



191<sup>st</sup> Annual Report of the  
Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry

May 1, 2025 - April 30, 2026

Unitarian Universalist  
Urban Ministry

**Annual Report  
2025 - 2026**

**191 Years**



**RYP students volunteer on the UUUM greenspace planting flowers under the new community posting board**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission and Vision.....6

Message from the Chair.....8

Report from Executive Director and Senior Minister..... 10

190<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Minutes..... 13

Budget Report.....20

Board of Directors 2024 - 2025.....21

Report of the Nominating Committee.....22

Board of Directors Candidate Biographies.....23

Program and Department Reports

    Roxbury Youth Programs.....26

    Renewal House.....28

    Congregational & Volunteer Engagement.....30

    Facilities.....34

Supporting Member Churches: Financial Gifts.....37

Contributing Foundations, Organizations  
and Non-Member Churches.....38

Member Churches, Delegates and Delegates at  
Supporting and Member Churches.....39

UU Urban Ministry Team.....43

Our Core Values.....45

Supporting the UU Urban Ministry.....46





Boston's Mayor Michelle Wu with Roxbury Youth Programs students during the Henry Knox 250 event - this first held in our restored Meetinghouse

## OUR MISSION:

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

## OUR VISION:

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



**Roxbury's Meetinghouse is illuminated with the artwork of local artists as part of the Henry Knox 250 event held here in March 2026**



**H**ello Dear Urban Ministry,

It is my great joy and my deep honor to serve you as your Board President. It is with abundant gratitude and mounting enthusiasm that I share this Annual Report with you, my first of many.

I have to begin with mountains of gratitude for my predecessor, Karla Baehr. Through her many years as President, Karla partnered with Mary Margaret, our incredible staff and a wonderful array of Board Members and accomplished so much. During the many years of her leadership we articulated and embraced our new mission and vision, the meetinghouse renovation was completed, the peace garden created and so much more. Our Board transformed in it's makeup, bringing in a balance of delegates and representatives from our member congregations as well as people with deep personal ties to Roxbury.

I came into this Presidency with a beautiful and inviting newly completed building, and a Board of Directors as diverse as it is gifted, as grounded as it is expansive. I came into this Presidency with a vibrant, beautiful, engaging and inspiring mission and vision, and a wonderful staff team led by a visionary, dependable, compassionate, committed and creative Executive Director and Senior Minister.

And so, now, with these many gifts, with this good beginning, now, dear Urban Ministry, we are ready to again roll up our sleeves and live into this rich potential before us. So many of you worked so long to realize the dream of the Meetinghouse restoration, and now we have this beautiful space. How, now, will we mobilize it to serve our mission? How will we continue to deepen and grow the work of RYP with its new leadership, these new youth and this changing world into which we are helping them launch.

Lastly, I must share some gratitude for our exceptional Executive Director and Senior Minister. When she asked me to serve as President I agreed heartily and with enthusiasm. Not because I am burdened with an abundance of free time, not because my ministry in Belmont or my family of five have lessened in demand or intensity.

Rather, I said yes to her invitation because I believe in her ministry and the wonderful work she is creating with this exceptional staff and all of you. I said yes because we all, together are just scratching the surface of the fullness of all we can achieve together. I said yes because in this next chapter, so much is possible, for two reasons.

First off, there is something extra special you can do as a leader after ten years. Mary Margaret now knows her job, she knows the Urban Ministry, she knows Roxbury. She has cultivated relationships now for ten years. She has learned and grown, she has created this staff team and this Board, she has worked so hard for

so long, and now the building and the mission and the vision and the team are all ready. And now, so much is possible.

And the second reason so much is possible is because of you. One of the gifts I can bring to this presidency is that I am unafraid of asking you to do more. If you are a donor, I am asking you to give more. So much is possible now, and imagine how much more is possible if you give even more. My family is increasing our gift to the Urban Ministry and I am inviting you to do the same. Imagine how much more is possible if we all give even more. And for the staff, I invite you all to create more, to serve more, to dig deeper into your creativity and continue this amazing work you are doing. One of my core commitment during my presidency is that we will engage in a comprehensive evaluation of everyone's compensation and we will do our best to pay you competitively and beyond. My hope is to lock in this incredible team around Mary Margaret, and have them all paid what they are worth for this wonderful work they are doing. We will build on this precious momentum.

And so thank you. Thank you for all you have given to the Urban Ministry. Thank you for pouring yourself out into our good work in the world, our mission and our ministry is needed, now more than ever. So thank you.

And thank you, especially, for all that we will build together in this next chapter. It is my great joy and deep honor to serve.

Chris,



Rev. Chris Jablonski  
*Chair, Board of Directors*  
*Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry*



Dear Friends,

My primary spiritual practice is gratitude. Daily, as I walk from the Ruggles MBTA station up the hill to our campus, I count on each finger what I'm grateful for. And daily, serving at the UU Urban Ministry is on that list. I'm grateful for meaningful work we do together, for the campus we have restored, and for the communities it serves. I'm grateful for a staff of strong leaders, and for the circle of support of churches and delegates that give us ballast as we navigate today's roiling waters.

At the helm with me this year was our new and bold board chair, the Rev. Chris Jablonski of Belmont – leading a thoughtful and committed board made up, equally, of Roxbury community members and RYP alum, and UU church members. They are such good stewards of this 200-year-old institution.

This year saw us steer through ongoing national uncertainty and turmoil – cuts to SNAP and to federal funding for our domestic violence shelter – and to great celebration with the completion of our historic Meetinghouse restoration.

UUUM's strength in coming through each of these is because of our strong board, as well as our committed supporters, churches and delegates, and the skills of our deeply talented staff.

