

# **Unity Church – Unitarian 2019-2020 Annual Report Table of Contents**

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## **Unity Church-Unitarian**

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### **Board of Trustees**

Alex Askew  
Justin Cummins  
Clover Earl

Nila Gouldin  
Ruth Kirkland  
Louise Livesay-Al

Jackie Smith, Chair  
Jennifer Tong  
Jill van Koolwijk, Secretary

### **Executive Team**

Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs  
Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs  
Rev. Lisa Friedman  
Rev. K.P. Hong  
Barbara Hubbard

Senior Co-Minister  
Senior Co-Minister  
Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement  
Minister of Faith Formation  
Executive Director

### **Church Staff**

#### **Program Staff**

Ahmed Anzaldúa  
Drew Danielson  
Rev. Karen Hering  
Ray Hommeyer  
Robin MacKenzie-Taris  
Michelle Mecey  
Laura Park  
Madeline Summers

Director of Music Ministries  
Coordinator of Youth and Campus Ministries  
Associate Minister  
Nursery Coordinator & Youth Ministry Assistant  
Nursery Supervisor  
Coordinator of Children's Ministries  
Managing Director, Unity Consulting  
Volunteer Coordinator / Wedding & Memorial Coordinator

#### **Administrative/Facilities Staff**

Heidi Birkholz  
Olendta Bryant  
Teresa Connor  
DeWayne Givens  
Bill Lowell  
Emma Mathews-Lingen  
Keenan Rust  
Song Thao  
Martha Tilton  
Vernon Sowell  
Louis Wilson

Facilities  
Facilities  
Facilities  
Facilities  
Facilities Manager  
Facilities  
Facilities  
Financial Assistant  
Coordinator of Communications  
Director of Finance  
Facilities

## **In Memoriam**

### **Eva Franziska Cross**

December 1, 1938 – November 14, 2019

### **Bryan Janssens**

March 11, 2020

### **Steve Dahlke**

May 6, 1946 - March 26, 2020

### **Marion Watson**

April 26, 1922 - March 28, 2020

### **John Robert Haley**

May 13, 1947 – April 13, 2020

### **Matt Bergen**

February 1, 1971 - July 11, 2020

### **Thomas Walter Merritt**

September 4, 1944 – July 12, 2020

### **Cathleen Fabian**

November 30, 1950 – August 5, 2020

### **J P Horan-Kimsal**

November 13, 1970 – August 22, 2020

### **Rick Heydinger**

August 2, 1944 – September 26, 2020

### **Ethel W. Griggs**

November 1, 1941 – November 20, 2020

## **Introduction to the 2019-2020 Annual Report**

In the summer of 1918, as the Great War came to a close, the congregation of Unity Church was eager for the return of their brilliant young minister, the Rev. Frederick May Eliot. They were disappointed but understanding when the American Unitarian Association recruited him to help conduct hundreds of memorial services all across the Nation. As the Great War ended, the Flu pandemic took hold. The Congregation, in the midst of grief and missing its minister, closed its doors for the duration of the threat of infection. For six months, held together by their shared faith and sheer determination, they waited it out. Then, as now, Unity Church responded to profound dislocation with inspiring creativity and strength.

The 2019-2020 church year began full of clarity and promise. The Board was busy making plans for the retirement of the Senior Co-Ministers. With the welcome addition of Ahmed Anzaldúa as Director of Music Ministries, church staff was at full strength and our multicultural initiative was starting to take hold. Fall fundraising efforts were successful. We set and met our goals. As the rhythm of Church life took hold and urged us on, we sensed our commitments both to the needs of the congregation and to the larger community were filled with energy and promise. Then in mid-March, the Covid 19 pandemic caused us to close the church building and move services and programs on-line. It was the first time since the summer of 1918 that the building had to be closed down. It was a sad and difficult decision but the congregational leadership agreed that it was necessary. In that challenging moment, we were able to speak with one voice and we were equally united in our efforts to respond to the situation with creativity, tenacity and strength.

This report will highlight some of the many ways staff and volunteers stepped up to meet not just the trials but also the opportunities at hand. At the start of the pandemic, the Board unanimously asked the Senior Co-Ministers to postpone their retirement to provide stable and seasoned leadership. They readily agreed. Staff, volunteers and ministers retooled in order both to maintain our ministries and to work to acquire the new skills on-line ministry requires. We especially want to recognize the work of Zoom Coordinator, Madeline Summers who has facilitated more than a thousand on-line gatherings and Coordinator of Communications, Martha Tilton, who has become Technical Director for on-line worship. In the midst of it, all we expressed our abiding gratitude and said a fond farewell to the Rev. Lisa Friedman, Minister of Congregational and Community Engagement who, after eight years with us, accepted a call to serve the Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka. Her work has been taken-up by Associate Minister, The Rev. Karen Hering and Acting Coordinator of Membership and Hospitality, Laura Park.

Your steady, generous support of the Church allowed us to purchase a live-stream video system and make major improvements to our sanctuary sound system that have significantly enhanced on-line worship. In addition, we have taken advantage of the vastly reduced usage of the building to make a series of major capital improvements that provide better access and safety and enhance the utility of our church home.

We cannot deny that it has been a difficult and disruptive year. Our hearts go out to those who have lost their lives to Covid 19 and to their friends and families. Yet, we have learned so much. On-line worship and programs have made our ministry more accessible to those unable to participate fully due to disability or distance. Though we regret that our wonderful choirs cannot sing safely together these days, we have been touched by the creativity and innovative vision of our music ministries. The clarity of the Ends provide a framework for a ministry that continues to be transformative. We are and always have been a resilient, inspiring religious community.

It is an honor to be among your partners in ministry,  
The Unity Church Executive Team  
Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs, Senior Co-Ministers  
K.P. Hong, Minister of Faith Formation  
Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director

## **Unity Church's Ends Statements 2019-2023**

### **Executive Team Interpretation of Ends and Strategic Priorities**

*The Strategic Priorities that were identified and implemented in the fall of 2019 were reviewed and refreshed at a mid-year Executive Team retreat, and are included in this report. These priorities were created through the lens of the impending transition in Unity's senior ministry, prior to the pandemic and to Janne and Rob Eller-Isaac's agreement to delay their retirement by a year. We revisit and refresh the strategic priorities at least annually.*

**Working within ourselves, among our church community, and beyond in the larger world, we the people of Unity Church-Unitarian:**

#### **1. Create a multicultural spiritual home built on authentic relationships.**

##### ***Interpretation:***

*The Beloved Community is inherently multicultural and always aspirational. We begin this work with deep humility, acknowledging that we need help navigating what, for us, is uncharted territory. Authentic relationships begin when we recognize and root out our assumptions and deepen through active curiosity and growing friendship. This work asks us to confront systems of oppression, disrupt white privilege and fragility, build bridges across differences, and embrace an ever-growing repertoire in every dimension of our ministry. We promise to stay engaged despite discomfort and inevitable failures.*

##### ***Strategic Priorities:***

We will:

- Integrate the IDI learning from the ministry area group profiles and feedback sessions into current program and ministry planning.
- Clarify and strengthen the covenant between Unity & Above with an emphasis on shared program planning and regularly scheduled leadership gatherings.
- Complete the evaluation of year 2 of the rotation curricula through a multicultural lens.
- Complete the contract process for year 2 with Team Dynamics, building on the areas where their coaching was effective and focusing the coaching/training relationship for the coming year.

## **2. Ground ourselves in personal practice and communal worship that grows our capacity for wonder and spiritual deepening.**

### ***Interpretation:***

*Individual spiritual practice is an essential expectation of church involvement. Such practice grounds our lives and inspires reverence. Both personal practice and congregational worship expand our capacity for wonder and foster spiritual development. When we bring our full selves into the worship experience, our particular stories, practices, and insights enrich communal worship and awaken the welcoming spirit among us.*

### ***Strategic Priorities:***

We will:

- Ensure the continuity and thoughtful consideration of worship into 2020-21, including summer worship.
- Complete the present round of end of life conversations and integrate the program into the ongoing ministry of the congregation.
- Offer Working Toward Prayer and intentionally train leaders who can carry it forward at Unity.
- Ensure the continuation of pilgrimage programs at Unity and expand/deepen the opportunities for local and civil rights pilgrimage.
- Develop a draft Pathways for Faith Formation for consideration and editing by the ET with an intention to launch in the fall.

**3. Articulate our Unitarian Universalist faith identity, teach it to our children, share it with others, and live it courageously in the world.**

***Interpretation:***

*We know and feel part of the unfolding story of liberal religion and use our stated principles as tools for self-reflection and action in the world. We understand teaching as a spiritual practice and cultivate the salvific potential of multigenerational community. Together, we celebrate our living tradition through ritual and worship, in stories and by example. We confidently claim our faith and testify to its transforming power.*

***Strategic Priorities:***

We will:

- Formalize and deepen Faith Formation intensives for older youth (such as Boston Pilgrimage and youth leadership summer retreat).
- Gather a curriculum development team in the area of Unitarian Universalist History and Identity.



**4. Know each other in all our fullness and create an ever-widening circle of belonging for all people**

***Interpretation:***

*We acknowledge the fullness of being human by embracing the messiness, complexity, and beauty of our existence. Our hearts contain the capacity for good and evil and all that lies between. Religious community helps us align ourselves toward the good, welcoming both gifts and wounds. We claim a faith that breaks past fear and leads toward Beloved Community.*

***Strategic Priorities:***

We will:

- Ensure that the welcome of LGBTQ+ people continues to be visible and clear.
- Reconsider including chosen pronouns on Unity nametags.
- Add additional wheelchair cutouts in the sanctuary, so that wheelchair users are not relegated to the back rows.

**5. Generously give and openly receive compassionate care in times of joy, sorrow and transition.**

***Interpretation:***

*Our pastoral ministry reflects a growing understanding of relational theology and its ability to transform lives. We accompany one another during threshold moments and times of transition. We are eager to be present in joyful times and able to stay present in the face of suffering. The Holy reveals itself in a tangible way in our mutual care for one another.*

***Strategic Priorities:***

We will:

- Establish and integrate Mental Health Task Force into the Pastoral Care ministry.
- Establish Pastoral Care Leadership Team from the leaders of the pastoral care groups, with additional members for gender balance.
- Cultivate and train Rev. Karen Hering in a shared pastoral ministry with Janne.
- Examine how and if the Couples Class continues after Rob and Janne's tenure. (The curriculum has been created and led by them.)
- Study and explore the question of streaming and electronic access to worship and other programming.

