

PEOPLES UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

# ANNUAL REPORT

2024



PCUU ANNUAL MEETING

May 19, 2024 12pm

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# BOARD OF TRUSTEES & STAFF

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## **Our Board of Trustees**

Steve Hershner, President

Kris Davis

Sue Davis

Marcy Mattison

Cate Sheller

Lu Wilcox

Ex Officio

Rev. Carin Bringelson

Gary McGraw, Treasurer

## **Our Staff**

Rev. Carin Bringelson  
Minister

Christine Kullander  
Congregational Administrator

Jackie Wedeking  
Digital Media Specialist

Matthew Wilde  
Internet Outreach Technician

Judy Mitschelen  
Pianist

Walter Robidoux  
Custodian

Jordan Wylie  
Childcare Provider

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# AGENDA

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## Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist Annual Meeting

May 19, 2024 – 12:15

### Lighting of the Chalice & Call to Order – Steve Hershner, Board President

“In the spirit of continued sacred community,  
we leave the chalice lit as we move into business.”

### Confirm Quorum

### Reports

Minister’s Report – Rev. Carin M. Bringelson  
Faith Formation – TBD  
Board of Trustees – Steve Hershner, President  
Treasurer & Finance Team – Gary McGraw  
Stewardship — Brenda Meshak

### Congregational Votes

Election of Trustees to the Board, nominees forwarded by the Nominating Committee:

VP – Susan Davis (Returning)  
Sec. – Marcy Mattison (Returning)  
Lu Wilcox  
Bob Butikoffer  
Steve Hershner

Election of Board President, nominee forwarded by Nominating Committee:

Robyn Meissler-Kubanek

Election of Nominees to Nominating Committee, nominees forwarded by Nominating Committee:

Jan Federer (Returning)  
Rose Gabe  
Kathleen Mavity  
Laura McGraw

### Governance Policy Updates

Further Clarification of Policy on Funerals & Memorial Services

### Other Business for the Good of the Church

### Closing Words and Extinguishing of the Chalice – Rev. Carin M. Bringelson

### Adjourn

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# MINISTER'S REPORT

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Rev. Carin Bringelson

Perhaps you wouldn't be surprised to hear that I was a tad overwhelmed when I started at Peoples Church on August 1, 2024. What was going on those 10-ish months ago?

- The Congregational Administrator had been out on medical leave since May 2023. The long-term substitute was fantastic, but neither of us had institutional knowledge. (Christine returned in early September; I continue to learn from and with her.)
- The siding on the west side of the building blew off in a storm in late July. That's when I was surprised to learn there was no active Building and Grounds Committee.
- The Faith Formation program was without a permanent staff person. Since life-long learning and faith development are particular passions of mine, this received lots of my attention.

Since those early August days, we have accomplished much together, including:

- Began the ongoing and important process of getting to know each other.
- Worked with an amazing Board, particularly President Steve Hershner, to...
  - Engage in an October Blast-off Weekend (also known as a "Start-up") with members of the Congregational Life Staff from the MidAmerica (Rev. Phil Lund and Lauren Wyeth)
  - Clarify my priorities of preaching, pastoral care, personnel/administration, and promoting congregational life
  - Affirm the covenant between the Board and me
  - Craft, update, and approve various procedures and policies, including those about flowers, Inclement Weather, Covid, and Funerals
  - Provide ongoing self-training on Board responsibilities
- Crafted and offered a variety of worship services (one of which was zoom-only), with a particular focus on the proposed UU Values crafted by the Article II Study Commission
- Facilitated a Zoom book discussion on the UUA Common Read, *On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World*
- Established relationships with interfaith partners in Cedar Rapids through...
  - Interreligious Council of Linn County (with a Peace Service in March)
  - Interfaith Alliance of Iowa
  - Voice of Christ connections (including a joint "Spring Clean")
  - Open and Affirming congregations in support of LGBTQ+ communities
  - Colleagues who are the religious leaders of the Youth Co-op congregations

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# MINISTER'S REPORT (CONT.)