These are key highlights from this year:

- We welcomed more young people into our programs – more than 40 regular participants, with additional young people dropping in. Young people visited museums, learned a range of skills, received tutoring and support applying to college, and a healthy meal each day. We again are hearing the success of young people receiving acceptance and scholarships to college.
- We placed five families from our emergency shelter in permanent housing – a feat in the midst of Boston's housing crisis. We also strengthened our relationship with other domestic violence providers by reaching out to assist survivors served there.
- In the fall we learned that the government was pausing SNAP benefits – impacting families we served. Congregations immediately sent in gift cards that were given to RYP and Renewal House families to ensure basic needs we met during the holiday season.
- We deepened our partnerships with Roxbury organizations. The Dynamic Seniors meet weekly on our campus, bringing joy and laughter with them, and helping us reach out to the local community about events and opportunities here. A group of local faith leaders meets here monthly to build connection across the neighborhood. We worked with organizations like the Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center, Roxbury Community College and DeeDee's Cry to walk with them in serving the community well.
- We began work on improving Putnam Chapel. With funding from the Klarman Foundation, we began work with an architect to make the space more functional and welcoming.

- And, of course, we threw open the doors of our 1804 Meetinghouse! We have already seen the restored space fill with music and history – with the reenactment of the Henry Knox trip from Fort Ticonderoga, to jazz music courtesy of Vivo, and a cantata sung by 8 UU choirs called The Immigrant Experience.

Each of these milestones was completed because of the network of relationships you are part of. Every time that we face a challenge, knowing that our member congregations and our delegates and our friends are facing it with us, gives me great confidence.

As I complete 11 years in this ministry, I feel no flagging in my love and gratitude for our shared work.

Thank you for bringing your care for justice, fairness and friendship to the doors of UUUM.

In faith,



Rev. Mary Margaret Earl  
*Executive Director and Senior Minister*  
*Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry*



Roxbury's Meetinghouse

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

**May 22, 2025**

*Meeting remotely, via Zoom*

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

The meeting started with music and photos from last year at 5:30 pm

Karla Baehr called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm, and she invited Rev. Mary Margaret Earl to offer the invocation.

Rev. Earl started the invocation, discussing the spirit of friendship and perseverance through our friendships. She welcomed everybody to the annual meeting. She gave a brief introduction to what would be discussed during this meeting, and mentioned that she is grateful for the connection between the UU Urban Ministry and the congregations.

Rev. Earl introduced Marie Padilla, Shelter Manager.

Ms. Padilla explained that she has a full shelter but has been working towards still applying for housing and strengthening the housing program via connections to best serve guests. Six staff members completed a 40-hour DV training during the past year. She also mentioned that Renewal House was able to provide tickets and field trips for the families that have been guests there. This school year, they were able to provide \$1,500 to each family for school and winter clothing and she thanked donors that they were able to do this. A resident was able to pass her driver's test, and the shelter was able to help with the cost of food that WIC does not cover. Families were able to get gifts for Christmas and had a full Thanksgiving spread for the holidays this year. Ms. Padilla mentioned that the shelter does its best to help meet residents' needs as they arise. With the support of donations, the shelter can help provide for the needs for residents, and she thanked them for their support.

Ms. Padilla welcomed Shamika Harrison, director of facilities.

Ms. Harrison started by mentioning that she was focused on the facilities and grounds, ensuring a welcome space for staff, neighbors, and anybody who comes. She shared that Bryan McCray was promoted to facilities manager and supports Ms. Harrison in helping run the building. Rosemary Santiago provides weekend support so others can use the space during business hours. She gave the Meetinghouse clock winders a big thank you, as they are committed to coming

into the building weekly and winding the clock so our bell rings every hour. The Meetinghouse is on the verge of reopening, and it is exciting to have these doors open for the community to use. They are currently finishing the final touches, but it has been going smoothly.

Ms. Harrison welcomed Reggie Walker, RYP program manager.

Mr. Walker talked about taking on more students in the upcoming year. This year, RYP enrolled 35 students who were able to be part of the stipended program as well as 20 drop-in students. The program has focused on life after high school and college readiness, providing workshops presented by volunteers from congregations or local residents, such as Judge Vicky Henry, Janice Rudolf, Georgia Foote, and Donald Glover. Mr. Walker talked about the potential for program expansion, including bringing on a new staff member, Abby Seero. Abby helped run the program with Colin Knight where students built a tour of their community in Roxbury. RYP was able to bring back Boston College tutors to work with the students this past year, as did RYP alum, Angel Sanchez. During spring break, students took field trips to Boston College, Harvard, and a Red Sox game. Looking ahead, RYP wants to offer real-world experiences, and it has been a great year of accomplishments.

Mr. Walker introduced Sarah-Simone Dyer, a high school senior and RYP student.

Ms. Dyer spoke about her experiences in RYP where she has been a participant since 8th grade. She talked about her most recent work in the program: doing research about the First Church of Roxbury. Ms. Dyer talked about how Roxbury has its own story to tell and that every town has its own story to tell. This project has helped her expand her research and leadership skills. She built a foundation for those who come afterwards, with the start of the research surrounding Roxbury. Sarah-Simone has made new connections through RYP and grown confident in her own network. She ended by sharing that she will be attending Boston University in the fall on a full ride, and plans to study child psychology.

Mr. Walker came back to thank Ms. Dyer for sharing and welcomed Robert Jones, congregational engagement and volunteer coordinator.

Mr. Jones' work has centered on bringing community organizations and congregations closer to UUUM. He meets with the congregational engagement task force once a month and has been learning more about the congregations and delegates. There have been two delegate lunches that enabled those in attendance to discuss shared experiences and meet with partner organizations. Mr. Jones has been conducting monthly volunteer networking sessions to allow volunteers to support, engage, and share with others. The program *Seeing Me in the World has been going well and is helping bring in new groups to help learn*

and reflect. Two *Bridges of Understanding* sessions have been held, and there is hope for more future sessions. Mr. Jones is working closely on building connections, showing up when it matters, and supporting as well. He talked about wanting to build on this foundation with shared purpose and intention. Mr. Jones shared a video from Toy Burton – talking about how the UU Urban Ministry supports her organization DeeDee’s Cry.