**6. Discover and pursue our individual and collective work to advance justice, wholeness, and equity for people and our Earth and all life on it.**

***Interpretation:***

*We understand the intersectionality of systems of oppression. To be credible partners, we must cultivate humility, examining our intentions and questioning our assumptions. Guided by the wisdom and experience of those most clearly in harm's way, we focus our collective power to imagine and to build the Beloved Community. We know change takes time. Even when we cannot see the results of our efforts, we are steadfast in our values. Faith asks us to join hands with visionaries, past and present, to set pathways of possibility for future generations.*

***Strategic Priorities:***

We will:

- Support the Sustainable Living Team in its effort to integrate the congregation's input and complete their application to become a Green Sanctuary Congregation.
- Monitor and integrate the institutional and infrastructure implications of the Green Sanctuary process.
- Formalize the Community Outreach Leadership Team, which has met 3 times since the fall.
- Revitalize the Sanctuary Team.
- Clarify a new partnership with the Interfaith Coalition on Immigration (ICOM).
- Develop a court accompaniment program for people facing deportation.

## **7. Create brave space for racial healing and dismantling dominant culture.**

### ***Interpretation:***

*As an expression of covenant, brave space invites us into authentic relationships that allow us to imagine new ways of being and help to heal old wounds. We learn to confront racist behavior in ourselves and in others, make mistakes, and renew our commitment to ending racism and patriarchy. In brave space we turn down the volume of the dominant culture and amplify voices that fight to be heard. We will learn to be together in new ways, practice sharing power, sing new songs, pray new prayers.*

### ***Strategic Priorities:***

We will:

- Develop and maintain a resource list for anti-racism work in the same model as the mental health resources.
- Revise Unity's statement on liturgy through a Brave Space/Anti-Racist/Anti- Oppression/Multi-Cultural lens to ensure institutional memory and inform future choices on the liturgical and worship life of the congregation.
- Offer an opportunity for confession before June 30 and consider the role of confession in the life of the church.
- Follow up on Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative's request to help them think about community building and conflict resolution in their housing locations. Offer Unity's support and promote circle keeping with the help of Unity' circle keepers.

## **8. Sustain and steward the church and our larger Unitarian Universalist movement for the future.**

### ***Interpretation:***

*Gratitude rests at the heart of our faith. When we embrace the gifts of the church and put them to work in the world, we understand the significance of the church in new ways. As disciples to our faith and its teachings, we hold the church in trust, testify by example, and act as stewards of its resources. Our gratitude extends to and undergirds our commitment to the larger Unitarian Universalist movement and our shared mission in the world.*

### ***Strategic Priorities:***

We will:

- Support the success of Unity's new Director of Finance, Vernon Sowell.
- Operationalize the resource development area within the Executive Director's job description in light of the Director of Finance providing day-to-day financial management and monitoring data.
- Integrate learning from the men's retreat on stewardship.
- Collaborate with the board to explore how the discipleship ministries underway in the congregation might connect with the Board's nominating process.
- Collaborate with the board to engage generative questions and create space to explore them.

## Monitoring Report – October, 2020

### Policy J: Anti-Racism and Racial Healing Commitment

The Executive Team shall not take actions or otherwise conduct the affairs of Unity Church-Unitarian in any manner that does not comport with its commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist institution. The Executive Team shall not:

1. Engage vendors in an amount greater than \$2,500 annually without assessing and educating any such vendor using a matrix of values which includes, but is not limited to anti-racism, anti-oppression, multiculturalism and class inclusion.

*The ET's plan in response to this limitation has been to:*

1. *Develop and implement a matrix of criteria that expresses the church's stated values and ends.*
2. *Survey current contractors and vendors to evaluate their compliance with our criteria.*
3. *Create required goals for our current vendors and contractors who are not in compliance, thus challenging and educating them;*
4. *Apply the criteria to all future processes for the selection of contracted services and vendors.*
5. *Report results to the Board of Trustees and the congregation annually in an effort to be accountable and transparent.*

*We have developed criteria (see below) but we have not surveyed current contractors as proposed. We do, however, apply these values and criteria with new contracts that are above \$2,500.00. Most recently, we used the Criteria when interviewing institutional composting vendors, and HVAC controls companies who were bidding to replace the "jace" in our HVAC system.*

<b>Matrix of Criteria for contracts and vendors (weighted):</b>
1. Minority hiring practices - resulting in a 31%* employment of people of color and women. <b>(25%)</b>
2. Sustainability practices – demonstration of a commitment to healing the earth. <b>(15%)</b>
3. Local engagement – demonstration of a commitment to the community's overall health and well-being. <b>(15%)</b>
4. Worker's Equity in fair compensation, inclusive benefits and healthy work environment. <b>(20%)</b>
5. Competitive fees for goods and services <b>(25%)</b>
*Keyed to Ramsey County requirements.

2. Allow the Board to be uninformed about diversity of staff on payroll, including the percentage of positions and salary paid to people of color.

*As of June, 2020 our staff was comprised of 31.8% people of color (7 of 22), and 31.7% of salaries were assigned to people of color (\$266,369 of \$841,443).*

*Please note that we used January – June budgeted staffing and salaries for this analysis, since the report covers the 2019-2020 church year. Some changes to staff were made in July, 2020 due to the pandemic.*

3. Allow staff members to be uninformed about how to conduct their duties in alignment with the anti-racism, anti-oppression, multiculturalism and class inclusion values of Unity Church-Unitarian.

*In 2016, the Beloved Community staff team was formed at Unity Church to strengthen and coordinate Unity's anti-racism and multi-cultural work, and to share the stories of this journey with the wider community. The BCST has members from the Executive Leadership, program staff and the laity.*

*In conjunction with Team Dynamics, we have offered opportunities for staff members to participate in the training in the fall of 2019 and in the current Equity and Justice 7-Part Series. Early in 2020, all staff completed the IDI and most participated in the group feedback session with a Qualified Administrator. Many have had an individual sessions with a Q.A.*

*We recognize that new learnings and growth call us to develop new ways of integrating our learnings into our staff dynamics and the church culture. We are taking steps to create venues for this integration.*

4. Interpret the Ends statements without consideration of the anti-racism commitment of Unity Church-Unitarian and how that commitment is implemented in covenant with local communities of color.

*As you can see from the ET's Interpretation of the Ends, our commitment to anti-racism is woven throughout the ministries and programs of the church.*

5. Allow the congregation to be uninformed about the work being done to live out the anti-racism, anti-oppression, multicultural and class inclusive values of Unity Church-Unitarian, and the measurable outcomes of that work, including the percentage of Sunday Offerings that go to organizations with an anti-racist agenda and/or that serve communities of color.

*The Beloved Community Staff Team has a Communications Team that reports on the work being done to live out the values of the church in the area. Our Annual Report to the congregation in November includes this summary report.*

*From July of 2019 through June of 2020, 80.4% of the organizations that received a Sunday offering serve communities of color and 47.8% of the organizations include an anti-racist agenda in their mission.*

**Policy J**

**Offering Recipient Analysis**

<b>Church Year</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b># Serve Comm of Color</b>	<b>%</b>	<b># With A-R Mission</b>	<b>%</b>
2014-2015	51	37	72.5%	23	45.1%
2015-2016	49	39	79.6%	35	71.4%
2016-2017	47	39	83.0%	24	51.1%
2017-2018	44	32	72.7%	21	47.7%
2018-2019	48	36	75.0%	20	41.7%
2019-2020	46	37	80.4%	22	47.8%



## Congregational Results Summary

Dear Unity Church community:

In the early months of a global pandemic, with Unity's church building shut down, nearly 400 people completed the 2020 congregational survey! This survey provides vital information to our ministers, our religious education leadership, and to the Board of Trustees as we work to understand what progress we're making on our mission and ends.

Laura Park and Jennifer Tong were excited to share the results in a Church Lady Chat video again this year. In it, they shared some of the key insights the board received from the survey analysis performed by Bill Etter and Laura Park. Many thanks to Emily Park Jordan for her wonderful work putting together this video for us.

This year the Board's Evaluation team, along with Bill and Laura, worked with Team Dynamics to think about ways to make this a more inclusive survey and hear more voices. One change was to use more open-ended demographic questions. The responses took more time to code, but gave us a richer sense of who was responding.

The Board also wanted to assess not only congregational progress on the Ends, but how individuals are impacted as well. We added nine statements based on the Spirit Map to understand how the Ends are impacting congregants as individuals.

On the Ends themselves we found results were fairly similar to last year, although the Ends ratings did increase over last year. The average rating across the Ends was over 5 (on a scale of 1-7), and we still have a lower-rated set of Ends related to building the multicultural spiritual home. We recognize there is a lot more to do in this space.

Comparing ratings for progress on the Ends to how people feel impacted at a personal level provided a deeper level of analysis. There were two areas where the Ends rating was quite different from the personal rating: 1) Creating a multicultural spiritual home; and 2) Grounding ourselves in personal spiritual practice. The Board is eager to explore these dynamics in greater depth.

The Board read all the comments and is taking several suggestions into consideration for next year's survey. We also passed along comments to staff to inform their work.

Now that you can access your membership information online, we encourage you to add your demographic information, because then we'll have a much better idea if the demographics of the survey respondents match the demographics of the congregation as a whole.

For tons more information and insights about the survey results, download the results presentation from the church website here:

[https://www.unityunitarian.org/uploads/6/1/0/3/6103699/2020\\_congregational\\_survey\\_results.pdf](https://www.unityunitarian.org/uploads/6/1/0/3/6103699/2020_congregational_survey_results.pdf)

Should you have questions about these results, please send them to Laura Park at [laura@unityconsulting.org](mailto:laura@unityconsulting.org).

On behalf of the board, I want to thank you for your participation in this year's survey and for Laura's and Bill's generous work in helping us all better understand who we are and who we want to become together.

Sincerely,  
Jackie Smith  
Board Chair

## **Ministerial Transition**

### **November 2020 Update**

*This is an update for the congregation on how the Unity Church Board of Trustees is planning for the next phase of the ministerial transition. A decision was made in the spring of this year to close the church because of the pandemic. Subsequent to that the BOT asked Janne and Rob to stay another year, and they generously agreed. The planning for the celebration for Rob and Janne will begin again after the first of the year.*

### **Calling a Senior Minister(s)**

We began the ministerial search team process in February, 2020 and because of the pandemic, decided to push the pause button. We restarted the process in September and presented a slate of 21 candidates to the congregation in November. Voting ends Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, and the announcement of the newly formed Ministerial Search Team will be made on Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Recruiting an Interim**

In the spring of 2021, the Board will work through the UUA to identify an interim minister to join us for a year, from August 2021 through June 2022. The interim minister will join our executive team that includes Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director and Rev. KP Hong, Minister of Faith Formation. The interim minister will shepherd Unity Church through the transition period.