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Rev. Carin Bringelson

- Hired and supervised a new Director of Faith Formation, Julie Olsen, who served from October – March
- Hired an additional Internet Outreach Technician, Matt Wilde, who began in December
- Supported a volunteer-led Peoples Church Choir
- Provided pastoral visits, cards, and phone calls, in collaboration with PCUU volunteers
- Welcomed 6 new members to PCUU
- Convened a Shared Ministry Team
- Strengthened relationships with UU connections and resources
- Worked with Finance Team and Stewardship Team to ensure appropriate use of the generosity of members/friends
- Co-facilitated a retreat training for Greeters
- Engaged in listening sessions with the Board to brainstorm the next Priorities for Peoples Church
- Planned and experienced a transformational Installation Weekend, with the formal rite of passage on April 27, 2024. Photos are at: <https://mykaelleighphotography.pixieset.com/theinstallationceremonyofrevcarinbringelson/>
- Special touches included:
  - Photos which can be viewed at <https://mykaelleighphotography.pixieset.com/theinstallationceremonyofrevcarinbringelson/>
  - A music video of My Roots Grow Down ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1VZ9\\_DxZhk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1VZ9_DxZhk)) and
  - The planting of a Bur Oak Tree in memory of Mike Meshak and in honor of the installation

I count it an honor to serve as your called minister. As a community, you are generous, resilient, inquisitive, and loving. I look forward to experiencing this next chapter with you.

Grounding in Love,

Respectfully submitted by Rev. Carin Bringelson

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# BOARD OF TRUSTEES PRESIDENT

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Steve Hershner

This past year has been AMAZING. We have celebrated and worshipped for almost 9 months with our settled and newly installed minister – Rev. Carin M. Bringelson. We have provided strong stewardship & financial support for PCUU and our Unitarian Universalist Association. Many have stepped up to be trained and serve as greeters, to help in the kitchen, and help PCUU in ways seen and unseen.

I want to thank those that helped guide our PCUU Priorities Listening Sessions to begin discerning Congregation and Board future actions that would best support our mission and values. Input received during the listening sessions is the first step in what could be future actions related to expanding church programming and/or projects which improve building accessibility and functionality. This input and future work will further the vision and mission of PCUU – you can expect to see and hear more on this topic in the coming months.

I reviewed my Board President summary for last year's Annual Report and was reminded how far we have come this past year. I am so thankful for the support we received from so many during our extended ministerial search. I am also grateful that many here at PCUU helped us continue tending our figurative church garden this past year so we are now in position to see PCUU blossom and Grow in Love through the collective efforts of Rev. Carin, the Board, other lay leadership, and all of the Congregation.

The work Rev. Carin has done (or will soon cover) in her sermons and during worship to reflect on our UU core values of Love, Interdependence, Equity, Generosity, Transformation, Pluralism, Inspirations, and Liberating Love may help us find or lead initiatives for compassionate action and peace.

Lastly, on a personal note – as you can see from the Annual Meeting agenda, I hope to pass the presidential baton to Robyn Meissler-Kubaneck, and continue my service to PCUU as a Board member.

I really appreciated the fact that whenever I asked folks for help during my two years of service as PCUU President the overwhelming response was, "Yes". Thank you so much!!

– Steve Hershner, Board President



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# DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Faith Formation
<b>Chair</b>	Julie Olson, served as Director of Faith Formation October 2023-March 2024; Megan Jones, acting as Faith Formation Coordinator
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Deb Booth, Scott Davis (teachers for Coming of Age); other various teachers; not actual Faith Formation Council is active as of this writing.

## **Job Description of the Group:**

Nursery is available for children ages birth through preschool on Sunday mornings.

Faith Formation classes for children ages preschool through 5th grade meet each Sunday from 9:45 a.m. -10:45 a.m. from the Sunday after Labor Day to mid-May with some breaks for holidays.

This year, youth from 6th through 10th grades formed a Coming of Age class, meeting each Sunday from 9:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. using the Soul Matters Coming of Age curriculum.

## **Activities of Note:**

The Faith Formation year started with challenges when both the interim (Ryan Roth-Klink) and settled (David Wise) Directors of Faith Formation resigned, effective June 30 and August 1, respectively. An ad hoc group of staff, board, and parents met over the summer and at the start of the Faith Formation year to discuss plans for the classrooms and strategies to hire a new Director of Faith Formation. Job sharing with another UU church was explored, but ultimately was not feasible. As a stop gap measure, the former interim DFF (Ryan) assisted with volunteer recruitment and the writing of curriculum and the parents and volunteers worked as teachers in the classrooms. Meanwhile, Rev. Carin and Lu Wilcox worked on hiring; Julie Olson was hired as the Director of Faith Formation and started in late October.

The Soul Matters curriculum for the elementary aged children was utilized the most this year with some revisions and additions from the Director of Faith Formation and volunteers. Seasonal parties were enjoyed throughout the year along with a Winter Pageant and Easter Egg Hunt. We had a strong turnout of elementary aged children most Sundays and have grown over the past few months to include new families.