Mr. Jones welcomed Dayenne Walters, arts liaison.

Ms. Walters thanked those who supported her and First Parish in Lexington for their efforts on the recent art exhibit and fundraising event that she helped organize. The exhibition is still open if people want to go, and she presented a short video of the work that she has been working on. Her presentation focused on the role of the art liaison and her goals within the position. Ms. Walters also talked about wanting to amplify local artists and future programming for the peace garden and Meetinghouse. Ms. Walters discussed what her Public Art tour will be focusing on and where people can sign up for the tours.

Ms. Walters welcomed back Rev. Earl.

Rev. Earl stated she is proud to work with the staff members and invited them back for a virtual bow, and offered for people to give some love in the chat.

Rev. Earl then introduced the business portion of the evening. Ms. Baehr joined her on screen and invited Lisa Snellings to present the Report of the Nominating Committee.

Ms. Snellings introduced herself and presented the candidates for the delegate-at-large: Cheryl Brown-Greene, Marcia Butman, Peter Coccoluto, Akunna Eneh, Marshall Hughes, Chris Jablonski, Ruby Jordan-Borges, Marisa Luse, Christine Nelson, Thomas Plant, Nishaila Porter, Doug Poutasse, Tom Roose, and Lisa Snellings. Ms. Baehr asked for a motion for a vote. Ms. Snellings made a motion to nominate this slate as delegates-at-large. Ms. Luse seconded the motion. Delegates and Delegates-At-Large voted unanimously on the motion’s passage with no abstentions. The motion passed.

Ms. Baehr asked Ms. Snellings to introduce the second vote for candidate for election to the board of directors.

Ms. Snellings read the names of the two candidates for re-election to the board: Doug Poutasse (2028) and Mr. Tom Roose (2031), as well as the three candidates for their first term on the board of directors: Cheryl Brown-Greene (2034), Akunna Eneh (2034), and Pat Rohan (2034). Ms. Snellings praised those who are leaving the board. Ms. Baehr then asked if there was a motion for a vote on all candidates as a single slate. Mr. Roose seconded the motion. Delegates and Delegates-At-Large voted unanimously on the motion’s passage with no abstentions. The motion passed.

Ms. Snellings then introduced the candidates for the nominating committee: Cheryl Brown-Greene, Ruby Jordan-Borges, Marisa Luse, and Lisa Snellings. Ms. Snellings moved for a vote on the slate of candidates to the Nominating Committee. Ms. Luse seconded. Delegates and Delegates-At-Large voted unanimously on the motion’s passage with no abstentions. The motion passed.

Ms. Baehr asked for a motion to approve last year's annual meeting minutes. Ms. Snellings made the motion to approve the minutes of last year. Mr. Roose seconded the motion. Delegates and Delegates-At-Large voted unanimously on the motion’s passage with no abstentions. The motion passed.

Ms. Baehr moved the conversation to the current bylaw changes that are proposed tonight for delegates to vote on. She explained that the board began reviewing the organization's bylaws in effort to align them with best practices for non-profit governance. Ms. Baehr praised Ms. Snellings for taking the lead on these changes, while working closely with Rev. John Hickey. Together Ms. Snelling and Rev. Hickey proposed a series of bylaws. Ms. Baehr emphasized the importance of incorporating language that reinforces the organization’s mission and vision. Ms. Baehr explained that these changes are due to the current policy changes in Washington D.C.. The process took place with legal guidance, the board was presented with option:

- revising the mission and vision statements
- not proposing new language
- or scrubbing all DEI language from the website.

Ms. Baehr concluded that the board decided to affirm the mission through the proposed DEI affirming language because they think it essential to operating the Organization in a manner that is mission-driven.

Ms. Snellings explained that delegates should have received a report with the proposed amendments and had the opportunity to attend different informational sessions to help explain these changes.

Ms. Snellings reviewed the proposed changes to the delegates:

- Commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Updating provisions to the removal of a board of directors with a super majority vote of 2/3
- Increase the audit and finance committee from 3 to 5 members
- Authorize the board to fill vacancies on the nominating committee between meetings of the delegates
- Authorize remote meetings of delegates, board, and committees
- Revised indemnification, insurance, and limitations of liability provisions

Ms. Baehr called for a vote on the changes to the bylaws, seeking approval to the proposed amendments to the bylaws under one vote. Ms. Snellings made the motion. Ms. Luse seconded the motion. Delegates and Delegates-At-Large voted unanimously on the motion’s passage with no abstentions. The motion passed.

Ms. Baehr welcomed Mr. Tom Roose.

Mr. Roose presented the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Roose began discussing the FY25 budget. FY25 ended with a surplus of \$410,336. Mr. Roose explained that the organization is estimating that there will be an operational gap of \$314,433 in FY26, but that the organization is predicted to have a break-even year for FY26. Mr. Roose explained that the organization exceeded the budget due to one-time donations and government funds that surpassed the budget. The contributions from grants and congregations fell short during FY25, but there is hope to increase this number in FY26. Looking ahead, there is an uncertainty around federal government funding, and that the board approved a budget with an assumption that we will be seeing \$140,000 less in federal (MOVA) funding for Renewal House. Currently, the organization has a surplus of \$300,000. The organization had a one-time government funding surplus. \$150,000 of that surplus fund will be put into helping fund any short fall from the federal government that is anticipated. The rest of the surplus will be utilized to offset those costs of the Meetinghouse. We ended FY25 with 12% savings in Organizational expenses. The majority of the savings came from hiring delays, leading to reduced salary and wage expenses. It is important to note that insurance and annual audit fees keep rising. The Harvard Community Action Partnership (CAP) team will be making recommendations in June for operating the Meetinghouse with a break-even goal. The organization will develop a more seasonalized income model to ensure expenses are in line with revenue. The department managers continue to be well-trained in managing their program budgets and are active in working with their budgets.