## Administration

The administrative staff is a hard-working, talented, long-tenured team of people who support literally every aspect of church life. Barbara Hubbard, Executive Director, oversees the administrative staff at Unity. There were some changes in personnel and job responsibilities in the 2019-2020 church year, some of which were planned and others in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in March of 2020.

Martha Tilton, our Coordinator of Communications manages all written communication, our website, orders of service, social media and our database. With the pandemic and the ensuing “virtual church,” Martha retooled her work to include live streamed worship services, daily minister’s messages and much more. We have been blessed to have Martha’s skills, creativity and willingness to take us to new heights.

Song Thao, our Financial Assistant (of 26 years!) is a true asset to Unity’s administrative operations. She handles contributions, disbursements, payroll and other administrative projects with calm and order. This is a real gift to the church, particularly when we need to research something from the past - and it’s right there in a binder.

In addition to her work as a Religious Education program staff member, Michelle Mecey has been serving as our part time Accounting Specialist, providing accounting support to our Executive Director. The decision was made at the end of 2019 to fold Michelle’s responsibilities and those of our contractual Accounting Consultant into a new half-time position. We’re grateful to Michelle for sharing her accounting skills with us these past four years.

Vernon Sowell was hired as our part time Director of Finance at the end of February, 2020. Vernon’s position was created to assume responsibilities for oversight of day to day fiscal management, preparation and analysis of financial statements, and budget control. Vernon came on board just weeks before the pandemic hit and just as the annual audit of the 2019 year-end financial position was beginning. Vernon has risen nicely to this challenging environment.

In addition to Madeline Summers’ primary work as Volunteer Coordinator, she had been serving as our Wedding/Memorial Coordinator. With the onset of the pandemic, Madeline’s job changed significantly. Instead of working with cooking teams, welcome teams and rites of passage, she has assumed the important and exciting role of Zoom Coordinator.

Our paid staff is generously supported by dedicated and hard-working front desk volunteers who play an important role in greeting people, answering phone calls, and helping with various projects. This beloved team of volunteers was furloughed with the pandemic. We look forward to their return at the reception desk.

The Memorial Service Reception team, led by Barbara Ford, serves a critical role in providing food and support for memorial service receptions, and we are very grateful for their work.

## **Archives Team**

The Archives Team continued its work in 2020, inventorying boxes and creating content lists. However, two factors slowed our progress considerably. One was a construction project at the MHS History Center that prevented us from shipping any completed boxes to them. The other was the COVID-19 pandemic, which meant that after March 2020 the team was unable to gather for work on materials stored in the church's facilities storage room.

Despite these setbacks, the archival news includes some exciting developments. First, a generous gift from a church member will provide funds to the Minnesota History Center for cataloging the boxes already sent. This means that the materials in these boxes will be more readily available to researchers from Unity Church as well as to students and scholars from around the world. Second, the History Center kindly provided collection access to members of the History Book Team during the construction project. This allowed those team members to continue their research for the planned volume focused on Unity's recent history.

Archives Team members continue to have concerns about ongoing archival work at Unity. We need to resolve issues related to space for appropriate storage and processing of materials, including storage for long-term retention of items in-house. Another matter is how to deal with digital-only items going forward, a concern of archivists everywhere. Finally, we continue to advocate for the development of a process for church staff that provides guidance about retaining and storing materials that illustrate the history of Unity Church.

--Respectfully, Unity Church Archives Team: Pauline Eichten, Susan Foote, Patt Kelly, Carol Miller, Louise Merriam

## **Art Team**

The fourteen member Art Team, chaired by Paul Rogne, works hard to manage the monthly Parish Hall art exhibits. They also have a subcommittee, the Permanent Art Collection Curators, led by Amanda Rueter that manages the Unity Church permanent collection consisting of more than 90 pieces of fine art.

The Art Team promotes art as an important part of the church environment and they work to improve the permanent collection in ways that affirm what Unity Church stands for. This past year three new pieces of art were added to the collection: two fine prints with social messages and a new painting by the March Parish Hall artist, Simone Spruce that focuses on the challenging immigrant experience.

The Team recruits and select artists for the monthly Parish Hall exhibits with the Unity Ends in mind. Twelve months of exhibiting artists were selected in May, 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a pause in much of the work of the Art Team including the postponement of months of Parish Hall exhibits. Those artists will have the option of exhibiting once the church is able to open again for on-site worship by the congregation. Also, the Art Team in May selected six additional artists who will be given a future month to exhibit. The Team is excited to get going on those wonderful exhibits in the future.

Selected pieces of the Permanent Collection are being featured with photos of the pieces in periodic emails from Unity Church to the congregation. There is fascinating background to these pieces. The Team hopes these feature stories and fine works of art will be appreciated by the congregation and entice them to explore the entire collection when they get a chance to be inside Unity Church again

The Art Share program, instituted by former Art Team chairperson Marty Rossmann continued to be a highlight featured in the Parish Hall. Members of the congregation volunteered to choose one of their favorite pieces of art, write a statement of why it's a favorite and display the art for two Sundays in the Parish Hall. We hope that this will continue once Unity is reopened for in-person services and uses of the Parish Hall.

The Team has other art projects under consideration for 2021-22 that we hope to announce soon. The Team is ready and hopeful for the time when we are gathering again within Unity Church and the art exhibits are there for all to appreciate.

## **Beloved Community Staff Team**

Submitted by K.P. Hong

Institutional commitments find embodiment in actors who are carriers of accountability and distributors of commitment, answerable to the established ends. Unity's interrelated commitments—to “create a multicultural spiritual home based on authentic relationship” and to “create brave space for racial healing and dismantling dominant culture”—are also conversations about leadership and actors working to embed multicultural and antiracist ends throughout the life of the congregation. Equipping and training for such leadership remained an encompassing strategy across programs and key areas of ministry.

Collaboration with Team Dynamics, with Alfonso Wenker as our primary liaison, continued to clarify the developmental focus needed for such leadership in multicultural work, featuring significantly in the following areas of congregational life: worship, welcome, education, community outreach, communications, and the generative work of the Board. Leaders representing those ministry areas participated in a multicultural training event with Team Dynamics in September/2019:

- The training event advanced individual and collective multicultural awareness, enabled greater precision and utility of shared language-concepts-meaning in *Diversity-Equity-Inclusion* (DEI) work, and helped animate leadership for next commitments toward becoming an antiracist, multicultural congregation.
- Areas of ministry began adapting and applying DEI framework to their specific ministry areas, with coaching from Team Dynamics supporting an expanding array of initiatives, including: the welcome team, communications team, worship associates, the Obama School ministry team, the Board in its monitoring work, strengthening the congregational survey to serve more effectively as metric for multicultural ends, the Board's transition team for future ministerial leadership, finance and investment, and the Beloved Community Staff Team.

Moving in parallel, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) continued to scale up with growing numbers of individuals and ministry teams completing the inventory, with feedback and intercultural coaching provided by a team of IDI qualified administrators. Ministry areas thus far included: welcome team, communications teams, Board of Trustees, Religious Education Ministry Team, church program and facilities staff, worship associates, teaching associates, outreach ministries, and the Beloved Community Staff Team. And still among new initiatives, the Artist in Residence program worked to articulate a more comprehensive vision for the role of artists, creatives, and cultural workers as key drivers in the work of activating communities and shaping social imaginaries in multicultural work.

As we closely track the multiple edges of this work in the life of the congregation, and however much the pandemic will reshape plans and schedules, our contract with Team Dynamics for 2020-21 formulates core expectations for advancing this work in the coming year:

- Fall/2020 leadership development and training will focus on (1) Identity and Bias (2) Conflict and Communications (3) Understanding Power. The training series will be offered with the congregation's aggregate profile of *minimization* in mind, toward *acceptance* and *adaptation* and greater multicultural capacities.
- Ongoing coaching sessions will be specifically coordinated with the ministerial search process, further capacity building for multiple ministry teams, and closely monitor this expanding work with the Beloved Community Staff Team.

Among the many converging transitions at this turning moment, our team welcomes Rev. Karen Hering and Laura Park as they assume responsibilities formerly held by Rev. Lisa Friedman. Our appreciation for Lisa's ministry reverberates within the wider gratitude for emerging actors and leaders who give momentum and carry this commitment forward.

**Members of the Beloved Community Staff Team:**

Ahmed Anzaldúa, Drew Danielson, Pauline Eichten, Lisa Friedman, K.P. Hong, Barbara Hubbard, Janne Eller-Isaacs, Rob Eller-Isaacs, Erika Sanders, Angela Wilcox



## Congregational and Community Engagement

### Membership

In February 2020, Unity Church certified 900 voting members with the Unitarian Universalist Association. From July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 Unity welcomed 43 new members and their families. Finding Yourself at Unity continued as a year-round, drop-in weekly Sunday class, led by a dedicated group of volunteer facilitators working with staff presenters with just a brief break when the building closed for COVID before it was up and running on-line again. The Mentor Program offered active visitors and new members an opportunity to be matched with a mentor for six months to help them connect more deeply with the congregation.