Two consistent volunteers (Deb Booth and Scott Davis) taught the Coming of Age class and they were in the classroom nearly every Sunday. The youth have also been consistent in their attendance, rarely missing classes, and they have welcomed new youth to the group who visit.

The Coming of Age pilgrimage to Louisville, KY was a large undertaking this year primarily orchestrated by Julie Olson with some assistance from Rev. Carin Bringelson and Megan Jones. One teacher (Deb Booth) and two parents (Erin Ogle and Megan Jones) chaperoned the trip with five youth. They visited two churches, met with youth from these churches, participated in lobbying through postcard writing, volunteered at a community food bank and resource center, learned about their sister church's involvement in the Black Lives Matter protest after the Breonna Taylor murder, and visited an African American History Museum called Roots 101. They also enjoyed bonding over fun events such as dinners out and an indoor theme park. The trip was quite inspirational and moving for all who attended. It is the hope of the group that a continued relationship is possible with their Louisville counterparts.



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# DIRECTOR FAITH FORMATION CONT.

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As part of this trip, the Coming of Age youth have worked to complete 10 hours of volunteer service to benefit the church and its members since last summer. The youth really enjoyed this work and wish to be included in more volunteer opportunities in the future. The Coming of Age service, a culmination of what they have learned and how they have grown into their own beliefs, is planned for May 12, 2024.

The youth have also continued to enjoy their involvement with the Youth Coop, a youth group coordinated by six churches in Cedar Rapids: Peoples Church UU, St. Paul's United Methodist Church (UMC), Lovely Lane UMC, St. Mark's UMC, and St. Stephen's Lutheran (ELCA), and Trinity St. James UMC. The Youth Coop meets Sunday afternoons, rotating churches and other locations for their meetings. They have engaged in learning opportunities, service projects, and fun activities. Members of the Youth Coop will also have the opportunity to attend summer sessions and learning trips. The middle school trip will focus on LGBTQ+ advocacy and the high school trip will focus on work being done to serve the unhoused.

Unfortunately, the Faith Formation year ended with challenges. Julie Olsen resigned suddenly in late March to better care for her health. Thankfully, Megan Jones worked closely with Rev. Carin to ensure classes continued and the Faith Formation year finished strong. Rev. Carin and Lu Wilcox (a parent and a Board member) again will work on hiring a new DFF together. Ryan Roth-Klinck will be PCUU's adult liaison in the Youth Coop so the youth can continue to attend during the search.

## **Continuing Needs:**

Hire a new Director of Faith Formation.

Re-convene a Faith Formation Council to better support and assist the program. (The Faith Formation Council has not been officially meeting since the pandemic.)

Megan Jones plans to hold informal listening sessions with the children, youth, and parents to find out their hopes and dreams for their children's faith formation experience – to better inform planning and hiring for the upcoming year.

More volunteers are always welcome! Often, we rely heavily on parents to volunteer in the classroom which is not conducive to the children and youth forming relationships with other church members. Many hands make light work, and we welcome any who would like to share their gifts with our children and families! (Note: all volunteers will need to consent to a background check.)

## **Other Comments:**

Another congregational campout hosted by Faith Formation families is in the works for this summer, keep an eye out for updates!

With all the difficulties in transition this year, it should be noted how the families and volunteers really stepped up to keep programming going and nurture relationships between children, parents, families, and volunteers. We extend much gratitude to all who have helped in the Faith Formation program in ways both big and small. Faith Formation is vital for our entire church community and we are stronger because of all of you. Thank you!

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# OFFICE REPORT

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## Congregational Administrator —Christine Kullander

### Office Communications

- Update our website.
- Maintain Realm database and Mailchimp mailing list.
- Generate weekly newsletter – either eWeekly or the Voice.
- Ensure the Order of Service is emailed and printed each week.
- Prepare worship slides and distribute to worship leader, PCUU tech, and pianist ,along with OoS.
- Enter events into the church calendar. A monthly calendar is in the Voice and the eWeekly has items for the forthcoming week and items of import for the coming weeks.
- Enter information from “green cards” into Realm and MailChimp; create name tag if requested.
- Assist with email and phone inquiries.

