



2025 UUWC Annual Report

WHO WE ARE

Stewardship



Actions



Values



Principles



A MESSAGE FROM OUR COUNCIL MODERATOR NIKA QUIRK

Dear People of Westside,

Happy New Year! As we look back at 2025, it's wonderful to appreciate our thriving and our accomplishments!

In 2025, your Council has continued to endeavor to serve this congregation well - stewarding our financial resources, tending to our building and grounds, supporting staff and volunteers, and developing a clear and resilient non-profit foundation to carry us into the future.

Our committees, teams and affinity groups have shared the enclosed annual reports so that you can enjoy their review of our journey as a congregation last year.

We are growing in energy, enthusiasm, and action. We are collaborating in making the community, and the world, that we want to live in. Thanks for all you are and do!

With gratitude,
Nika Quirk, MBA PhD, Council Moderator

on behalf of UUWC Congregational Council:
Rev. Carole Eagleheart, Vice Moderator
Delbert Schafer, PhD, Scribe
Ruth Tucker Bogart, Treasurer
Kathy Wright, Member

and our Minister, Rev. Dr. Nancy Hitt



FINANCE COMMITTEE



2025 was a good year financially. We passed a budget with a small surplus, and income exceeded expenses for the year. We continue to renew our \$25,000 Certificate of Deposit; we are currently earning 3.75% interest on that CD.

Laurel Anderson and Hobbit Merritt formed a new Stewardship Committee for this year's pledge campaign. To save paper, ink, and postage, the committee, along with Rev. Nancy and the Treasurer, designed a campaign that used Breeze forms instead of physical cards to receive pledges. Many members responded that the process was very easy, and overall it was considered a success. We subscribed to Jacquie Lawson e-cards for thank you notes, and Laurel and Hobbit sent notes to those who pledged.

Submitted by Ruth Bogart, UUWC Treasurer

UUWC ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE



The UUWC Endowment Committee provided two grants in 2025 from the Joe Danclovic Leadership Fund. A grant in the amount of \$475 was approved to provide the registration fee for a member of the congregation to attend the UUA General Assembly. A second grant in the amount of \$1600 was approved for Nika Quirk to develop four workshops on leadership training. The first workshop will be presented by Nika on January 10, 2026, and \$400 has been disbursed. The remaining \$1200 remains in the UUWC checking account.



Three Endowment Committee meetings were held in 2025 to discuss grant requests and approve the year-end report. An Endowment Committee brochure was developed and printed and is available to all at the back of the sanctuary. A report to the Congregation was given in November.

The current balances in the two Endowment Funds are as of the end of November, 2025:

- Joe Danclovic Leadership Fund - \$13,003.29
- UU Westside Memorial Endowment Fund - \$13,582.85

Submitted by Karen Schafer and Carl Noennig

PHOTO: NIC PROVENZO



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General:

The Facilities Committee performed scheduled maintenance and repairs, made improvements to the UUWC Building and Grounds during 2025, avoided any major disasters, and will tackle major projects for 2026.

Facilities hosted workdays in April and November, which resulted in numerous building and grounds projects begun or completed. Thanks to all members and friends of the congregations who participated.

One notable November achievement was the revival of the Peace River on the south side of the building between the Sanctuary and Social Hall entrances. Dawn Knighten's work is appreciated.

The two labyrinths have been cleaned up under the supervision of Amy Strine. CUUPS has volunteered to help with maintenance at least three times annually. Thanks to Amy and to CUUPS.

In December the painting, new lighting, and installation of new flooring in the Gallery Room was completed. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this project. Kelly Cook, Stevie Williams, Wendy Dampier, Keisha Parrish, and Dale McLaughlin deserve extra pats on the back for their help.

Facilities is involved with maintenance of the legacy Memorial Garden, while administration has been taken over by the Community Care Committee.

Plans are underway, with coordination from Tracey Willson and Tom Hughes, on updating of the Courtyard Entrance, which may involve some new Memorial features.

The Kitchen Team has been moved from Facilities to the Community Care Committee. However, Facilities is looking at ways to replace the kitchen range, as the oven is not operational. Further, a replacement of the dishwasher is at the top of the list.