These are the people who joined Unity Church July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020:

- |                            |                             |                        |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Erik Akre               | 16. Karl Fast               | 30. Leah Oliver        |
| 2. Monica Akre             | 17. Mary Greene             | 31. Michelle Sheire    |
| 3. Denise Aldrich          | 18. Chris Griese            | 32. Karen Solas        |
| 4. Merrill Aldrich         | 19. Pat Haff                | 33. Nate Solas         |
| 5. Andrea Anastos          | 20. Cynthia Harms           | 34. Jay Stapp          |
| 6. George Anastos          | 21. Ray Ann<br>Hommeyer     | 35. Barbara Svoboda    |
| 7. Dave Backlund           | 22. Kirstin Jarvis          | 36. Jill Thompson      |
| 8. Samantha Bailey<br>Fast | 23. Deb Johnson             | 37. Cathy Trana        |
| 9. Kyle Belmont            | 24. Vicki Kappus            | 38. John Trout         |
| 10. Lewis Campbell         | 25. Elizabeth Karre         | 39. Muffet Trout       |
| 11. Claire Cooke           | 26. Dayna Kennedy           | 40. Linda Valeri       |
| 12. Sara Cooper            | 27. Brendan<br>McGillicuddy | 41. Rob Wagner         |
| 13. Alethea Douah          | 28. Mary Ann McLeod         | 42. Amy J Welty        |
| 14. Frank Dutke            | 29. Gail Mulcahey           | 43. Colleen Zuro-White |

### Welcome Teams

Unity's Welcome Teams create a vital ministry of hospitality at every worship service held throughout the year. Before the building closed in March, 63 people served on one of the 12 welcome teams, and 5 people joined our welcome team ministry. Welcome Team members' participation in developmental opportunities show their commitment to co-creating a culture of radical hospitality. 70 % of the team has completed the Intercultural Development Inventory and subsequent one-on-one coaching with a Qualified Administrator, and 30 Welcome Team Members attended training in hospitality and cultural awareness with Rev Lisa Friedman and Alfonso Wenker of Team Dynamics in October of 2019. In addition to their Sunday support, Welcome Team Members also work to create a sense of hospitality at special worship events and memorial services. Although COVID-19 restrictions prevented us from holding our usual spring appreciation party, Welcome Team members are a hugely important part of our hospitality ministry and greatly valued.

### **Adult Religious Education and Programming**

In a year of dramatic upheaval, changing how we meet and underscoring the long overdue call for racial justice, Unity's adult programming and mid-week congregational life continued offering a range of opportunities for members and friends to grow their souls, deepen connection to one another and our faith, and bless and engage in the larger world. Adult Religious Education opportunities included classes on Unitarian Universalism through the Faith Forward series and a third year of Chalice Circles serving almost 100 members and now meeting online and through the summer.

Wellspring Wednesday programs represented a significant portion of the adult program offerings in the 2019-2020 program year, including anti-racism, multi-cultural and justice-oriented presentations as well as opportunities for spiritual deepening and growth. Until the building closed for COVID in mid-March, Wellspring Wednesday thrived as an onsite learning community with a hundred or more gathering for the mid-week meal, chapel service and programming. In a very quick turnaround, when COVID required the closing of the building, this became a vibrant online learning community, serving Unity members locally as well as a growing number of members and friends logging on from afar. In addition, Wellspring Wednesday continued to program through the summer months, acknowledging the importance of year-round learning and fellowship.

Several series spanned a longer arc of time including the 10-month UU Wellspring Program engaging participants in spiritual deepening rooted in our Unitarian Universalist faith tradition and a 12-part OWL (Our Whole Lives) sexuality curriculum for adults. Wednesday offerings also included poetry readings, creative spiritual practices, UU history presentations and a variety of embodied practices such as yoga and kung fu. (Tai ji classes were held on weekday mornings.) We heard from Unity members and congregational teams and partners, outside presenters as well as Unity's artists-in-residence. Rebekah Crisanta de Ybarra taught us about the making and meaning of the Dias de los Muertos ofrenda, and the rich harmonies of the mother and son duo, Ina Yukka brought us to our feet with music and dance rooted in Andean folk culture. We also learned about Karen textile arts and heard from photographer Jim Noltner. Deep appreciation goes out to the many Unity teams, including Community Outreach, Library/Bookstall, Beloved Community Staff Team, Art Team, and other members who help make this rich and diverse learning possible.

Several annual anchors of Unity's programming continued, such as the monthly Open Page Writing sessions and the Threshold series with Rev. Karen Hering, the All-Congregational Book Read (featuring the 2020 selection *The Nickel Boys*, by Colson Whitehead), and the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Women's Retreat held while the building was still open. Unfortunately, the annual Men's Retreat and Queer Retreat were both cancelled in the early days of moving to online gatherings, with plans to offer them again in new form in the coming year. In addition, the monthly Racial Justice movie night and the Sustainable Living Film series both continued inviting members into Friday night discussions of movies that inform and inspire our commitment to addressing racial justice and environmental concerns.

A new series of programs titled “Next Right Action” was launched on June 3, following George Floyd’s murder. With an emphasis on integrating learning, personal reflection and action, the programs encourage participants to find their own next right steps in response to centuries old racial injustices. They continue into the new program year and likely beyond.

### **Food Ministry**

Our kitchen space, when the building is open, is used every day of the week to provide warm meals within and beyond the congregation. Unity’s food ministry volunteers served well over 2700 meals before the building closed in March – 2100 Wellspring Wednesday meals, 650 bowls of soup, and hundreds of pancakes too! Team Leaders Martha Tilton, Therese Sexe, Maria Caliandro, Tom Zell and Dick Buggs led and coordinated cooking teams. Dedicated team volunteers of all ages volunteered for multiple shifts each month, including the Soup Supper Serving, Tuesday night prep teams and the Wednesday cooking and cleaning teams. Thank you to all who participated in making Unity’s food ministry a delicious success!

Unity’s kitchen also serves others beyond our walls. Tom Zell bakes and freezes nutrition-packed breakfast muffins to support the Crisis Nursery. Sarah Balenger cooks a meal for the Circle of Peace every Monday. Our facilities staff plays a vital role in making sure that our state of the art space is clean, in working order, and ready to welcome in both members and friends.

### **Community Outreach Ministry**

Unity’s ten active Community Outreach Teams invite church members and friends into the rich and challenging work of education, advocacy and service related to particular issue areas and community needs. Each team partners with one or more organizations addressing the team’s focus area and the teams, in turn, engage the congregation in joining action with spiritual reflection to support transformation in the heart and in the world. This year’s teams worked with 15 community partners both local and international. What follows is a brief summary of highlights from each team’s year, including the significant impact many experienced due to the pandemic and the uprising following George Floyd’s murder in late May. Each team creatively adapted to new circumstances and often growing needs.

### **Affordable Housing Ministry Team**

**Community Partners:** *Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, St. Paul Interfaith Action Project Home, and Faith Builders Habitat for Humanity Collaboration.*

The Affordable Housing Team is a member of the Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, a collective of over 80 congregations in four counties committed to achieving equitable, affordable housing. Unity team members worked with Beacon organizers to build stronger advocacy skills and collaborative relationships with other Beacon congregations in St. Paul, hosting team meetings in the fall with leaders from House of Hope Presbyterian Church, Central Presbyterian and Mt. Olivet Lutheran. Unity members wrote post cards to their legislators, some attended a hearing in support of a new Beacon build in Prior Lake and team members participated in public hearings and legislative visits for Homeless Day on the Hill. That was two

days before the legislature closed for COVID restrictions. The team adapted to virtual reality and completed visits to six legislators. Unity members supported residents of Beacon's St. Paul: facilities Prior Crossing, Kimball Court and American House through a hygiene drive for COVID protections such as masks, soap and hand sanitizer. Project Home was closed because of COVID but volunteers adapted by supporting the hygiene drive as well as collecting craft supplies for the Interfaith Action housing facility. Also due to the pandemic, Unity's involvement in Habitat for Humanity postponed church members' involvement in a local build to August, to be included in next year's report. A summer offering supported Habitat financially.

### **Evergreen Projects Ministry**

**Community Partners:** *The Family Place, Hallie Q. Brown Food shelf, Jeremiah Transitional Housing Program, Obama School*

After a very successful holiday sale, the Evergreen Project supported their partner groups from the sale earnings and established a schedule for regular deliveries of food donations to the food shelf. Even COVID-19 cannot keep this group of dedicated quilters from continuing to create. Beginning in mid-March they regrouped on Zoom, continuing to meet twice monthly to share what they sewed, teach each other new techniques, and practice their craft. They have completed several new quilts for families at The Family Place, to be delivered when possible, and they plan to awe the congregation with a future exhibit/silent auction and raffle, to be rescheduled when the church building reopens.

### **Generosity Ministry Team**

Unity is in the 15th year of its Generosity Ministry, which continues to receive strong support from the congregation and wider community. The Generosity Ministry Team vets nominations from Unity members for the offering and schedules an offering recipient for every service of the church year, with recipients receiving 70 percent of the collected offering. The team prioritizes organizations that share Unity's mission and values as well as those for whom a Unity offering would make a significant impact.

From July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020, \$82,574.00 went to 47 organizations, averaging \$1,756.00 per recipient. In addition, \$12, 313.00 went to five annual Unity Church collections, among them, the Foote Music Sunday and the Hallman Intern Endowment. As worship services moved online, shared Sunday offerings were made possible by electronic giving options through the church's website and Shelby app (supplemented by those who prefer to mail in a check).

### **Gun Sense Ministry Team**

**Community Partners:** *Protect Minnesota*

The Gun Sense Ministry Team continues the partnership with Protect Minnesota and the Interfaith Alliance for Gun Safety. The focus of the work is to raise awareness of the issue of gun violence and of Minnesota gun policies and to support and facilitate Unity Church members in expressing their views to their state government. The team supports those goals and created posters that accompanied letters to legislators advocating for particular legislation. During the pandemic, the team used the monthly church newsletter to inform members about related

policy positions prior to the 2020 election and to promote awareness of free gunlocks available from the Ramsey County Sheriff's office for county residents.

### **Mano a Mano Ministry Team ("Hand to Hand" in Spanish)**

*Community Partner: Mano a Mano International Partners*

Mano a Mano partners with Bolivian communities to meet their basic needs for health care, education, food and nutrition, and access to goods and services beyond their village borders. Dozens of Unity members continued to volunteer this year, collecting surplus medical, school and related supplies that would be discarded in our local community, then packing and preparing them for shipment to Bolivia. In Bolivia, Mano a Mano uses these donations to improve and expand its services. Unity members also helped with three fundraising activities and made an educational presentation on Bolivia to the Congregation. A parish hall art exhibit featured photos of Bolivia and Mano a Mano projects.

### **Obama School Ministry Team**

*Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary School*

Unity's Obama Outreach Ministry Team partners with Obama School to enhance the learning of Obama scholars and to support the faculty and staff. Until early March, the team's 53 volunteers met at least once a week with Obama school scholars, assisted in the library, provided snacks for after school staff meetings, and staffed the Book Fair. The team also administered the third and final year of giving 100 Cub Foods cards to Obama Families and arranged for a receipt collection box at Kowalskis to generate funds for the school. All volunteers met in January to share their experiences and 20 of them received training as literacy tutors. Since March 2020, in-school volunteering has been halted, first during the teachers' strike and later due to the pandemic. During the strike, Unity provided space to support picketing teachers. After the pandemic moved learning on-line, the team continued to work with school administration to identify creative ways to enhance the learning of the scholars and to support school staff.