### Facilities

- Ensure annual inspections are conducted – lift, ER lights, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, fire panel.
- A new snow removal company, who can also provide mowing services, was hired.
- Ensure mowing and snow removal occur in a timely manner. (They are notified when we have special occasions outside of our normal operations.)
- Work with custodian to ensure the building is properly maintained and that seasonal actions occur (snow supplies; dehumidifiers).
- Arrange extra cleaning when necessary. e.g., carpet cleaning
- Program thermostats and change settings with the seasons.
- A Knox Box was ordered and installed by the Gordon entrance. This box contains a building map and keys for the Fire Department to quickly access our building in an emergency.

### Office Administration

- Assist the Minister as needed.
- Annual recertification with the UUA (3 of us have a role in this.)
- Bi-annual recertification with the Iowa Secretary of State.
- Supporting the Board of Trustees with the Annual Meeting mailing and Annual Report compilation/distro.
- Gathering/copying/printing materials to support the Stewardship team in the stewardship campaign.
- Serve as primary contact for building rental.
- Liaison with Voices of Christ in their long-term rental and use of our building.
- Maintain worship music and worship calendar spreadsheets for internal use and mandatory CCS license reporting.
- Process payment for guest musicians and others.
- Update the UUA magazine subscription list annually.
- Order office, facility, and worship supplies as needed.
- Enter expenses and reconcile with credit card statement.
- Contacted a variety of churches to enquire about their funeral policies.
- The process of getting a new copier/printer/scanner was started at the end of 2023. The machine is expected in May 2024.

### Other

Many thanks to everyone who helped out in my absence last spring/summer. You were amazing!!

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# TECHNOLOGY & MEDIA REPORT

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Digital Media Specialist—Jackie Wedeking

<b>Committee or Group</b>	Tech Team
<b>Chair</b>	Jackie Wedeking
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Jackie Wedeking, Matt Wilde, Bill Hart, Cate Sheller, Bryan Davis, Robyn Miessler-Kubanek

## **Job Description of the Group:**

Providing technical support and audio-visual support to the church, utilizing the sound system and tv monitors, and broadcasting via Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube

## **Activities of Note:**

Every service is broadcast via Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube. The service on Zoom averages between 11-20 people for each service. The broadcast and clips on Facebook are utilized more for general outreach rather than how our congregation watches the full service. The YouTube broadcast is a live broadcast, but more often people will use it to watch clips of the service after the fact.

Facebook followers have now reached 663 and Instagram has 155 followers.

## **Continuing Needs:**

The area is very open to the public, which means that kids often crawl under the pews and accidentally disconnect the cords. A blocked off area would reduce stress.

Showing videos both on Zoom and to the congregation simultaneously using vMix is a challenge. Our services are improved greatly through vMix by allowing the vMix technician to be able to see all of the sources (the two cameras, PowerPoint, audio channels, videos, etc.) available all on one dashboard. But the software glitches when an external video is played through vMix, resulting in the sanctuary and the YouTube audience being able to hear the video's audio, but Zoom does not receive the audio.

Streaming on Facebook has been challenging. While it sometimes works, there are some technical hoops that can be confusing for the user.

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# TREASURER & FINANCE TEAM REPORT

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## Treasurer—Gary McGraw

<b>Committee or Group</b>	Finance
<b>Chair</b>	Gary McGraw, Treasurer
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Bob Butikofer, Judy Price, Rich Patterson, Doug Ogle, Rev. Carin Bringelson (ex-officio); Charles Cizio (Pledge Treasurer)

### Job Description of the Group:

The Finance Committee is responsible for the financial activities of the church, including:

- Weekly accounting and deposit of Sunday collection and other income.
- Monthly review of bookkeeper reports, monitoring income and expenses and the church balance sheet, including endowment activity, providing monthly reports to the Board of Trustees (BoT).
- Oversee investments with the Veridian Credit Union and monitor UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF) and the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation (GCRCF).
- Provide advice to BoT and the Minister on financial matters.
- Develop church policies and practices for financial operations.
- Development of annual budget, including support to the Stewardship Council.

### Activities of Note:

In 2023-2024 the church continued in its process of achieving long-term financial stability.

- We finished 2023 with a **surplus** of \$3,058. This was due to strong pledge payments from our members, endowment income and less than expected expenses. This surplus was allocated to reserve funds.
- We have maintained adequate cash reserves, while funding building repairs and paying for our ministerial search. The ministerial search fund ended up with a balance of over \$11k, as costs were lower than expected. These funds are being used to pay for Rev. Carin's installation.
- Our Endowments are contributing a significant portion of our operating income, totaling about \$45,000.
- Averaged over the course of the year, our solar panels generate enough energy to cover 100% of our electrical usage, resulting in monthly electrical bills of about \$22 for grid connection fees and taxes.
- We have continued to operate the committee based on the congregation's policy-based governance and our committee policy document.