Mr. Roose welcomed Thomas Plant.

Mr. Plant provided an update on the History Committee's work. He announced that the UU Urban Ministry was recently awarded a \$25,000 grant from Harvard University to support the continued investigation of the Meetinghouse's history. This grant enabled the hiring of two research fellows: Mary Snyder and Mica Caine. These fellows are conducting historical and genealogical research and have already uncovered connections, including tracing the lineage of the first interracial couple, that lead back to the First Church in Roxbury (the Meetinghouse). Mr. Plant also shared updates on Ms. Snyder's work related to the Meetinghouse, mentioning that she is working on a database to show the lineage of the enslaved people. Mr. Plant highlighted that the research fellows taught a workshop to youth and community members, teaching them how to conduct their own genealogy research. Mr. Plant closed by thanking both the Board and the History Committee for their dedication and excellent work.

Mr. Plant welcomed Rev. Dave Egan.

Rev. Egan shared that it has been a great experience to lead the Congregational

Engagement Task Force. He noted that the current focus is on identifying the most effective ways to engage with congregations and delegates. He highlighted the delegate lunches as a successful example of collaboration and expressed his excitement about the plan to hold more in the future. Rev. Egan also spoke about his work with Monique on the *Bridges of Understanding* program, which is designed to help adults explore issues of race and privilege - both on a personal level and within institutional structures. While the second session just happened, they are still working on making improvements and are excited for the future.

Rev. Egan welcomed back Ms. Baehr.

Ms. Baehr reflected on her time serving on the board, noting the significant moments the organization has navigated, including the murder of George Floyd and the challenges of COVID-19, and emphasized the resilience that the organization demonstrated during these times. Ms. Baehr expressed her appreciation for the dedicated staff working under Rev Earl's leadership and shared her enthusiasm for the direction the organization is going towards. Ms. Baehr highlighted the adoption of new core values, stating how proud she is of them and has seen examples of these values in action throughout the organization. She concluded by affirming that the Urban Ministry still has a board that is deeply committed to its mission and ongoing work.

Ms. Baehr welcomed back Rev. Earl for her final words.

Rev. Earl wanted to lift up three leaders, the board members who are leaving the board. She went through high lights of each one of their service and she was very grateful. She blessed people at the end of the meeting.

Ms. Baehr came back and thanked Vinnie Myles, Director of Development and Communications, for the amazing work he put into the Annual Meeting behind the scenes.

*Respectfully submitted by Margaret Paula on behalf of Ms. Baehr and Ms. Porter.*



**Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry  
Board of Directors**

2025 - 2026

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

Rev. Chris Jablonski, *Chair*

Ms. Nishaila Porter, *Vice Chair*

Ms. Marisa Luse\*, *Clerk*

Mr. Tom Roose, *Treasurer*

**Directors of the UU Urban Ministry**

Ms. Cheryl Brown-Greene

Rev. David Egan

Ms. Akunna Eneh

Ruby Jordan-Borges

Mr. Thomas Plant

Mr. Doug Poutasse

Mr. Pat Rohan

Ms. Lisa Snellings

*\*Did not serve full year*

**Report of the Nominating Committee  
190<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**

May 22, 2025

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

**Candidates for Delegate-at-Large**

*Delegate term to expire in 2026*

|                         |                        |                      |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Ms. Karla Baehr         | Rev. Chris Jablonski   | Ms. Nishaila Porter  |
| Ms. Cheryl Brown-Greene | Ms. Ruby Jordan-Borges | Mr. Douglas Poutasse |
| Mr. Peter Coccoluto     | Ms. Jean Krasnow       | Mr. Tom Roose        |
| Ms. Akunna Eneh         | Ms. Christine Nelson   | Ms. Lisa Snellings   |
| Mr. Marshall Hughes     | Mr. Thomas Plant       |                      |

**Candidates for the Board of Directors**

Board members can serve up to three consecutive 3-year terms. The year in parentheses would be the prospective board member's final year on the Board of Directors, should they serve three consecutive terms.

**I. Candidates currently serving on the UUUM Board of Directors**

Ms. Lisa Snellings (2029)

**II. New candidates to the UUUM Board of Directors**

Mr. Marc Jacobson (2035)

Rev. Stephanie May (2035)

**Candidates to serve on the Nominating Committee**

*Committee term to expire in 2027*

Ms. Cheryl Brown-Greene

Ms. Ruby Jordan-Borges

Ms. Lisa Snellings

*Respectfully Submitted,*

Rev. Chris Jablonski

Ms. Cheryl Brown-Greene

Ms. Ruby Jordan-Borges

Ms. Lisa Snellings, *chair*

## Board of Directors Candidate Biographies

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

### Mr. Marc Jacobson

Marc Jacobson is a technology consultant at Accenture specializing in Data and Artificial Intelligence strategy. Drawing on a career in the technology industry spanning product management and market strategy consulting, he is now focused on helping organizations navigate AI strategy and transformation with clarity and purpose.

Beyond his professional work, Marc has a longstanding commitment to community service. His connection to the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry (UUUM) began in 2002, when his father encouraged him to volunteer with the organization's youth programs — a relationship that has only grown since. A long-time member of First Parish Arlington, he serves as a delegate to the UUUM on behalf of the congregation.

Outside of work and board commitments, Marc enjoys skiing, ultimate frisbee, and all sorts of live music. He lives in Arlington, Massachusetts, with his wife, two sons, and two beloved mixed-breed dogs.

