTIME PROGRAMS...MORE YOGA AND SIMI-
LAR CLASSES...ANTI BULLYING WORKSHOP...SMALL GROUP MINISTRY...HUMANIST DISCUSSION GROUP...ART AND
CRAFT NIGHT...ATTEND CULTURAL EVENTS IN BOSTON...MORE INTERGENERATIONAL ACTIVITIES...PARENTING
CLASS...STUDY OF OUR PENAL SYSTEM...DEEPEN ATRAVES CONNECTION ...AGING...ROLE OF MEDIA IN MODERN
WORLD...IMMIGRATION...CREATE MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ALL AGES

If you were to suggest one new goal for the Unitarian Church of Sharon to strive towards, what would it be:

MORE RACIAL AND ECONOMIC DIVERSITY IN MEMBERSHIP...EFFECTIVE COPING WITH GROWTH...
ENCOURAGING NEW LEADERSHIP...BETTER PUBLICITY ABOUT US IN LARGER COMMUNITY...
INTEGRATE NEW MEMBERS AND VISITORS BETTER...GET THE SANCTUARY ISSUE SETTLED...
TWO SERVICES IN THE MORNING...STRONGER PRESENCE IN THE LARGER COMMUNITY...
REVITALIZING THE MEMORIAL GARDEN...MORE HELP CARING FOR CHURCH GROUNDS...
MAKE THE SANCTUARY LOOK BETTER...GROW THE MEMBERSHIP...MORE OUTREACH TO OLDER MEMBERS...MORE
SPIRITUAL FOCUS

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SHARON – LEADERSHIP CIRCLES – 2011-2012

Annual Meeting
June 10, 2011

Presented by the Nominating Committee:
Lisa Yeransian
Patty Fitzgerald
Blair Weidig

Committees Voted Directly by the Congregation

Proposed Slate of Officers and Board of Trustees – 2 year terms

President	Philip Conover	2010 – June 2012
Vice President	Jim Mullin	2010 – June 2012
Clerk	Ellen Davey-Fleming *	2011 – June 2013
Treasurer & Chair of Finance Cmte	Bill Fox*	2011 – June 2013
Trustee	Evelynne Swagerty *	2011 – June 2013
Trustee	Kathleen Guilday *	2011 – June 2013
Trustee	David Schoenfeld *	2011 – June 2013

Endowment Fund – 3 year terms

Chair	Tom Yeransian *	2011 – June 2013
Member	Patricia Daner *	2011 – June 2013
Member	Terry Jones *	2011 – June 2013
Member	Colleen Tuck *	2011 – June 2013
Member	Pam Baker-Webber	2009 – June 2012

Nominating Committee – 3 year terms

Chair	Lisa Yeransian	2009 – June 2012
Member	Patty Fitzgerald (filling an unexpired term)	2010 – June 2013
Member	Susan Allison *	2011 - June 2013

* indicates a new term

Committees of the Board

Buildings and Grounds Memorial Garden	Peter Wilson Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks
Finance – Ex-Officio Assistant Treasurer	Bill Fox Paul Tuck
Information and Technology	To be determined
Membership Caring	Jean Zaniewski and Terry Fitzgerald Louise Chereski
Personnel	Kathy Farrell
RE for Youth	Pam Baker-Webber
Social Justice	Mia Joiner-Moore and Gare Reid
Stewardship	Rory McGregor
Worship	Chris Raskin and Melissa Leonard

Autonomous Committee

Separate from Congregational Governance and established as a community-congregation
Partnership

Meetinghouse Preservation Fund – 3 year terms

Chair – Frank Salvatore

Congregational Member – Fred Bramhall	2009 – June 2012
Congregational Member – Rory McGregor	2009 – June 2012
Community Member – Barry Zlotin	2009 – June 2012

The Treasurer and Chair of Buildings and Grounds also serve as members of the Meetinghouse Preservation Fund.