### Continuing Needs:

We need additional people to help with the weekly deposit, join the committee, or participate in Stewardship Campaign. Besides providing an important service to Peoples, serving on the Finance Committee provides an opportunity to learn about the functioning of non-profit organizations, which is useful experience, both personally and professionally.

# MINISTRY TEAMS

## Ministry Teams Reports

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# ARCHIVES

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Archives
<b>Chair</b>	Various committee members
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Clarice Krippner, Bill Hart, Marcy Mattison, Jan Federer, Joye Winey Jan Watkins

## **Mission/Focus of the Archives & Heritage Committee:**

Collecting, preserving and sharing the history of Peoples Church from 1869 through 2024 and in to the future. To be a resource for the community as well as the congregation

## **Activities of note:**

- Sorted and filed the multitude of materials donated from church members.
- On a request from Radavan Lovci, an historian of Czech Unitarianism in Europe, we determined that Waclav Francis Severa was indeed a member of Peoples Church and his death had been entered into church minutes in 1938.
- Prepared and hung a sign for the Mary Andre room telling of its namesake's history.
- Ordered cast bronze name to the Plaque of Ministers to honor Rev. Rebecca Hinds' service, and ordered one honoring Reverend Carin Bringelson's installation at Peoples Church.
- Reorganized Archive flash drives in an orderly structure with 2579 files, eliminating 618 duplicates.
- Found archival information that the Newton Alliance donated a Silver Service to the church.

## **Ongoing work:**

- Organizing and labeling Photos
- Making decisions based on what really tells the story of our church
- Refining the present filing system
- Developing a policy for materials we receive, the right to refuse or dispose of in an appropriate manner.

## **Continuing Needs:**

- Funding for office materials needed to store archive documents and artifacts.
- Tech expertise and equipment for the safe electronic storage of materials (such as?)
- Continued donations of historical documents and artifacts of Peoples Church identified with people, place, and time

## **Other Comments:**

Our history reveals how we have evolved in belief and practice and how we have attempted to assert a positive influence on the world around us. In order for us to know who we are today, we need to understand who we have been.

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# CHOIR

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Peoples Church Choir
<b>Chair</b>	Karen Pierce and Kathleen Mavity
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Kelsey Anthony, Ezrah Benion, Shelbi Benion, Bev Buhr, Bryan Davis, Kris Davis, Jim Federer, Steve Hershner, Emily Hoselton, Bill Kilbourn, Linda Levy, Kathleen Marsh, Kathleen Mavity, Karen Pierce, Judy Price, Cate Sheller, Josh Wagner, Lu Wilcox, Payton Wilcox

## **Job Description of the Group:**

Peoples Church Choir are individuals who come together in community to sing and create music supporting Unitarian Universalism.

## **Activities of Note:**

Last Fall we organized: met with Rev. Carin, extended an invitation to singers, held an interest meeting, established volunteer co-directors, and hired a pianist (Kathleen Marsh). Our inaugural performance was December 3, 2023. In 2024, we performed monthly: January 21, February 18, March 17, April 21, and May 19. In addition, we sang at Rev. Carin's installation service April 27. We practice together three times a month: two Monday evenings prior to our singing date and the third Sunday of the month, prior to the service..

## **Continuing Needs:**

- Singers/musicians
- A very capable pianist
- New music
- Financial support for pianist and new music pieces

## **Other Comments:**

Going forward, we want to maintain (and preferably build) our music program. In that effort, we will evaluate this past year and obtain input from participants.

Thank you to the singers/musicians for their time, commitment, and artistry. It has been a pleasure to meet and build relationships with everyone in the group.



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# GOOD NEIGHBORS TEAM

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Good Neighbors
<b>Chair</b>	Kris Davis and Kathy Juba
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Bob Butikofer, Charlie Cizio, Bryan Davis, Jan Federer, Judy Price, Jim Wasta, Jo Wasta

## **Job Description of the Group:**

Good Neighbors provides church members and others in right relationship with the church occasional help of the type that a “good neighbor” might do.

## **Activities of Note:**

Four members of our congregation were given rides a total of approximately 13 times by 4 people, mostly for medical appointments. These numbers do not include rides to church services on Sundays for up to 3 people per Sunday. In addition, a number of meals were provided by multiple people to two members of our congregation after they had medical procedures.