### Rev. Stephanie May

The Rev. Dr. Stephanie May serves as Senior Minister at the First Church in Boston. In this role, she also sits on the boards of the Minns Lectures and the Hale-Barnard House, an affordable home for older persons in Back Bay. Prior to joining this historic, urban congregation in 2023, she served as Minister at the First Parish in Wayland for nine years where she proudly helped to create Metrowest Climate Solutions and the Lydia Maria Child Fund for Activism.

Raised as an evangelical Christian in Michigan, Rev. Stephanie followed her religious questions to a more liberal faith in her 20s. After graduating from Princeton Theological Seminary, she pursued a doctorate at Harvard Divinity School in Religion, Gender, and Culture. Rev. Stephanie continues to weave her academic background into her ministry as chair of the UUA Panel on Theological Education, Lecturer in UU Polity at Harvard Divinity School, and through years of service to the UU Studies Network and other UU scholarly groups. She has long-standing passion for the interplay of religion and society as well as for how history shapes the ongoing stories of individuals and institutions.

# Program and Department Reports



## Roxbury Youth Programs

This past year has been filled with growth and renewal. RYP students not only continue to absorb all of the knowledge that our program staff has exposed them to, but our scholars have also contributed to our community both locally and around the Greater Boston Area through volunteerism, tourism, public speaking, and providing heartwarming support to guests in our newly renovated meeting house during programs like Patriots Day, Henry Knox Recognition, and Community Conversations.

### Program Expansion and Staffing

I am excited to announce that we have added 3 new members to the programming staff to continue providing leadership, growth, and stability to RYP. Jared Mahabali was hired as a program coordinator and has already been promoted to Team Lead, providing much-needed management of staffing logistics, student hiring, and funding partner management. Next, we hired Ola Akinwumi. She is also a program coordinator focusing on workshop development and facilitation, as well as academic guidance and support for student participation in the Seeing Me in the World Tours. And most recently, we hired Danieza Cardoso (Dee). Dee supplements the programming support through communications, family outreach, and alumni engagement. Now that we have a solid team of student-centered professionals, we are working to develop team cohesion and professional development that will ultimately improve student outcomes.

### Youth Participation and Engagement

During the SY2025-2026, we hired 40 RYP scholars into our After School program. During the summer, we will onboard 20 students. Thanks to our recent recruitment efforts, we expect that at least 10 of these students will be new to our program. RYP students and staff have attended multiple job fairs hosted by the City of Boston, and after-school participants have invited their friends to visit. Our students have been the best ambassadors for our program initiatives. Many of their friends and classmates are now registering for the summer program as well.

### Innovative Programming and Partnerships

Through consistent participation, our students have delved deep into college and career exploration through *Beyond High School* presentations and activities; *Art/History and Tourism* through Seeing Me in the World seminars and Local Legacy tours; *Leadership Development*; and *Academic Support* through adult staff check-ins, tutoring with our Boston College student interns and our end of the season RYP Showcase were all students conduct presentations of learning based upon some aspect of learning that took place during either the after school or summer program sessions.



Roxbury Youth Programs (RYP) students on a field trip to the Dillaway-Thomas House, a museum about the history of Roxbury

**Challenges and Resilience**

One of the challenges in the midst of economic uncertainty is the potential loss of government funding for the program. In response to what we're being told, Mary Margaret, Vinnie, and I are meeting weekly to develop a realistic strategy to offset this potential shortfall. This constitutes a potential loss of \$50K in revenue.

**Looking Ahead**

During the 2026 Summer Program, we will enroll 20 students to research the history of Roxbury and its impact on the 250th anniversary of the founding of America. They will simultaneously learn proper tourism techniques/public speaking, and how to document through proper podcasting and videography. We are also partnered with the Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH). They are providing us with a graduate research student to collaborate with a small cadre of RYP students to lead them in developing a project around a health disparity of their choice to address an issue of concern in our community.

Also in the coming year, we will host coffees, meetings, and receptions so that we may engage both RYP families and alumni.

Karsten Cash  
*Director of Programs*

**Renewal House****General Program Highlights:**

Since our last report we have successfully housed three of our five program participants. We were able to provide this participant with a substantial amount of furniture and household goods by way of a flex funds grant acquired from the state by our organization. We have also successfully assisted 13 survivors from other agencies with funds to move into permanent housing. This has strengthened our relationships with other organizations. Brick by brick, our program - though not as large as other programs - has made an impact on the lives of survivors both at Renewal House and within other networks.

Renewal House is currently at capacity. Our families are thriving. Seventy five percent of our guests are employed, working towards and achieving their goal of obtaining self-reliance. This is a key goal set in in each guest's weekly case management meeting.

**Something Going Well:**

For years, four of our five rooms were funded by the Mass. Department of Public Health (DPH). This year and going forward, all five of our rooms are funded by the DPH. This additional stream of funding will supplement the \$40K federal funding budget cut recently made to our program.

**Greatest Challenge:**

Staffing has been our greatest challenge this year. For this reason, I have revisited some roles currently within our staff and restructured these roles to maximize the impact and benefit to our program. The Case Manager/Housing Manager role is now part-time. This allows an opportunity for direct care staff to assist in the day-to-day shelter operations. I am also in the process of hiring more Relief Staff to ensure we are fully staffed 24/7.

Marie Padilla  
*Shelter Manager*

## Congregational and Volunteer Engagement

Over the past year, my work in Congregational Engagement and Volunteer Coordination has continued to center relationships while expanding how and where those relationships take shape. What began as a focus on connecting congregations more deeply to Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry has grown into an effort to build pathways between congregations, community partners, youth, and new audiences beyond our immediate network.

This year has been shaped by both continuity and movement. The work remains grounded in Roxbury and in the relationships that define UU Urban Ministry, while also expanding in how it is shared and experienced. In some cases, this has meant supporting partnerships that develop over time, allowing space for learning, reflection, and shared commitment.

