

Midwest Unitarian Universalist Conference & Midwest Unitarian Universalist Foundation

2019 Annual Report to the MidAmerica Region & the Mountain Desert District

Midwest Unitarian Universalist Conference

History: With the consolidation of the American Unitarian Association (AUA) and the Universalist Church of America (UCA) in 1961, the Midwest Universalist Conference and the Western Unitarian Conference formed the Midwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference (Conference) and the Midwest Unitarian Universalist Foundation (Foundation). During the summer of 2018 the conference's name was legally amended to Midwest Unitarian Universalist Conference.

Purpose: The purpose of the Conference is to further the interests of Unitarian Universalists and their institutions in the mid-continental states (i.e., MidAmerica Region and the Mountain Desert District); to support those institutions to spread the message of Unitarian Universalism; and to distribute returns generated by funds held in trust by the Foundation, a subsidiary corporation. The purpose of the Foundation is to hold those funds received from the AUA, UCA, and other sources in trust, and to invest, administer, and safeguard those funds.

Funds: There are four funds for which the Conference and the Foundation are responsible:

- the General Fund, which provides an annual grant to the MidAmerica Region and the Mountain Desert District, and which can fund other initiatives. One of those initiatives is the fairly new Munroe Husbands Grant Program, which provides grants to lay-lead (less than half-time ministerial support) congregations.
- the Ryder Fund (1888): the income is used to provide emergency financial support for retired ministers and their partners;
- the Iva Laughlin Fund (1903): the income is used to provide emergency financial support for elderly Unitarian Universalists; and
- the Colchester Fund (1926): the income is used to provide an annual scholarship that is awarded by Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago to a Unitarian Universalist theological student; and

Since June 2016, the MidAmerica Region has been the fiscal agent for the Midwest Unitarian Universalist Conference. This role is limited to holding funds distributed from the Midwest Unitarian Universalist Foundation related to the Ryder, Laughlin, and Colchester Funds, as well as limited funds to support small grants, such as those of the Munroe Husbands Grant Program, which provides grants to lay lead congregations for leadership development, communications tools for outreach and growth, and related matters.

The Conference Board has developed materials to publicize the funds available from the Ryder Fund and the Iva Laughlin Fund. The Board also sends money from the Ryder Fund to the UUA for distribution to retired ministers and their partners through the work of the Rev. Richard Nugent, Church Staff Finances Director consistent with the guidelines of the Ryder Fund. Both funds have been active distributing funds.

The Munroe Husbands Grant Program is new and began being advertised this fiscal year. The committee overseeing that program has recently received its first application.

Work improving the website for the Conference and Foundation (www.midwestuuconf.org) has continued this year. Board member Barb Gutsch has been serving as the Webmaster.

Committees: The Conference has several working committees: the Nominating Committee, Colchester Fund Committee, Laughlin Fund Committee, Ryder Fund Committee, and the Munroe Husbands Grant Program Committee.

A distribution in the amount of \$5,300 from the Colchester Fund was sent in spring 2018 to Meadville Lombard Theological School to be awarded by Meadville to a theological student(s) as the Colchester Scholarship(s) for the 2018-2019 academic year. Greta Seidohl was the Colchester scholarship recipient this year.

As the result of increased advertising both the Ryder Fund Committee and the Laughlin Fund Committee have continued to received multiple applications each year, and each has awarded multiple grants. During the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018, the Ryder Fund distributed grants totaling \$29,623.34, while the Laughlin Fund distributed grants totaling \$3,398.77.

Interim Meetings: The Conference directors and the Foundation directors work separately during the year via quarterly tele-conference calls and committee communications.

Annual Meeting: The Boards of the Midwest UU Conference and the Midwest UU Foundation hold their annual meeting in Chicago in early May, where they meet separately and jointly. The 2018 meeting was held on May 4-5, 2018. The 2019 meeting will be held May 3-4 in Chicago.