## **Continuing Needs:**

We would benefit from at least one more person to be a contact for Good Neighbors as well as additional people we could call to help out with a Good Neighbors’ type task occasionally.

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# GREETERS

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Greeters
<b>Chair</b>	Kathy Juba
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Bob Butikofer, Judy Price, Emily Hoselton, Karen Pierce, Kathleen Mavity, Marcy Mattison, Paulette Montague, Rose Gabe, Scott Davis, Steve Hersher, Jim Wasta, Jo Wasta, Lu Wilcox, Joye Winey

## **Job Description of the Group:**

- Provide a welcoming experience before, during, and after worship service for each person attending.
- Maintain all supplies, funds, and records in a secure manner.

## **Activities of Note:**

- Greeted at every Sunday worship service.
- Provided a 2.5-hour greeter training January 27, 2024

## **Continuing Needs:**

Additional greeters are always welcome.

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# INSTALLATION

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Installation
<b>Chair</b>	Laura McGraw
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Rev. Carin Bringelson, Marcy Mattison, Marta Hersher, Judy Price

## **Job Description of the Group:**

Plan the installation of Rev. Carin on April 27th, including hospitality for invited guests.

## **Activities of Note:**

The team met monthly from October through March, when meetings became more frequent. We planned to welcome visiting ministers and invited guests, provided lunch before the service, and coordinated with the Van Vechten Guild, who organized the reception following the installation. Members of our team designed the invitations and programs, hired a photographer, reserved hotel rooms, and discussed the many other details that such an event requires.

## **Continuing Needs:**

Event has concluded and the team is disbanded.

## **Other Comments:**

The installation and hospitality was well-received!

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# KITCHEN

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Kitchen Crew for Socials
<b>Chair</b>	Jill Jones
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Variety of members have helped: Kathleen M., Judy P., Marian P., Kathy J., Diane, Megan J., Sue D., plus others, that I have missed

## **Job Description of the Group:**

Provide coffee and snacks for the Socials after the Sunday services. Set-up and clean-up of the kitchen for Socials.

## **Activities of Note:**

Try to maintain kitchen supplies: coffee, half & half, sugar, ice, teas, etc. Try to provide sweet and savory snacks, fruit, or veggies. Try to provide nutritious snacks.

## **Continuing Needs:**

Appreciate any donations of gluten-free snacks/cookies, or any snacks that provide more variety.

Appreciate any help with clean-up after the Social.

## **Other Comments:**

I would like to take one Sunday off every month. Maybe go back to a sign-up schedule for a 3-month window on the table outside of the Sanctuary for helping with the socials.

Appreciate the Van Vechten Guild for providing the Socials for the Special events. They provide a beautiful setting and hospitality.

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# MEMBERSHIP

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Membership
<b>Chair</b>	Marion Patterson & Sheryl Ochs, co-chairs
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Marion Patterson, Megan Murphy Salyer, & Sheryl Ochs

## **Job Description of the Group:**

The committee promotes membership, as well as supporting and connecting new members with others in the congregation.

Over the past several months the Membership Team have met with Rev. Carin to familiarize her with past activities and brainstorm to support ways to re-invigorate membership activities.

## **Activities of Note:**

As new attendees showed up, greeters welcomed people, collected and gave cards to the office for processing. The Membership Team also noted and welcomed new faces.

From the series of membership classes 6 people decided to join Peoples church, they are: Shelbi Benion, Josh Wagner, Alida Anderson, Danny Anderson, Kelsey Anthony, and Megan Murphy Salyer. Please welcome our new members when you see them around Peoples!

## **Continuing Needs:**

We plan to update contact information for all and check the website to make certain membership committee information on the site is accurate.

Comments: Membership also hosted a vegetarian/vegan potluck earlier this spring. Due to feedback, we feel people are ready for additional social events which build community. We plan to schedule more events in the coming months. Please give us your ideas!

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# PARAMINISTRY

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Paraministry
<b>Chair</b>	Rose Gabe
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Deb Booth, Jan Federer, Rose Gabe, Dorothy Hershner, Paulette Montague, Rosie Rimrodt, Rev. Carin Bringelson

## **Job Description of the Group:**

The Paraministry Team is a small group of Peoples Church members who minister to others in need. Skills used include listening, problem solving, and referral to others as needed. There are currently 6 members in the group and we meet every 2-3 months with Rev. Carin to develop an "on call" list of Paraministers whom the congregation can contact. Each member serves a 2-week period beginning on Monday and ending 14 days later. Each Paraminister is listed in the monthly Voice so that others know who to call if they have concerns.