### **Partner Church Ministry Team**

The Partner Church Team has supported the ongoing relationship with Unity's partner village of Homorodszepter, Romania, since 2001. In July, 2019, twenty Unity members travelled with Rob and Janne Eller-Isaacs on pilgrimage to Romania as the last pilgrimage under the Eller-Isaacs' leadership. On that trip, Unity presented our partner church with a Minnesota state flag from the late Gary DeCramer's state senate office. Before the pilgrims departed Homorodszepter, the village presented Unity Church with a commissioned Szeley gate (then still being carved), to be shipped to St. Paul when completed. The Rev. Kinga-Reka Szekely was to visit St. Paul in the spring for the gate's installation, but the trip and the gate shipping were both cancelled due to the pandemic. However, as both partner churches moved activities online, we enjoyed several opportunities to share programming and worship online in the late spring of 2020. In addition, a special insert to Unity's arts journal, *Cairns*, featured words and images testifying to the power of this partnership.

### **Racial and Restorative Justice Ministry Team**

**Community Partners:** *Amicus (Second Chance Coalition), Rondo Circle of Peace, Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance, and Minnesota Second Chance Coalition*

The team continued to support the work and growth of the Circle of Peace Movement (TCOPM) throughout the year, participating in the weekly circle and providing food for the meals, adding meal support for TCOPM's Tuesday evening mentorship program, until COVID when Peace Circle activities went online. Some provided support for youth involved in the Circle of Peace by showing up at Juvenile Court upon request. With Amicus, the team ran another hugely successful Winter Warm Up Drive for clothing, sundries, and other basic necessities for men and women just getting out of prison and reentering the community. Volunteers participated in the annual Day on the Hill through Minnesota Second Chance Coalition. Some participated in the *Mapping Prejudice* initiative, and the team hosted two film viewings and discussion of "A Time for Burning". After George Floyd's murder and the congregation's initial Next Right Action meetings in June, the RRJ team organized to address the issue of Policing and Community Safety by forming a legislative action group and a building community partnerships group, and by planning two congregational online Peace Circle conversations about community safety issues, held in late summer.

### **Rainbow Chalice Alliance Ministry Team**

**Community Partners:** *Minnesota School Outreach Coalition (MnSOC), Out for Equity, Transforming Families Minnesota*

For many years this team was one of the earliest and primary supporters of the annual MnSOC Q-Quest conferences for over 500 LGBTQA high school and middle school students from across the state. They raised significant funds for the annual LGBTQ spring school proms through the much-in-demand Unity Pi Day Pie Sale and also partnered with Transforming Families Minnesota, whose monthly St. Paul gathering often met at Unity Church. Late this year, team members agreed that the team's work was now successfully being carried on by larger organizational sponsors and supporters in the Twin Cities. Plans are being made to sunset this team in the coming year, allowing team members to turn their energies toward other emerging needs and responses.

### **Sanctuary Team**

**Community Partners:** *ISAIAH, St. Paul Sanctuary Coalition and Interfaith Coalition on Immigration*

The sanctuary effort has housed three different individuals in the past year. Our first guest moved into the duplex and we were able to house two other individuals who needed temporary housing over the year. One was facing certain deportation but that order was changed with a lot of political pressure. The other spent a two-week quarantine period at Unity and was safely placed in a home. We continue to be active participants in the St. Paul Sanctuary Coalition and became involved in the Interfaith Coalition on Immigration. We continue to communicate with the congregation around issues of immigration within and

outside our community and state. The team was part of an advocacy effort at the state house to reinstate driver's licenses to undocumented workers.

### **Sustainable Living Team**

*Community Partner: Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light*

The team held a major event in February called Gather for the Earth, involving a growing number of church members in planning the team's future activities and focus. They continued to support Unity's composting efforts and to offer a monthly Sustainable film series and regular educational programs on Wellspring Wednesday, even as programming shifted online. The team installed a pollinator garden in the church's green space, gave members instructions on how to create their own. From Memorial to Labor Day weekend, the team members provided weekly Summer-In-the-Garden programs for Unity's children, and helped facilitate the church's BizRecycling grant application. Throughout the year, the team took steps to intentionally align their environmental work with racial justice goals and awareness.

## **Denominational Affairs**

Unity Church continued to deepen its covenantal relationship with the larger Unitarian Universalist Association. Unity once again increased its financial support on the path to becoming a Fair Share congregation. Unity provided meeting space and hospitality for association-wide meetings, retreats and gatherings.

The staff and members of Unity Church volunteer for the larger movement and association in a variety of ways. Don Brunnquell serves on the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Lia Rivamonte serves on the Board of MUUSJA (the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance) and Pastor Danny Givens is on staff as MUUSJA's Statewide Organizer. Rev. Janne Eller-Isaacs continued her years of service as a UUA Transitions Consultant to congregations in ministerial search and as a Board member of the Unitarian Universalist Holdeen India Program. Rev. Lisa Friedman was elected to serve as a Good Officer for the Prairie Star Chapter of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association. Rev. KP Hong consulted with the Fahs Center Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School. All of Unity's ministers serve as mentors to colleagues in preliminary fellowship and support the profession of ministry in a variety of ways.

As Unity Church began its journey toward ministerial transition, we engaged Rev. Jen Crow, a UUA Ministerial Settlement Representative, to guide us through the process.



## **Facilities**

### **Staffing**

We offer thanks to our facilities team members in the 2019-2020 church year: Teresa Connor, Bill Lowell, Olentda Bryant, Louis Wilson, Dewayne Givens, Emma Mathews-Lingen, Heidi Birkholz and Keenen Rust.

The staff was busier than ever in the first half of this church year, supporting the program and worship life of the church and the growing number of events held in the building by community partners and groups. On any given day or evening of the week, there were multiple groups gathering for a broad variety of purposes.

Additionally, the staff accomplished maintenance projects including cleaning, repairs, painting, snow removal, and grounds maintenance at both the church and the church-owned duplex.

The pandemic hit our facilities staff harder than others on staff given that we closed out building. Not knowing how to predict income as the pandemic unfolded, we applied for and received a Payment Protection Plan loan in April, allowing us to confidently pay all staff at budgeted levels and allowing us to defer layoffs until the summer of 2020. We provided opportunities for facilities staff members to come into the building to work on projects.

Bill Lowell, who served as our Facilities Manager for fourteen years, moved his planned retirement up to May of 2020. Bill's commitment to a clean and safe facility and grounds was noted by many members and visitors. He spent maaaaany hours behind snow blowers, buffing machines and carpet cleaners. He showed up at odd hours to answer to tripped alarms, mechanical problems and to help with massive cleanups after big events. Bill (and crew) literally moved *everything* both out of and into this building in 2012 when we did our big Unity Tomorrow capital renovation project. Happy retirement, Bill!

Given the short timeframe for hiring and training, we posted a "Facilities Maintenance Coordinator" position internally to provide advancement opportunities to current facilities staff. We interviewed three people and then offered the position to Heidi Birkholz, who comes with prior facilities experience. This position, along with our Facilities Operations Coordinator, Teresa Connor and our Facilities Team Member, Olentda Bryant became our restructured facilities team.

### **Covid-19: Closing the building**

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we closed our building on March 14, 2020. We are grateful for the guidance of Governor Walz and Commissioner Malcolm, our primary sources of authority throughout the pandemic. We placed ultimate value on the health and safety of the staff and congregation by moving our worship and programs online, providing a means to keep us connected and to offer hope, inspiration and spiritual guidance during this challenging time.

The daily activities in the church during the pandemic included a few staff members coming and going, vendors onsite for inspections and repairs, and regular visits by our much celebrated mail carriers. On Sundays, our worship leaders, musicians, tech team and bell ringer made our live-streamed worship services happen.

Exceptions to the building closure have been monthly Touchstone events, live-streamed memorial services with a small number of guests, and opening the Parish Hall for the primary and general elections.

We developed protocols that allowed for the highest levels of safety. Anyone entering the building was required to sign in, wear a mask and sanitize hands. All daily activities were limited to the main floor of the building and the doors to common areas were left open so that we weren't touching surfaces. Masks were required in all common spaces, and we sanitized our common spaces daily. All meetings were done by Zoom.

### **Facilities maintenance and upgrades**

Right after the first of the year, we added institutional composting to our sustainability efforts. We thank all of the Sustainable Living Team members who, for years, took our compost offsite to other compost sites.

After closing in March, the building had a deep cleaning, something that's hard to do in our normally busy church life. Walls received a fresh coat of paint. The kitchen and appliances received extra love and attention. Carpets and mats and windows and stairwells were deep-cleaned.

In addition to the many maintenance projects, we put capital pledge dollars to work on acquisitions and repairs.

- Early in the year, we replaced or upgraded ten computers.
- Once the pandemic hit and we realized that we would be virtual for a long time, we added a video system to the Sanctuary.
- We subsequently made significant upgrades to our audio capabilities, enabling a more safely distanced live stream, much better sound, and multiple musicians.
- We are pleased to announce that we now have *full* lighting in the Ames Chapel, which means enough light to read words and music at night!

### **Gardening**

Led by Ethel Griggs, our Garden Group worked diligently to provide beautiful landscaping, particularly in the courtyard at Grotto and Portland. The chance to come together on Thursdays (with masks) was a welcome opportunity for outdoor fellowship, and the beauty brightened the days of all who witnessed.

### **Building Tenants**

In the first half of the church year, we had multiple tenants. One Voice Mixed Chorus rented office, rehearsal, and meeting space at Unity Church. Above Every Name continued to worship at Unity on Sunday afternoons. Medley Village Preschool rented space during the school year. Unity also hosted the Minnesota Hungarians who have a language school for their children and hold occasional dinners, dances, and fundraisers at the church. The New Century Club held meetings at Unity, as well as various 12-step groups and other community groups.

Since the building closed in March, One Voice has retained its office space. All other tenants have either moved online or suspended their activities.

### **Emergency Preparedness Team**

Our Emergency Preparedness Team (EPT), assembled in 2015, continued its important work in evaluating and improving the safety and security of our building. We have an Emergency Action Plan that creates procedures and a position of readiness in the event of medical emergencies, fire, weather, loss of power, persons showing inappropriate behavior, demonstrations, suspicious packages, bomb threats, and active shooters. We conducted practice evacuation drills and trained staff, tenants, front desk volunteers and Welcome Team members in situational awareness. Leah Doherty, Rob Fulton, Richard Birger, and staff members Teresa Connor and Barbara Hubbard are on the EPT.