Programs like *Seeing Me in the World* have been central to that shift. As the program has grown, it has welcomed visiting groups from both local congregations and communities beyond Massachusetts, offering participants an opportunity to engage more deeply with Roxbury's history and present-day realities while reflecting on their own role in broader conversations about justice and community.

As interest has increased, I have also begun sharing this work in new spaces, including a presentation with the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) and the development of a workshop for the upcoming UUA General Assembly. This visibility reflects a wider interest in UUUM's approach to engagement while also requiring ongoing attention to keeping the program rooted in community and youth leadership.

### Creating Space for Dialogue and Reflection

Alongside this expansion, I have continued to support spaces where people can come together in reflective, honest, and grounded ways. These programs are less about delivering information and more about creating conditions for people to think, question, and connect.

The Community Conversations series has continued to evolve, with each session building on the last. Topics such as culture, generational connection, and future aspirations have created space for both personal reflection and collective dialogue. As with previous series, the final conversation centered youth voices from Roxbury Youth Programs, reinforcing the importance of creating space for young people to speak from their own lived experience and help shape the direction of the dialogue.

The Microaggressions workshop series invited participants to reflect on language, behavior, and impact while developing tools for navigating difficult mo-



UUUM Delegates gather in the Meetinghouse at the start of a luncheon event

ments with greater awareness and accountability. Bridges of Understanding has also continued to take shape through iteration and feedback, with each offering bringing greater clarity to how the program supports dialogue and learning across differences.

### **Youth Leadership and Transition**

Youth engagement has remained a consistent part of this work, particularly through *Seeing Me in the World* and Roxbury Youth Programs. This year included a transition between cohorts of teen facilitators, as graduating leaders stepped out and a new group stepped in.

Supporting this transition has required a focus on teaching, support, and trust. Training new facilitators is not only about preparing them to lead tours, but about helping them understand the purpose of the program and the responsibility that comes with representing their community. Each new cohort brings its own perspective, allowing the program to remain dynamic while grounded in its core values.

Youth have also continued to engage through workshops, partner events, and leadership opportunities, strengthening their connection to UUUM's work.

### **Partnership and Shared Work**

Partnerships have continued to deepen through consistency and presence. Relationships with organizations such as Dee Dee's Cry, the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, RIAC, Sociedad Latina, and others have been sustained through collaboration and shared programming.

One of the most visible expressions of this work was *The Immigrant Experience* concert. Supporting that event included connecting Sociedad Latina youth performers and working alongside colleagues and partners to bring the program together. The event not only raised funds for our partner organization RIAC and for BIJAN, but also created space for connection, storytelling, and shared experience. Partnership has also taken shape through longer, more intentional processes. The developing relationship with First Parish Arlington is one example. What began as a conversation grew through visits, shared experiences, and ongoing dialogue about what meaningful partnership could look like.

Members of the congregation engaged directly with the work, participating in tours, attending events, and exploring how to align their values with action. Over time, this led to a collective commitment to partner with Roxbury Youth Programs. What stands out is not a single moment, but the care and intention that shaped the process.

Other partnership efforts, including Circle of Support meetings, intergenerational programming, and support for partner-led initiatives, continue to reflect a commit-

ment to showing up consistently and working alongside others in ways that are grounded in trust.

### **Sustaining Engagement and Connection**

Alongside these efforts, I have continued to focus on the systems that support engagement. Maintaining communication with delegates, coordinating volunteer opportunities, and facilitating spaces such as Volunteer Networking Sessions help ensure that individuals are not only invited into this work, but are able to remain connected over time.

My continued work with the Congregational Engagement Task Force has provided an important space for reflection and collaboration, helping shape how we approach congregational relationships across UUUM.

I have also continued visiting congregations to share more in-depth about UUUM's programs, partnerships, and opportunities for involvement. These visits create space for conversation and a deeper understanding of how congregations can engage in ways that feel meaningful within their own contexts.

Delegate Luncheons and ongoing outreach have further strengthened these relationships, while volunteer coordination continues to connect individuals with meaningful opportunities across UUUM programs and partnerships.

### **Looking Ahead**

As I look ahead, I remain focused on deepening this work while expanding access to it in thoughtful ways. This includes growing participation in *Seeing Me in the World*, continuing to develop programs that support dialogue and reflection, and strengthening the systems that sustain volunteer and congregational engagement.

It also includes building on the relationships and partnerships that have been central to this year, ensuring that UUUM's work remains rooted in Roxbury while also responsive to a broader and growing network of individuals and communities seeking connection and engagement.

Robert L. Jones  
*Congregational and Volunteer Coordinator*

## Facilities

Over the past year, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to managing the daily operations of our campus and buildings. Our primary objective has been to uphold the highest standards, ensuring a safe, functional, and welcoming environment for all.

Beyond meeting administrative and operational needs, we continue to focus on supporting our staff, our partners, and the overarching mission of our organization.


In support of social equity, we partnered with BU medical students from the Outreach Van Project providing a van with resources, each Saturday. This initiative delivered essential items—such as toiletries, clothing, and dry food—to residents in Roxbury and the surrounding areas. Such efforts highlight our commitment to community involvement and ensure our actions remain steadfastly aligned with our mission statement.

Being a native of Roxbury, I felt a deep sense of pride standing before our partners, the Mayor of Boston, and the local community to celebrate and welcome the reopening of the Meetinghouse.

This moment marked the end of our journey filled with both challenges and anticipation as we prepared to open the doors of our historic, newly renovated building. We embraced this waiting period as a transformative experience, one that fostered deep appreciation of the efforts invested and the purposeful use of the Meetinghouse.

Entering the new year, I remain deeply devoted to our youth, the community, and our partners, while maintaining a firm commitment to being an active presence in Roxbury - a neighborhood I hold very dear.

Looking toward the coming year, I anticipate the many possibilities that our inviting and revitalized spaces at the Meetinghouse and UUUM will offer to our community as well as the individuals we support. We also look forward to embarking on a new chapter with the Putnam Hall renovation project—stay tuned as we share more about this upcoming journey!