## **Activities of Note:**

- The person on call contacts the 2 hospitals (St. Luke's and Mercy) twice weekly to find out if anyone from People's Church is in the hospital.
- We meet quarterly and share confidential information, for our team only, and decide if church members should be visited or have cards sent to them, depending upon the circumstances.
- We also write cards to members who have not been to church for a while that indicate we miss them.

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# SHARED MINISTRY TEAM

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Shared Ministry Team (SMT)
<b>Chair</b>	Kathleen Mavity
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Kathy Juba, Kathleen Mavity, Susan Petersmith, working in concert with Rev. Carin Bringelson

## **Job Description of the Group:**

Support the shared ministry within Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist, striving for a culture in which the Minister and individual congregants feel they *each* play a vital role. Members of the Shared Ministry Team contribute to this effort in the following ways:

- Assist the Minister on their journey to achieving Full Fellowship;
- Take a view “from the balcony” of all the ministries occurring within the Church;
- Serve as a sounding board and clearinghouse for ideas – suggesting resources without being experts;
- Support the congregation in learning to live into the spiritual practice of open, honest, and healthy conflict engagement;
- Maintain a basic working knowledge of the focus and work of the lay-led teams at Peoples Church.

## **Activities of Note:**

- Established trust within the group so as to best discuss challenges and possibilities facing Peoples Church;
- Clarified our goals and roles, drafting a charge that was approved by the Board of Trustees;
- Created a covenant outlining how SMT members aspire to be with each other;
- Began exploring characteristics of white supremacy culture, exploring how those relate to the culture of Peoples Church.

## **Continuing Needs:**

Time to continue practicing and exploring how we can best support the shared ministry of Peoples Church.

## **Other Comments:**

The intention is for the Shared Ministry Team to serve as a resource to all Peoples members wanting to engage with how the Church fulfills its Mission and ministry.



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# SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Social Justice Team
<b>Chair</b>	Marcia Swift
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Clarice Krippner, Jan Federer, Kathy Juba, Rose Gabe, Laura McGraw, Jim Wasta

## **Job Description of the Group:**

The Social Justice Council makes recommendations to the congregation on social justice initiatives for action and submits a ballot for voting on the recipients of the First Sunday Plate Collection. The SJC organizes social justice actions, including Forums for the congregation's participation. The SJC coordinates volunteers for Juneteenth and CRPride. The SJC keeps the congregation informed through online communications and social media about social justice issues related to the chosen priorities for the year. Members of the SJC represent PCUU with community groups and at events approved by the congregation.

## **Activities of Note:**

- The SJC has participated at Juneteenth, CRPride, and the Meskwaki Pow Wow.
- The SJC has been collecting household goods for the families served by the Linn County Association of Immigrants & Refugees.
- A social justice member participates with the WeVoteCoalition and Stand In Unity.
- Women immigrants from African countries continue to plant their garden on PCUU grounds and the SJC maintains the signs for these gardens.
- The SJC has purchased temporary signs showing support for our Queer community.
- The SJC has held Forums on Native Americans in Iowa and organized a book read.
- We held a workshop with Dr Sebastian Braun from ISU on the Indians of Iowa which was well attended.
- PCUU congregants continue to give generously to the First Sunday Plate Collection.

## **Continuing Needs:**

- The SJC continues to need more congregants to participate on the committee and in the planned events.
- Volunteers are needed to continue our participation at Juneteenth and CRPride.
- We need improved technology so Forums can be held online and representatives from social justice groups can zoom into Services.
- We need to update the social justice page on the PCUU website with more information and photos of Peoples Church social justice in action.

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# STEWARDSHIP TEAM

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Stewardship Committee
<b>Chair</b>	Brenda Meshak
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Judy Price, Charlie Cizio, Bryan Davis, Bob Butikofer, Reverend Carin

## **Job Description of the Group:**

The Stewardship Committee's main responsibility is planning and managing the annual pledge campaign which accounts for three quarters or more of the church's operating budget.

## **Activities of Note:**

The annual pledge campaign for fiscal year 2024 was "Blast Off!"

The goal was \$185,000 and we exceeded our goal by raising \$189,697 or 102% of goal

## **Continuing Needs:**

New ideas for communicating with our members and friends about the importance of making a financial commitment. Simplifying pledging. New members.