## Literary Ministries

In addition to staffing the Bookstall and offering service in the Whitman Children's Library and Anderson Library on Sunday mornings until the church building closed in March 2020, the Library and Bookstall Team, led by Barb Foss, Janice Gestner, and Shelley Butler organized the 2020 Unity Book Read, and supported The Gathering women's retreat and the St. Paul Sanctuary Coalition book reads. With the help of Madeline Summers, the team was able to hold the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Café Unity: Poetry and Music Salon on Zoom, and sponsor a 15-poet reading from *Rocked by the Waters: Poems of Motherhood* (also on Zoom).

This year, the Cairns staff produced both *Cairns: The Unity Church Journal of the Arts*, Vol. 11 (Reredos Press, 2019) and a free e-book in honor of National Poetry Month, *A Month of Poems Randomly Chosen from 10 Years of Cairns, 2009-2018*.



In its second year, in addition to *Cairns*, Reredos Press published:

- *The Vintage Cookbooks of Unity Church-Unitarian*, a compilation of two cookbooks produced by Unity Church in the late 20<sup>st</sup> century.
- *The Story of Unity Church 1872-1872* Reprint Edition by Elinor Otto.

The committee of researchers and writers is still working to produce the next chapter of Unity Church history from 1970-2021. Led by Kathy Oakley, the new history is scheduled to be published by June 2021.

## **Music Ministry**

Submitted by Ahmed Anzaldúa, Director of Music Ministries

My first year as Director of Music Ministries at Unity Church has certainly been unusual. It began with an extended period of adjustment to find ways to both honor the long musical tradition of this place and chart new paths. It was interrupted abruptly by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before the pandemic, Unity Choir, Unity Singers, Women's Ensemble, Children's Choir, Unity music staff, and a wide variety of guest musicians continued to bring their gifts to our three weekly services, with some sort of choral presence on average three Sundays per month. In addition to our existing choirs, I began to set the foundation for a youth choral program to emerge as a continuation of the Children's Choir after members age out in the coming years and started the Twin Cities chapter of Threshold Choir, singers that sing at people's bedsides. I am grateful to have been able to establish Unity Church as the home base for my choral organization Border CrosSing, creating the potential for future collaborations with Unity's thriving choir program and with the other choral organizations housed in our building, Mila and OneVoice Mixed Chorus. I was also thrilled to hire Laura Potratz as Unity's part-time organist.

The pandemic meant a restructuring of our music staff and all of us learning the skills necessary to produce a live stream service every Sunday. It has meant rethinking worship and worship music so it will translate into a small screen and stumbling through the process as best we can. It has also meant finding ways to keep our large choral community connected with each other and with their ministry when they can't sing together, something that has been possible through weekly Zoom events, virtual choir projects, and daily music messages from the Music Ministry. This work has also helped us connect to the wider UUA community, both through the sharing of our online content and although through joint Zoom events such as online hymn sings in partnership with choirs and music directors from UU congregations from all over the country.

Some musical highlights from the past year include the following:

- The hundredth anniversary of the Christmas Pageant and the successful continuation of other Unity musical programs such as the Holiday Concert (presented for a packed audience, and possibly expanding towards two performances in future years), the Tolling of Bells Service, the Christmas Candlelight Choir, and the Children's Musical.
- Collaborations with world-class musicians from a wide variety of backgrounds and genres, including Ina Yukka, Pat Donahue, Peter Mayer, Rebekah Crisanta de Ybarra, Abebi Stafford, Two-tap Trio, Sprig of That, The Mirandola Ensemble, Dean Billmeyer, Jeffrey Van, and many others

- Continuing Unity's long tradition of contributing to the choral repertoire by commissioning new music by Linda Kachelmeier, Nicolás Gutierrez, Abbie Betinis, and Elizabeth Alexander

I am grateful to be part of a community that so values its music and to be able to build on the work of my predecessor. While the COVID-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of the music ministry, it has also given us the space to find new ways to make music together and a renewed appreciation for what live music brings to worship and to our lives. I am excited to see what comes from the connections and insights gained from this period of forced isolation when we are able to come back to worship and make music in person.

## Ministry with Children and Youth

Submitted by K.P. Hong, Minister of Faith Formation

Over the last decade, the language of “faith formation” has become increasingly important, but often as a reference point to address perceived decline in institutional participation and the rise of the “nones” who claim no religious affiliation. Popular faith formation programs, caught in this conception of loss, have sought to provide programmatic and pragmatic actions to overturn decline and disaffiliation. Yet this focus on loss has narrowed our vision from seeing and grappling with formidable undercurrents shaping our secular worldview, a social imaginary that gives faint heed to transcendence or divine action or practices to integrate the “experience of the holy” into our lives. What is fundamentally at stake is not one of measuring church participation or surveying sociological variables constraining religious life, but ways of *imagining the very possibility of divine action* in our lives. How do we help teachers to deepen attentiveness to their work as the very way of imagining divine action in their own lives and in the lives of children? To see teaching as spiritual practice in service to faith formation?

With teachers organized again into *teaching teams* to journey with each other and with their group of children for the year, the underlying focus continued the project of faith formation for children and teachers alike. Members of the REMT (leadership council for Religious Education) offered opportunities for teaching teams to come together for further training each semester, asking them to explore greater collaboration, take time to reflect and document the learning taking place in their classrooms, and expand their capacity to attend more closely to the work of faith formation. What should teachers be noticing? What is the story of what is occurring in the classroom? How do we go from making *doing* visible, to making *learning* visible, to making the *experience of the holy* visible?

Specifically, several trainings brought generative focus to “foundations of teaching,” with two of our resident wise teachers, Nate Schultz and Jess Goff, inviting teachers to shift from classroom management approaches to ways teachers can anchor their work upon foundational beliefs and aspirations they bring to their classrooms. What foundational beliefs will we focus on to help us grow in our role as teachers? How will we embody those beliefs in the classroom? What experiments might we try in interactions with children to see how these beliefs match our aims?

The work of embedding racial justice and multiculturalism throughout RE continued, with members of the REMT beginning the review of the Rotations curriculum for elementary grades, before the pandemic dramatically altered the course of RE. For the remainder of the spring semester, the mainstay practice of worship, with Story for All Ages in every Sunday worship service, grounded our ministry with children and families. Similar to multiple challenges facing schooling and distance learning during the pandemic, RE families struggled to stay connected and find best practices that worked for them. Going forth, Wednesday chapel services will offer another creative site to engage intergenerationally with our children and families, and the work of migrating each of our RE programs online will continue over summer as we ready for fall/2020. Lesson plans are being adapted for distance learning, classes adjusted for both

synchronous and asynchronous learning, teachers will be trained to facilitate virtual RE classrooms, and greater attention will be given to ways spiritual practices and “church” can be integrated into family life. This considerable undertaking is only made possible through the creative collaboration between RE staff and the deeply dedicated volunteers who are reimagining faith formation for the world today.



## **Ministerial Intern**

Unity Church values its role as a teaching congregation to future ministers. During the Eller-Isaacs' tenure, Unity has had one, and sometimes two, ministerial interns each year since 2002. Each intern has been supervised by Revs. Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs, and each has had a Ministerial Intern Support Team (MIST) made up of members of the church.

As we anticipated the transition of our Senior Co-Ministers in the 2019-2020 church year, we made the decision to not bring in a ministerial intern for this year.

## Pastoral Care

The pastoral care program seeks to serve people in times of need, crisis, transition, grief, and loss. Overseen by Janne Eller-Isaacs, the interns and a team of remarkable pastoral care associates provide a caring ministry of presence for our members and friends.

The heart of the program is best expressed in the Embracing Meditation each Sunday. This essential part of our worship always contains the joys and sorrows of people who are willing to share their tender news with the larger congregation. The Embracing Meditation is read at the weekly staff meeting, the adult service, Children's Chapel and with the preschoolers in spirit play. It is also placed on the pastoral care table in the Parish Hall during coffee hour. There, the entire congregation is invited to send cards of care, concern and congratulations to those listed each week. The congregation has continued to send cards to people lifted up in the Embracing Meditation even during the pandemic, but more informally and based upon established relationships.

There is a large network of support and care available to members and friends in need or in times of transition. The formal structure of the program seeks to ensure quality support and care for all of Unity's community. It begins, of course, with the lay ministry provided by the pastoral care team itself but their work is supported by a group of largely invisible people who add to their visible care by helping out when asked to provide rides or meals.

We begin first with the U-Knitarians who knit comfort shawls throughout the year. The shawls are then finished by shawl coordinator, Carol Miller. She delivers them to the pastoral care meeting where they are blessed by all the members there. Our comfort shawls have been delivered to over 35 folks this year, and the practice of sharing our shawls with non-Unity friends and family continued to be much appreciated. We also continue to share comfort shawls with members of Above Every Name who are living through challenging times in their lives.

The Pastoral Care Team meets monthly throughout the year to receive training, support one another, share ideas and to ensure that everyone in need is served adequately. Monthly meetings often focus on a particular theme or pastoral issue. This past year the team participated in informational meetings or trainings at most of our meetings. The team has continued its work virtually or through cards, phone calls or walks when the weather permitted physically distanced interactions.

We always work to hone our listening skills because they are at the heart of the ministry of presence we seek to provide everyone with whom we come in contact.

This year we invited the congregation once again to volunteer in our Caring Circle. The caring circle seeks to provide one-time services that include things like rides, meal preparation and delivery, childcare, respite care, shopping and errand running and house projects. The Caring Circle is designed to allow for more practical kinds of support to be offered to members and

friends who need things that are offered generously from their fellow congregants. One hundred forty people signed up. This part of the pastoral care program is often invisible and yet it serves many of our folks who are in need of practical support. The services offered by the Caring Circle form an essential piece when we create a team approach for the numerous services that are needed for a particular individual.

The program continues to grow in scope and depth. The gender balance of the caregivers was achieved, with men playing a vital role in the program. We have reinstated the evening program to accommodate the needs of people who work full time but want to participate actively in the pastoral program.

The pastoral care program seeks to respond to the stated needs of the congregation. If you have a pastoral need or an interest in forming a support group, please contact Janne.