Tech:

In April, the power supply to Erin's computer died. Charlie Merritt stepped in, found a person to replace the supply rapidly and at a low cost. Thanks, Charlie.





In October, the team oversaw an update of the soundboard, with a couple of new microphones, addition of an audio extractor to direct sound from the laptops and monitors through the sound system, and added a subwoofer to improve the quality of the sound in the Sanctuary.

Plans to extend sound into the Gallery Room are under consideration.

Cleaning Team:

Hobbit Merritt reports that the cleaning team is functioning well, and takes pride in keeping the building in tip-top shape.

Submitted by Delbert Schafer

COMMUNITY CARE COMMITTEE

We have had a busy year with lots of activity:

- There was extensive research by Norma McLaughlin to determine the best set-up and best price for rectangular tables and chairs. The round tables will no longer be used for coffee time. New tables and some chairs were purchased. This change was made to accommodate additional attendance and new members.
- Update the First Aid box
- New Member Orientation Program developed and presented to three groups
- Received and made available to the congregation emergency contact information supplied by RR Police Department
- Participated in the March Community Fair
- Grace Poley took over the management of the kitchen crew, food donations, and decorations for special events
- Training continues for new greeters; ushers were added to the offering procedure
- Developing a system for tracking attendance and using Breeze continues
- Teams for table set-up and take down have been recruited
- Storehouse West was accepted as a priority due to cuts in federal funding
- Community Care is now managing the care of the Peace River and the Memorial Garden
- We are always pleased to welcome new members to our committee and are happy to answer any questions.

Submitted by Karen Schafer





Carla Clark and Maggie Green assumed the role of co-chairs of the Social Justice Committee beginning with the May 2025 meeting. Previously Laurel Anderson had chaired the meetings and Laurel's notes are referenced for activities prior to May.



- Gay Pride: Jenny and Kelly Cook co-chaired the 2025 participation in Albuquerque Pride Fest. The event was held downtown. UUWC entered a float in the parade and many members walked or rode with the float. UUWC also had a booth at the plaza where the event was held with a prize wheel and small prizes like key chains and bookmarks. Those staffing the booth engaged with passersby. This was a successful event overall.
- Green Sanctuary: Large decisions such as implementing solar panels, were relegated to the Council. There was discussion about cleaning products and paper products that were “greener” in nature. Implementation was left up to the cleaning crew chaired by Hobbit Merrit.
- Carla Clark looked into inviting a speaker from the Native American Farmer’s Association or similar group, but no speaker was found and there was some question as to how this would be viewed. The SJC did decide to add a separate quarterly collection to our usual Sunday collection, which was donated to Southwest Reservation Aid. We recently received a very gracious card of thanks.
- There was discussion of a “free yard sale event” but ultimately this idea was discarded.

Since Carla and Maggie have been co-chairing the SJC, the following ongoing and new projects are being implemented. Ongoing projects include:

- Feed Rio Rancho Kids: see *the FRRK section in this report*.
- Storehouse West: This project collects non-perishable food from the congregation and delivers it to Storehouse West for distribution to those with food insecurities.
- UU the Vote: Led by Carole Eagleheart, UU the Vote sends reminders to vote via postcards and letters. Carole organizes members of the congregation in writing events and has sent out hundreds of postcards and letters. UU the Vote is also active in supporting important legislation.
- Anti-racist book club: this group meets at the Whispering Bean Coffee Shop in Corrales. Jen Tripp Zillich is the current point person.





- No Human is Illegal immigrant support group: Dee Curry is the contact for this project. In 2025, No Human is Illegal participated in the “Dignity Mission” at Placitas Presbyterian Church where they created hygiene bags for Asylum Seekers on both sides of the border. That was slowed down and then halted due to the new administration. The group also sent stuffed animals, books, and toys to Asylum children for the holidays. Due to “Due Process” abuses of the current administration, they joined in protest calling for “Due Process for Immigrants” at an Indivisible/50501 protest in Albuquerque. They handed out “Know your Rights” cards and copies of the Constitution and flyers in regards to an upcoming house bill to shut down ICE detentions in New Mexico. Presently, this group is letter writing State Senators to shut down the detentions in New Mexico as a similar bill will be introduced in the upcoming legislative session. As needed, they will be supporting the passing of that bill. The group also prepared a statement regarding the worth of every human being and support for immigrants, which was accepted by the council as an official policy statement.
- Little Free Libraries: led by Laurel Anderson and Keisha Parrish, this project ensures that all 6 of our Little Free Libraries throughout Rio Rancho are kept stocked and clean. This year, due to widespread food insecurity, Laurel has been adding non-perishable goods to the libraries and reports that they have been utilized.
- Pride Fest 2026 – Jenny Cook has indicated that she will be organizing this event.