Distribution from the General Fund: Part of the agenda at the Annual Meeting was to determine the annual grants for 2018-2019 to the MidAmerica Region and the Mountain Desert District. These grants are based on a formula that takes into account the number of congregation members (weight = 45%), the number of congregations (weight = 45%), and the geographical size (weight = 10%) of the region or district. The number of members and congregations was based upon UUA certification data as of February 1, 2018.

The maximum amount available for distribution is 4% of a rolling 13-quarter moving average of the Foundation's General Fund. The distribution for 2018-2019 is as follows: \$78,211 to the MidAmerica Region and \$21,310 to the Mountain Desert District, along with \$5,000 reserved for MUUC projects, specifically the Munroe Husband Grant Program.

Please note that the Midwest Unitarian Universalist Conference requires an annual report from both the MidAmerica Region and the Mountain Desert District to confirm that the work of these two organizations continue to be aligned with the purposes of the Conference which are listed above, and Conference's interests which are as follows:

- **Section 1a.** To facilitate the vitality and growth of Unitarian Universalism in the Midwest and Rocky Mountain states (i.e. Mid-America Region and the Mountain Desert District).
- **Section 1b.** To strengthen Unitarian Universalist congregations, districts, regions and organizations and institutions, including the Unitarian Universalist Association and Meadville-Lombard Theological School.
- **Section 1c.** To invite congregations to effectively serve the communities in which they are located in accord with their mission and the principles, purposes, and ends of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

- **Section 1d.** To encourage outreach and support of Unitarian Universalists living in the Midwest and Rocky Mountain states who do not live in communities served by Unitarian Universalist congregations.

Conference Board Directors (seven members) (three-year terms) (one director represents the Mountain Desert District, six represent the MidAmerica Region)

- Rae Jane Araujo, Heritage UU Church, Cincinnati, OH, (2020)
- Ted Lau, Eliot Chapel, St. Louis, MO (2020)
- Allan J. Lindrup, (President), First Unitarian Society, Chicago, IL, (2021)
- Michael May, First Unitarian Society, Madison, WI, (2021)
- Kathy Wire, (Secretary), First UU Church, St. Louis, MO, (2019)
- Barb Gutsch (Vice President), UU Fellowship, Salina KS (2019)
- Fred Cole, UU Church of Boulder, CO, (2022)

(Treasurer: Rebecca Pace, see the Foundation Board of Directors below)

Rev. Kirk Loadman-Copeland resigned from the Conference Board in December, 2018, after five and a half years of service. We thank him for his service.

Midwest Unitarian Universalist Foundation

The fiscal year is from April 1 to March 31. The total assets of the Foundation have grown from about \$200,000 in 1962 to \$3,286,032 as of March 31, 2018.

The financial statements are audited annually. The auditor of record for a number of years continues to be Wilkerson, Guthmann, and Johnson, Ltd. of Saint Paul, Minnesota. The audit report, dated October 16, 2018, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018 determined that the financial statements of the Midwest Unitarian Universalist Foundation presented fairly, in all material respects, its financial position, and the changes in its net assets and cash flows in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

The Foundation assets are invested in a variety of mutual funds and exchange traded funds which provide investment diversity. The Foundation determines its asset allocation each year and currently strives for a 70/30 allocation between equity and fixed income. The Foundation also is very sensitive to keeping investment expenses as low as possible while seeking reasonable returns.

Foundation Board Directors (seven members) (three-year terms)

- Katherine Brewin, Chicago, IL (President) (2020)
- Roger Sell, Indianapolis, IN (2021)
- Vicki Pratt, Omaha, NE (2019)
- Laura Gossman, Casper, WY (Secretary) (2021)
- Brian Hellmer, Fitchburg, WI (Vice President) (2019)
- Rebecca Pace, Cincinnati, OH (Treasurer)(2019)
- One vacancy, which the MUUC Nominating Committee is working to fill (2020)

Katherine Brewin was appointed by the Conference Board and the Foundation as its registered agent in the State of Illinois.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Conference and Foundation,



Allan J. Lindrup, President

Midwest Unitarian Universalist Conference