A view inside the restored Meetinghouse, with the sunlight streaming through the windows

We sincerely appreciate your continued support and the interest you have shown in our` initiatives. Your ongoing support is truly essential to our success.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to my dedicated team: Bryan McCray, our Kitchen Manager/Chef and Rosemary Santiago, our Facilities Support. ***Thank you for all that you do!***

Shamika Harrison  
*Director of Facilities*



A full house watches “The Immigrant Experience” concert in the Meetinghouse

**Supporting Member Churches Financial Gifts****\$10,000 and over**

First Parish UU of Arlington  
 First Church in Boston  
 First Church in Chestnut Hill  
 First Parish Church in Weston

**\$1,000 - \$9,999**

First Church in Belmont  
 First Parish Church in Duxbury  
 First Parish Church of Stow and  
 Acton  
 First Parish in Cambridge  
 First Parish in Cohasset  
 First Parish in Concord  
 First Parish in Framingham  
 First Parish in Lexington  
 First Parish in Milton  
 First Parish Church in Norwell  
 First Parish in Canton  
 Follen Community Church  
 First Unitarian Universalist  
 Society in Newton (FUUSN)  
 Old Ship Church (First Parish in  
 Hingham)  
 Theodore Parker Unitarian  
 Church  
 Winchester Unitarian Society

**Up to \$999**

First Parish in Bedford  
 First Parish in Brookline  
 First Parish in Cohasset  
 First Church and Parish in  
 Dedham  
 Harvard UU Church  
 First Parish in Lincoln  
 First Church in Littleton  
 First Parish Church Medfield  
 First Parish in Needham  
 First Parish of Scituate  
 Unitarian Church of Sharon  
 First Parish in Wayland  
 First Parish in Watertown  
 UU Wellesley Hills

**Contributing Foundations, Organizations,  
and Non-member Churches**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Anonymous (2)                                     | Massachusetts Service Alliance                        |
| Boston After School & Beyond                      | PayPal Giving Fund                                    |
| Bushrod H. Campbell and Adah F. Hall Charity Fund | Polly Thayer Starr Charitable Trust                   |
| City of Boston                                    | Priscilla Endicott Charitable Foundation              |
| Community Preservation Act                        | Sacajawea Charitable Foundation                       |
| Edward Kane and Martha Wallace Family Foundation  | Social Justice Action Team (Follen)                   |
| First Parish Brewster                             | South Friendly Society Fund                           |
| Harvard University                                | SuccessLink (City of Boston)                          |
| The Isaac Munroe Foundation for Children          | UU Society of Schenectady                             |
| The John Clarke Fund                              | Women's Alliance (FCP Dedham)                         |
| Legacy Fund of Boston                             | Women's Alliance of FCU (Littleton)                   |
| Liberty Mutual Foundation                         | Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock |
| Linden Ponds UU Fellowship                        |   |
| Mass Humanities                                   |   |
| Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance        |   |