New Projects undertaken by the SJC in the past few months include:

- Statement on Gaza and the West Bank. Inspired by Pete Gleichman, members of the SJC drafted a statement of support for the innocents impacted by Israel’s destructive war in Gaza. This statement was accepted by the council as a policy statement for UUWC. Pete also arranged for a speaker to come on a Saturday, and the meeting was well attended and received.
- Love is at the Center Art Project: this project was created by Terri Del Curto and Hobbit Merritt and later adopted by the SJC as an appropriate project to be supported. Several congregates meet near the post office every Saturday with signs bearing positive messages only. Hobbit reports mostly very positive responses.



- Oasis Tutoring: Laurel Anderson brought this program to our attention. The program entails one on one sessions with elementary-aged school children in Albuquerque schools. Laurel is working to have a formal training session that occur in 2026 at our church location, so interested volunteers can easily participate.
- Statement of support for Transgender and LGBTQAI+ individuals: this is a work in progress with Roxey Cast-Hecht working on it. Intent is to develop a statement which might be adopted by the congregation.
- A Hand Up for the Unhoused: a committee led by Carla and Maggie was formed to investigate ways to assist the unhoused in Rio Rancho. This is proving to be complicated as there are no gathering spaces or shelters in Rio Rancho. An initial meeting has been held and research is ongoing.
- Gun Safety: Janet Bellamy is following the NM legislature and will let us know when key legislation is being heard. Carpool to Santa Fe to support this may be organized.
- Universal Health Care: Judy Deutsch has updated us on the introduction of legislation relative to Universal Health Care on a national level. Judy has provided us with research related to the benefits. If at some point this program is seriously considered by Congress, a letter writing campaign may be instituted in support.

Each month the SJC helps to decide the Social Justice Candle for coming months.

Submitted by Maggie Green and Carla Clark



WHAT WE DO



This year has been a very important year for FRRK as we have worked to meet the growing needs of hungry kids in several of our Rio Rancho schools. We recently provided 120 new winter coats to our schools. We also helped with Thanksgiving meals for 40 families. Our partnership with UUWC and the Democratic Party of Sandoval County (DPSC) makes this kind of support for local kids and their families a reality. We estimate that our volunteers provided 310 volunteer hours August through December 2025.

Starting in January 2026 we will increase the number of packets each month from 300 to 400 as we strive to meet the current needs of our children. Federal funds have been cancelled for foodbanks, and the loss of SNAP benefits has meant additional food scarcity.

We are currently serving Colinas del Norte Elementary School, Ernest Stapleton Elementary School, Lincoln Middle School, Independence High School, Shining Stars Preschool and Desert Hills elementary and middle school. Our UUWC liaison is Kelly Cook and the DPSC contact is Alexandria Piland.

Submitted by Karen Schafer

UUWC WEBSITE

Our website, UUWestside.org, continues to provide a major public exposure for the Congregation and its activities throughout the year.

A reorganization of the website occurred with the Home Page highlighting the Calendar of Activities and Events. This provides users with a snapshot of all activities going on at UUWC. A page featuring links to new from the Unitarian Universalist Association was added. A page featuring the Programming Committee was added. A password protected section was added to provide an archive of all committee and team meeting minutes. These minutes are posted by the UUWC office coordinator, Erin Uhles. Dee Curry stepped forward to also serve as a content manager for the website.

The biggest challenge is to convince members and friends of the Congregation to submit information and photos to be published on the website.