Other Comments: We appreciate each and everyone's financial gifts to the church.  
THANK YOU!!!

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# VAN VECHTEN GUILD

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<b>Group or Committee</b>	Van Vechten Guild
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Woodward
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	15

## **Job Description of the Group:**

The focus of Van Vechten Guild is to provide church support, member support, and support for the greater community. The Guild is a pledging unit to Peoples and makes other contributions to the church as needed. Officers are: Chair – Ann Woodward, Vice Chair – Jan Federer, Secretary – Karen Hartlip, and Treasurer – Kathy Juba. This year the Guild purchased a new coffeepot for the McGraw kitchen.

## **Activities of Note:**

Within the last year the Guild hosted the following speakers: Kathy Goode on Aging with Dignity, Ruth White from the Academy for Scholastic and Personal Success, Dara Schmidt from the CR Library, Mugisha Gloire, from United We March Forward and Cindy Dvorak on her experiences working at the border with migrants. Yet this year we will host Donna Craft from the Linn County Auditor’s Office and the African Women Gardeners. Each agency the speaker represents receives a \$100 stipend.

Annually we hold a summer potluck and a December Cookie Exchange. We hosted a reception for the arrival of Rev. Carin as well this year and will hold a “high tea” reception for her Installation on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Of special note this year was the Guild’s work in establishing a memorial/meditation garden and a pollinator garden on church grounds. This was a project that had been two years in the making. With memorial funds donated to the Van Vechten Guild, notably by the families and friends of Janet Obando and Doris Hamilton, it was decided to create a garden east of the church. Both Janet and Doris were avid gardeners, and it seemed a fitting tribute.

Ann Woodward, Jan Federer, and Melissa Rucker developed the design, Dan Meiners pulled out all the stumps, and most members of the VVG prepared the area, planted, and mulched. Many hands do make light work. And beautiful work!

Please take a moment to sit on the bench and gaze at the flowers, listen to the trickle of water and the tinkling of chimes, and meditate on life. And while you are outside, please visit the pollinator garden at the Gordon Street entrance as well. It is a beautiful welcoming place for the butterflies and bees.

Thanks again to VVG members, and the Youth of the church for it’s creation.

Finally, we held a successful pecan sale over the holidays.

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# VAN VECHTEN GUILD CONT.

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## **Continuing Needs:**

A meeting place at Peoples Church for our monthly meetings and advertisement of the meeting dates and topics in the church newsletter

## **Other Comments:**

We invite anyone to attend our meetings which are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month at noon, excepting July, August, and January. Friends and non-members of Peoples are also welcome. Dues are \$15.00. From the dues received, we pay the stipend to speakers, and support a fund to purchase memorial funds when no garden flowers are available.

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# WORSHIP ARTS TEAM

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<b>Committee or Group</b>	Worship Arts Team
<b>Chair</b>	Vacant; Rev. Carin Bringelson serving in the interim
<b>2023-2024 Active Members</b>	Angie Pierce Jennings, Bryan Davis, Cate Sheller, Deborah Booth, Emily Hoselton, Jim Federer, Lu Wilcox, Paulette Montague, Robyn Miessler-Kubaneck, and Rev. Rosie Rimrodt.

## **Job Description of the Group:**

The Worship Arts team works with Rev. Carin to craft inclusive, meaningful, and memorable worship experiences.

**Activities of Note:** The Worship Arts team meets nearly every month with Rev. Carin to strengthen their relationship with one another while exploring topics related to the crafting and leading of worship services. They also establish the Sunday schedule.

They use the monthly [themes from the Soul Matters group](#) to inspire and support their spiritual and communal explorations. The themes for the 2023-24 church year revolved around the proposed values from the Article II Study Commission, including: Welcome, Heritage, Generosity, Mystery, Liberating Love, Justice & Equity, Transformation, Interdependence, Pluralism, and Renewal.

Worship Associates also assist the Worship Leader with readings and other service elements on Sundays, as well as create and lead services on the Minister's Sundays off.

## **Continuing Needs:**

The Worship Arts team welcomes diverse voices and people who would like to deepen their participation in worship, either as a regular committee member, or by collaborating with the team to delve into a particular topic.

Regular Worship Arts team members commit to attend and actively participate in the regular planning meetings, assist in services, and share their unique message by leading an occasional service.

## **Other Comments:**

People who are interested in learning about how to increase their participation in the worship services can speak with Rev. Carin or any of the current Worship Arts team members.