## Member Churches and Delegates

2025 - 2026

### Arlington

#### **First Parish Church of Arlington**

Lois Fine  
Maryglenn Vincens

### Bedford

#### **First Parish in Bedford**

Cecile Mercado  
Robert Schmalz

### Belmont

#### **First Church in Belmont**

David Deese  
Gladys Unger  
Sean Westgate

### Boston

#### **Arlington Street Church**

Thomas Gagnon  
Claire Humphrey  
Alan Kemp

#### **Community Church of Boston**

#### **Arlington Street Church**

Thomas Gagnon  
Claire Humphrey  
Alan Kemp

#### **First Church Boston**

Grace Gregor  
Rev. Stephanie May  
Gita Rao

#### **King's Chapel**

Amy Meyer

### Brookline

#### **First Parish in Brookline**

Karla Baehr  
Madeline Fine

### Cambridge

#### **First Parish in Cambridge**

Cushing Giesey

### Canton

#### **First Parish in Canton**

Michelle Walsh

### Chestnut Hill

#### **First Church in Chestnut Hill**

Sally Baker  
Carol Lohe  
Dr. Ludy Shih

### Cohasset

#### **First Parish in Cohasset**

Mary Parker  
Nancy Robertson

### Concord

#### **First Parish in Concord**

Leslie Fisher  
Rebecca Winborn

### Danvers

#### **Northshore UU Church**

### Dedham

#### **First Church & Parish in Dedham**

Paquita Bass  
Howard Ostroff  
Susan Sennott

### Dorchester

#### **First Parish Church in Dorchester**

Bruce Shatswell

### Duxbury

#### **First Parish Church in Duxbury**

Shirley Jenkins  
Donna Savicki

### Framingham

#### **First Parish in Framingham**

Carol Lawton  
Laura Stone  
Valerie Waldman

### Harvard

#### **First Congregational Church of Harvard**

### Hingham

#### **Old Ship Church**

Davalene Cooper  
Lisa Sawyer  
Dianne Walcott

### Lexington

#### **First Parish in Lexington**

Jane Beswick  
Connee Counts  
Teresa Jacobson

### **Follen Church**

Marica Butman  
Catherine Collins  
Paul Rubin

### Lincoln

#### **First Parish in Lincoln**

Alice DeNormandie  
Gary Taylor

### Littleton

#### **First Church Littleton**

### Medfield

#### **First Parish Church Medfield**

Rev. Dave Egan  
Margaret Rolph  
Nicole Silvestri Hall

### Melrose

#### **Melrose UU Church**

### Milton

#### **First Parish in Milton**

Mary Blanchette  
Elise Henricks  
Bebe Williamson

### Needham

#### **First Parish in Needham**

Vicky Makrides  
Marianne McGowan

### Newton

#### **First UU Society in Newton (FUUSN)**

Kevan Hartshorn  
Joanna Mann  
Pat Rohan

### Norwell

#### **First Parish Church in Norwell**

Peggy Kitchenham  
Jack Wallace

### Quincy

#### **United First Parish Church in Quincy**

Reading

**UU Church of Reading**

Marianne Bezaire  
Anne P. Mark

Scituate

**First Parish Church of Scituate**

Katy Glennon  
Jennifer McGonagle Dziedzic  
Carol Sullivan

Sharon

**Unitarian Church of Sharon**

Alison Reid  
Gare Reid

Sherborn

**First Parish in Sherborn**

Stow

**First Parish Church Stow and Acton**

Andy Derr  
Lisa Fagerstrom  
Katherine Weeks

Swampscott

**UU Church of Greater Lynn**

Waltham

**First Parish Church in Waltham**

Watertown

**First Parish of Watertown**

Wayland

**The First Parish in Wayland**

Lea Anderson  
Susan Crowley-Bechtel

Wellesley Hills

**UU Society of Wellesley Hills**

Tricia Johnson  
Elaine Mittell  
Kathy White

West Roxbury

**Theodore Parker Church**

Jennifer Bottomley  
Jen Buchwald  
Laura Maltby

Weston

**First Parish Church in Weston**

Georgia Foote  
Jean Masland  
Nancy Vescuso

Winchester

**Winchester Unitarian Society**

Patty Cameron  
Gordon McIntosh

**UU Urban Ministry Delegates**

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

They truly help to make all that we do possible.

*Thank you, UUUM Delegates!*



RYP students leading a "Local Legacies" tour, one that they helped create the focuses on the history and present day of Roxbury from their viewpoint

**UU Urban Ministry Team**

May 2026

**Executive Leadership**

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

**Roxbury Youth Programs**

Karsten Cash *Director of Programs*

Olawumi Akinwumi *RYP Youth Program Coordinator*

Danieza Cardoso *RYP Youth Program Coordinator*

Jared Mahabali *RYP Lead Youth Program Coordinator*

(D)ayenne Walters *Arts Liaison*

**Development and Communications**

Vinnie Myles *Director of Development and Communications*

Heidi Ho *Northeastern Co-op Student*

Robert Jones *Congregational and Volunteer Coordinator*

Marisa Luse *Interim Meetinghouse Activation Consultant*

Maggie Paula *Development Associate*

**Facilities**

Shamika Harrison *Director of Facilities*

Bryan McCray *Facilities Manager, Chef*

Rosemary Santiago *Facilities Support*

**UU Urban Ministry Team continued****Renewal House**

Marie Padilla *Shelter Manager*

Yohanna Abraha *Relief Advocate*

Arianna Agosto *Relief Advocate*

Doris Gilliam *Relief Advocate*

Mihret Kasaye *Relief Advocate*

Selamawit Mengiste *Relief Advocate*

Ashley Platt *Relief Advocate*

Ann Taylor *Overnight Advocate*

Linda Torres *Relief Advocate*

Ruth Worrede *Relief Advocate*

Dibora Yimesgen *Relief Advocate*

Denita Young-Brimage *Relief Advocate*

**Community Engagement / Special Projects**

Monique Marshall Veale *Leadership Coach*

Roxanne Clarke *Special Projects Assistant*

**Finance**

Jayanthi (Jay) Ganapathy *Finance Lead*

Joseph Butler *Finance Assistant/Bookkeeper*

**RYP Career Exploration Interns**

Laphton Devil *Communications Intern (Development)*

Francisco Landaverde *Communications Intern (Development)*

Mary Peguero *Communications Intern (Development)*

## Core Values of the UU Urban Ministry

*What are the two or three words that define the work of the UU Urban Ministry?*

That is the question that started a year of introspection and discussions between the staff of the Urban Ministry.

In early 2024, with our mission and vision statements established and woven into every aspect of what we do, the next consideration focused on identifying the Core Values that define our organization.

For over a year, all UUUM staff members were invited to numerous meetings - dedicated to discussions that examined who we are as an organization. The process was open to every member of the staff, and involved many deep discussions about our work, our culture, and our strengths. Rev. June Cooper facilitated this process, and helped guide the staff through these discussions.

Earlier this year, the UUUM staff voted by consensus to adopt three Core Values for the organization:

- ◆ **Partnerships**  
*Building strong relationships to achieve shared goals*
- ◆ **Amplification**  
*Lifting up voices in our community to pursue racial justice and social change*
- ◆ **Responsiveness**  
*Listening and responding to the evolving needs of our community*

These core values were presented to the Board of Directors at their meeting in March. The board voted unanimously to affirm these Core Values.

Articulating our Core Values helps us be clearer about our work within our organization, and communicate more clearly to others. More importantly, these strong values will shape the work we do to advance our mission.






## Empowering Youth. Expanding Opportunity. Partnering in Community.

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

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

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

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

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <br><b>Mail a Check</b><br>Please mail your check to:<br><br>UU Urban Ministry<br>10 Putnam Street<br>Roxbury, MA 02119 | <br><b>Matching Gifts</b><br>Many companies match or double donations. Check with your employer to see if they have a payroll deduction giving program. Designate UUUM as your charity of choice. | <br><b>Questions</b><br>If you have any questions about making a gift to the UU Urban Ministry, contact:<br><br><b>Development Office</b><br><a href="mailto:development@uum.org">development@uum.org</a><br>(617) 318-6010 |
|--|--|--|

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

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





Restored historic box pews in  
Roxbury's Meetinghouse

“

If you have come here  
to help me, you are  
wasting your time.  
But if you have come  
because your liberation  
is bound up with mine,  
then let us work  
together.

- Lilla Watson

*Indigenous Australian artist,  
activist, and academic*



10 Putnam St.  
Roxbury, MA 02119

[www.uuum.org](http://www.uuum.org)