Submitted by Delbert Schafer



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Enchanted VISION

A Celebration of Local Art & Artists



Unitarian Universalist Westside Congregation
1650 Abrazo Rd. NE, Rio Rancho

SAVE THE DATES NOV 14-16

Friday 11/14 -Opening Night
6:00 - 8:00 pm
Wine and hors d'oeuvres

Saturday 11/15 Show
11:00am - 5:00 pm

Featuring Artist Demonstrations:

- 11:00 Quilting by Jacqueline Lloyd
- 1:00 Painting by Jonathan Schleser
- 3:00 Drawing by Jackie Freedman

Live Native American Flute music by Josee Mandile

Sunday 11/16 Show
11:00-5:00 pm

Free Admission all Weekend
Entry into games including
painting, photography and
fiber art

Once again, in 2025, UUWC's CUUPS circle grew in numbers and earth spirituality offerings to our congregation and the local pagan community. Together we explored the ancient earth-centered traditions of our ancestors while building an inclusive, supportive community through:

- public Sabbats, with potluck dinner & ritual (open to the public and hosted in UUWC's building)
- participation in UUWC Sunday CUUPS Services (6-8 times per year)
- women's monthly full moon circles (by invitation in member's private home)
- creative crafting evenings (an opportunity to share, support and have fun(!), also by invitation in a private home)

CUUPS also participated in Albuquerque Pagan Pride Day on September 28, hosting a booth, workshop and winning 2nd prize for their altar.

Submitted by Nika Quirk

ENCHANTED VISION ART SHOW

Under the leadership of Carole Eagleheart, UUWC produced and enjoyed our 4th Annual Art Show. An amazing group of artists register, many of whom have entered in prior years. Our Friday Opening Night was a splendid evening with finger foods donated by congregants, wine and other beverages. The weather was lovely, the event was well attended and parking went smoothly! Everyone appeared to really enjoy this special occasion and sales were brisk! On Saturday, 3 artists were featured, providing demonstrations of quilting, painting and drawing, while a Native American flutist strolled the galleries. Sunday was fun for folks attending the service who got to enjoy the show as part of coffee hour.

Of course, one of our goals is selling art and raising funds for UUWC. As Carole said "Ta-dah! Total is \$4209. That's \$810 more than last year. We had a great show."

Submitted by Carole Eagleheart and Nika Quirk



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In 2025 the UUWC Humanist Group continued to organize the UUWC library. It is now cleaned, sorted, newly labeled and ready for the congregation to use. In February work began on events with Liz James of the Unitarian Universalist Hysterical Society. She led the service on March 9th entitled “Inherent Mirth and Dignity.” She also presented a workshop on “Avoiding Volunteer Burnout.” Both events were well received by the participants.

Following a rather quiet summer because of scheduling conflicts, the group began work on celebrating Human Light, the Humanist holiday party. Established 20 years ago by a Humanist Group in New Jersey, it is now celebrated worldwide. It provides an enjoyable, secular holiday event. The emphasis is on Reason, Compassion and Hope. We celebrated it on December 23rd with refreshments, games, and singing.

The Humanist Group is pleased to announce we have secured Rep. Kathleen Cates to present a 2026 legislative preview in the sanctuary on January 10th. UUWC is partnering with the Democratic Party of Sandoval County.

Submitted by Karen Schafer

PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

The Programming Committee, led by Rev. Dr. Nancy Hitt, ensures that our congregation’s Sunday service offerings respond to the challenges of our spiritual diversity and the current topics that are of impact to us. In 2025, our services continued to be inspirational, educational, fun and collectively bonding. Many services are reflected in the photos in this report. An exciting first this year was the well-attended daylong Programming Workshop held on November 8!

This committee provides an opportunity for congregants to directly impact what topics are spoken about on Sunday mornings. Slide presentations, music, and wording of parts of the service are also discussed in meetings and Sunday Services are planned out and scheduled. Issues affecting services such as technology, music and research for guest speakers are reviewed. Recent topics have been acquiring the Virtual Hymnal, strategies to accommodate growth, and expanding the tech team that supports Sunday services.

Submitted by Wendy Dampier and Nika Quirk





UU WESTSIDE CONGREGATION