Janne Eller-Isaacs and Cynthia Orange continue to co-facilitate a once a month support group for caregivers that has provided a place of mutual support and encouragement for the caretakers who attend. This group continues to grow in numbers and commitment. It continues to include people from other congregations who are in need of the support it offers, when this offering is not available in the congregations they attend. As a response to the burden placed on caregivers during Covid, the group has met twice a month since March and will continue to do so as long as the group finds it useful. With Covid, many caregivers lost access to other supportive resources or respite care, so the group's importance has increased.

The grief group continues as a monthly drop in resource. There is a core of regular attenders who seek to welcome all newcomers so that they feel welcomed and included. Co-facilitated by Janne Eller-Isaacs and Linda Kjerland, an environment of mutual support and understanding is available to anyone walking the journey of grief.

Barbara Hubbard and Janne Eller-Isaacs co-convene a monthly support group for people who have loved ones living with mental health challenges. Since the pandemic hit, the group has been meeting virtually and has been able to include people from beyond our community, a service we are pleased to be able to provide. This group provides a vital sounding board, a place to ask for advice and a place to receive much needed support and acknowledgement of shared struggles that the group provides.

In response to the challenges faced by individuals and the Unity community in the face of the pandemic, we set up a connectors program. This program asked assigned connectors to reach out to people in the church and check in with them on an agreed upon basis. Some of the relationships have been more sustained and successful than others, but the program does continue and will be reevaluated at the end of the pandemic.

Lastly, I would like to close this annual report with great appreciation for the Memorial Service team. Coordinated by Barbara Ford, they seek to provide a calm and lovely reception after memorial services. Barbara recruits bakers who bake cookies that are delivered to the church.

Another group then sets up a lovely reception. Though designed for Unity members they have been especially generous in also getting cookies and bars for services for non-Unity members and friends. Their services came to an end when the pandemic hit, but the staff continues to provide a safe harbor for memorial services when we can.

## Unity Consulting

Unity Consulting is a program of Unity Church whose mission is to liberate and empower the leadership of progressive religious congregations and institutions to awaken compassion, transform lives, and bless the world. We help congregations understand their purpose, the difference they make in people's lives, and then we help them organize to deliver on that promise. Our primary tool is Policy Governance® as we've learned to adapt it for congregations.

Five percent of Unity Consulting's fees go to support Unity Church's operating budget. Unity Consulting also provides some pro-bono services to the denomination through governance consulting with denominational and congregational leaders.

Highlights from this past year's work include:

- Continued Spirit Map development work. Spirit Map, a proprietary product of Unity Church and Unity Consulting, is a tool that helps individuals, groups and institutions explore their spiritual landscape, focus their spiritual practice, grow their spiritual presence, and deepen their spiritual well-being.
  - In close consultation with Theo Jolosky, an expert in inventory marketing who worked on the first iteration of Spirit Map (then called the Transformation Index), we developed a marketing positioning statement and a marketing plan aligned with that statement. We will begin plan implementation in 2021 under the guidance of a Marketing Team.
  - 48 individuals completed the Spirit Map inventory July 2019 through June 2020. The Fall 2019 issue of UU World published an article about Spirit Map which increased sales significantly September through December 2019.
  - Redesigned the Spirit Map report, with help from Unity Church member Klrt Schaper.
  - Bill Etter added additional reliability results to the Spirit Map white paper and began a confirmatory factor analysis investigation.
- Provided consulting services, including on-site retreats and hourly virtual coaching, to 13 congregations over the course of the year (July 2019-June 2020), fewer than last year. Three of the congregations were new clients.
- Continued sales of *The Nested Bowls: The Promise and Practice of Good Governance*, the first in an anticipated series of books on Unity Consulting practices. InSpirit, the UUA Bookstore, carries the book and it is also available on Amazon. Sales have been small but steady.
- \$2,242.86 went to the Unity Church operating budget from Unity Consulting and Spirit Map fees and book royalties July 2019 through June 2020.

## **Worship Life**

The worship life of Unity Church remains the collective practice at the center of our ministry. The ministers and worship associates receive consistently positive feedback as well as occasional constructive criticism. Services were well attended in the period before the pandemic caused us to move worship on-line. It is difficult to gage participation in on-line worship. The worship team has solicited advice from television and theater producers and have altered the liturgy in ways intended to compensate for the loss of physical proximity. Service topics are reflected in extensive programming for adults and children. We continue to bind the services together thematically and use the monthly themes to deepen and inform the Chalice Circles.

While our Senior Co-Ministers led most of the services in the formal church year, additional members of the ministerial team including Lisa Friedman, K.P. Hong, and Karen Hering also led worship. The worship associates continue to be a vital support team for the worship life of the church. Staff and ministers are deeply grateful for their commitment. This past year, more people of color and young adults joined the worship associates team, bringing their stories and experiences into the worship life of the congregation. More attention was given to moving toward multiculturalism in the worship life of the church, including sources for readings, music, and much more.

Wellspring Wednesday worship continues on-line. Over the course of the year, responsibility for the service was transferred to the Religious Education staff with Drew Danielson and Ray Hommeyer taking primary leadership. The service is still framed using the children's chapel Sunday liturgy.

Summer services in July and August continue to be anchored by a strong team of lay preachers, ministers and guests. The musical talents of Unity members and friends also enrich the services. In recognition of need to provide continuity and provide a clear welcome to our many summer guests a member of the Unity Executive Team participates in every summer service.

## Finance and Resource Development

This annual report to the congregation includes highlights and accomplishments of the 2019-2020 church year. Reports in the area of finances/resource development cross two fiscal years because the church's fiscal year is a calendar year. We are including a written overview of the December 31, 2019 financials, the audited statements as prepared by Schechter, Dokken, Kanter CPAs and an update of 2020 finances.

### **Overview of 12/31/19 Audited Financial Statements**

In preparation for the ministerial transition in 2020 and 2021, the Board of Trustees engaged Schechter, Dokken, Kanter CPAs to prepare a full audit of the church's financial position as of December 31, 2019 with comparisons to the prior year. (The last full audit was done in 2010, prior to our *Unity Tomorrow* Capital Campaign.)

The field work was scheduled to begin in April, 2020. With the pandemic, all field work was done remotely and stretched into the summer. The report was presented to our trustees at the August 15, 2020 board meeting and included a "clean" management letter and the full report.

In addition to the financial statements, the report includes important notes about the nature of our business, significant accounting policies, liquidity, pledges, investment income, property and equipment, funds held by others, long term debt, endowment funds and more. Full copies of the December 31, 2019 SDK audit report are available (electronically or in hard copy) upon request.

### **2019 Audit Highlights (see the statements below)**

The **Statements of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)** takes a snapshot of the church's financial position on December 31, 2019 and compares it to December 31, 2018. This statement shows what we own (assets), what we owe (liabilities) and our net value (net assets).

**Assets are divided into "Current" "Property and Equipment" and "Other" assets.**

- **Current assets** are made up of actual cash, pledges that are receivable for 2018 and 2019, and other receivables and deposits as of December 31st, 2019. Total current assets were \$1,866,436 at the end of 2019, an increase of \$156k over 2018.
- **Property and Equipment** includes our land and buildings, equipment and artwork. The total in Property and Equipment as of December 31, 2019 was \$8,275,478. The \$278k drop from 2018 to 2019 was due in large part to depreciation and because we wrote off the value of Erte art that was sold in 2019.
- **Other Assets** include future pledge receivables (2020 and beyond), the actual value of our investments and the value of investments "held by others" for Unity Church. The total in Other Assets at the end of the year was \$2,894,411, an increase of \$514k over

the year. The change was impacted most dramatically by the receipt of a \$700,000 unrestricted bequest from the estate of Helener Currier, \$400k of which was invested.

- **Total Assets as of December 31, 2019 were \$13,036,325, and increase of \$392k from 2018.**

**Liabilities are also divided into “current” and “non-current” liabilities.**

- **Current liabilities** are made up of invoices payable, salaries and benefits payable, sabbatical funds and copier lease payable, and the Western Bank loan principal that’s due in 2020. Current Liabilities at December 31, 2019 were \$209,642, an increase of \$8,700 from 2018.
- **Non-Current liabilities** are made up of future year’s payables including the \$1.2 million owed on our Western Bank loan (beyond 2020), and \$128k that is payable to the Building Endowment for the cash flow loan in 2013. Non-current liabilities dropped by \$463k in 2019, largely due to the additional principal only payments made on our long-term loan.

The maximum allowed annually in principal only payments is 20% of the opening balance of the loan. In 2019, we were able to pay the maximum amount of \$342,641 through individual gifts and bequests, the application of \$225,000 from the Currier bequest and \$37,798 from Capital Pledge receipts.

Since 2017, we have been making debt service payments of \$142,512 annually and we have made additional loan principal payments of \$466,772, leaving a loan balance of \$1,293,993 as of 12/31/2019. We will be renegotiating this debt in 2021.

- **Total Liabilities of \$1,536,910 decreased by \$454k from December 2018 to December 2019.**

**Net Assets are divided into funds “Without Donor Restrictions” and “With Donor Restrictions.”**

- The Without Donor Restrictions category increased in 2019, in part because of the establishment of a Board Designated “Currier Fund for Racial Justice.” The total amount in this category at the end of 2019 was \$6,741,199, and increase of \$605k from 2018.
- The With Donor Restrictions category includes Operating and Capital pledges that will be released (recognized as income) as time proceeds, permanent investments and other funds that are restricted for time or purpose. The December 31, 2019 balance in this category was \$4,758,216, an increase of \$241k from 2018.
- **Total Net Assets were \$11,499,415 at the end of December 2019, an increase of \$846k from December 2018.**



- **Total Liabilities and Net Assets as of December 31, 2019 were \$13,036,325, and increase of \$392k from 2018.**

**The Statements of Activities and Changes in Net Assets** show an increase in total revenue and support of \$680k from 2018 to 2019, an increase in total expenses of \$58k between the two years, and total change in net assets from 2019 to 2019 of \$622k.

**The Statements of Cash Flows** compare cash, cash equivalents and restricted cash at the end of 2018 and 2019. The change from 2018 to 2019 was in increase of \$15,656.

**The Statements of Functional Expenses** compare program, management and general, and fundraising expenses for 2018 and 2019. The totals in all three categories increased by \$58k from 2018 to 2019, while the percentage of expense in each category remained consistent.

### **Other Notes / Highlights from 2019**

#### **Unity Tomorrow Capital Campaign / Long Term Debt**

We have been enjoying our newly renovated building since the Unity Tomorrow capital project was completed in 2012. Through the generous contributions of Unity Church members and friends, we were able to modernize our infrastructure, upgrade the kitchen, add restrooms and create a beautiful and welcoming main entrance.

In November of 2011, the congregation voted to move forward with the Unity Tomorrow capital project with the goal of attaining \$8 million in pledges. At a special meeting of the congregation in April, 2012 a resolution was passed that the “debt in the project be limited to the cost of short-term construction financing and long term financing such that scheduled repayments shall not exceed more than 10% of the annual operating budget of the church, and authorize such encumbrances as are necessary to secure such financing and such liens as are customary industry practice.”

The Unity Tomorrow project cost \$8 million. Total Unity Tomorrow commitments from 2011 – 2016 were \$6,874,342 and by the end of December, 2016 we had collected \$6,653,734 or 96.8% of the amount promised.

After paying principal and interest on the short term construction loan for 4.5 years, we converted the remaining \$1,950,000 to a long term note on January 1, 2017. This is a five year note with Western Bank based on a 20 year amortization schedule. Interest is fixed at 4.0% and debt service payments are \$142,512 per year from 2017-2021. Our capital pledges are adequate to cover this debt service without impact to programming.

In addition to debt service payments, we are allowed to pre-pay up to 20% of the principal balance each year without penalty. Since 2017, we have made additional loan principal payments of \$466,772, leaving a loan balance of \$1,293,993 as of 12/31/2019.

These payments were made possible through individual gifts for this purpose and through the application of unrestricted bequests.

We will need to refinance the note at the end of five years (2021) with either the current or another financial institution, without prepayment penalty. Making additional principal-only payments (in addition to the regularly scheduled debt service) before refinancing creates more favorable options. At that time, the factors in play will be the remaining principal balance, interest rates, and our tolerance for debt, which will determine the number of years over which to amortize the loan.

### **Legacy Giving**

The Heritage Society is made up of members and friends who have remembered Unity Church in their estate plans. These legacy gifts ensure the future of the church. Even though we weren't able to hold our annual Heritage Society event in May of 2020, we welcomed four additional people into Unity Church's Heritage Society in 2019-2020, joining over 200 others who have committed to supporting the church into the future.

We received generous gifts from the estates of Hazel Dicken, Jane Bose, Helener Currier and Eva Cross in the past year.

### **2020 Financial Update**

The congregation approved the 2020 Operating and Capital budgets at the November 16, 2019 Annual Meeting. On February 1, 2020 we were only \$30k from our 2020 year-end pledge goal of \$1,350,000. Worship, programs, and operations were in full swing; and then in March, the Coronavirus pandemic hit. We closed the building on March 14 and began the challenging and creative process of becoming a virtual church. So, what's happened to the 2020 approved Operating and Capital budgets?

#### **2020 Operating Budget:**

None of us could predict the length or breadth of this pandemic, which is still very real at the writing of this report. When the Federal government offered the Payment Protection Plan (PPP) to qualifying non-profits in April, Unity Church applied for and was awarded a \$224,000 loan. The amount of the loan was awarded to cover salaries, taxes and benefits for an 8 week period of time and allowed us to pay all staff at budgeted levels into the summer, even though the building was closed. We are in the process of applying for full forgiveness of the PPP loan, which we are assured will happen.

Staff members have been provided the means to work from home and where possible, duties have been reassigned to allow for meaningful work. A few staff are coming to the church as

necessary to live stream worship services, do program and financial work and care for our facility. Given the severely reduced building activity, we downsized our facilities staff in July, going from 160 to 76 hours per week.

Our operating income was greatly enhanced by the PPP loan proceeds, offsetting the significant drop in building and program income. Our Spring Fundraiser that was scheduled for March 21<sup>st</sup> was abruptly cancelled. Investment income, which comes primarily from perpetual trusts held outside of the church, has held to budget. Our own investments saw a big drop in the first quarter of 2020, and have recovered since.

Pledge payments have held. Offering income and unrestricted special gifts have actually increased beyond what was budgeted as people have responded generously to our commitment to our partner organizations and out of appreciation for the church's online ministry during this challenging time.

Salaries, taxes and benefits are the largest expense category in our 2020 budget. Janne and Rob Eller-Isaacs agreed to stay for another full year. We deferred the arrival of an interim minister into 2021. Bill Lowell retired in May and Lisa Friedman left Unity in June, requiring hiring and adjusting to fill those positions. It's safe to say that all staff positions have been impacted and retooled in 2020. We are paying salaries at budgeted levels through the end of the year. All other expense line items are affected in some way by the closure of the building and our online ministries.

In spite of all of the surprises and creative responses, 2020 forecasts show a balanced Operating budget at year-end.

### **2020 Capital Budget:**

We were able to continue with Capital projects during this unusual time because construction companies were able to continue working. We installed a new video system in the Sanctuary for live streaming, made significant upgrades to our audio capacities and finished the upgrades to lighting in the Ames Chapel. Improvements to our HVAC system allow us to provide more ventilation and better control. We added two pew cut outs in the Sanctuary to accommodate people with mobility needs. In the fall of 2020, we are getting our leaky roof fixed.

We are hearing from members and friends how important our online presence is during this time of fear and uncertainty. Thank you to each of you who continue to support the church by paying your pledges, by supporting our offering recipients, by making special gifts and by staying connected!

**Financial Statements of:  
Unity Church of St. Paul**

**Years ended  
December 31, 2019 and 2018**



**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

**STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
DECEMBER 31**

	2019	2018 (Reviewed)	2019	2018 (Reviewed)
<b>Assets:</b>				
Current assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 542,136	\$ 462,772		
Pledges receivable:				
Current portion:				
Operating pledges, net	1,080,981	1,046,423		
Capital pledges, net	173,996	167,617		
Other receivables	53,749	22,651		
Prepaid expenses	15,574	10,579		
Total current assets	<u>1,866,436</u>	<u>1,710,042</u>		
Property and equipment:				
Land and land improvements	195,011	195,011		
Buildings and building improvements	11,583,086	11,559,720		
Equipment	1,137,542	1,168,123		
Artwork	23,300	61,300		
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>12,938,939</u>	<u>12,984,154</u>		
	4,663,461	4,430,576		
Other assets:				
Cash restricted for long-term purposes	8,275,478	8,553,578		
Operating pledges, long-term		63,708		
Capital pledges, long-term	518,677	674,398		
Investments	111,816	120,215		
St. Paul Foundation holdings	1,656,548	966,840		
Beneficial interest in perpetual trust	137,856	125,740		
	469,514	429,715		
Total assets	<u>2,894,411</u>	<u>2,380,616</u>		
	<u>\$ 13,036,325</u>	<u>\$ 12,644,236</u>		
<b>Liabilities and net assets:</b>				
Current liabilities:				
Accounts payable	\$ 27,624	\$ 23,073		
Accrued expenses	88,411	95,718		
Security Deposits	1,875	-		
Current portion:				
Long-term debt	91,732	74,803		
Copier lease payable	-	7,359		
Total current liabilities	<u>209,642</u>	<u>200,953</u>		
Copier lease payable, net of current portion				
	-	3,217		
Long-term debt, net of current portion	1,199,366	1,634,057		
Loan from donor restricted fund	127,902	152,530		
Total liabilities	<u>1,536,910</u>	<u>1,990,757</u>		
Net assets:				
Without donor restrictions:				
Undesignated	6,516,199	6,135,774		
Board-designated for racial justice	225,000	-		
Total without donor restrictions	<u>6,741,199</u>	<u>6,135,774</u>		
With donor restrictions	4,758,216	4,517,705		
Total net assets	<u>11,499,415</u>	<u>10,653,479</u>		
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 13,036,325</u>	<u>\$ 12,644,236</u>		

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31

	2019		2018 (Reviewed)			
	Without donor restrictions	With donor restrictions	Total	Without donor restrictions	With donor restrictions	Total
Support and revenue:						
Pledges and gifts	\$ 907,535	\$ 1,713,568	\$ 2,621,103	\$ 195,634	\$ 2,141,523	\$ 2,337,157
Sunday collections	34,807	135,551	170,358	31,328	133,761	165,089
Program fees	66,808		66,808	73,518		73,518
Investment income (loss)	35,411	260,354	295,765	22,107	(51,946)	(29,839)
Change in value of:						
St. Paul Foundation holdings		12,116	12,116		(12,577)	(12,577)
Diether perpetual trust		39,799	39,799		(50,953)	(50,953)
Rental Income	55,857		55,857	46,911		46,911
Unity consulting income	59,044		59,044	62,343		62,343
Miscellaneous income	20,898		20,898	40,703		40,703
In-kind contributions	-		-	28,702		28,702
Net assets released from restrictions	1,920,877	(1,920,877)	-	1,889,188	(1,889,188)	-
Total revenues and support	3,101,237	240,511	3,341,748	2,390,434	270,620	2,661,054
Expenses:						
Program	2,030,378		2,030,378	2,009,547		2,009,547
Management and general	352,264		352,264	331,266		331,266
Fundraising	113,170		113,170	96,724		96,724
Total expenses	2,495,812		2,495,812	2,437,537		2,437,537
Change in net assets	605,425	240,511	845,936	(47,103)	270,620	223,517
Net assets, beginning	6,135,774	4,517,705	10,653,479	6,182,877	4,247,085	10,429,962
Net assets, ending	\$ 6,741,199	\$ 4,758,216	\$ 11,499,415	\$ 6,135,774	\$ 4,517,705	\$ 10,653,479

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

**STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS  
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31**

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u> (Reviewed)
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Change in net assets	\$ 845,936	\$ 223,517
Adjustments to reconcile changes in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	262,422	257,215
Accretion of financing costs	1,568	1,448
Donated investments	(45,906)	(17,684)
Loss on sale of property	35,117	18,330
Donor contributions restricted into perpetuity	44,984	79,737
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	(205,822)	127,594
Change in value of:		
St. Paul Foundation holdings	(12,116)	12,577
Beneficial interest in perpetual trust	(39,799)	50,953
Decrease (increase) in assets:		
Pledges receivable	123,183	(202,955)
Other receivables	(31,098)	13,473
Prepaid expenses	(4,995)	(1,162)
Increase (decrease) in liabilities:		
Accounts payable	4,551	(2,684)
Accrued expenses	(7,307)	(5,121)
Security Deposits	1,875	-
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<u>972,593</u>	<u>555,238</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of:		
Property and equipment	(25,984)	(145,435)
Investments	(503,626)	(89,851)
Proceeds from:		
Investments	65,646	17,699
Sale of property	6,545	1,670
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<u>(457,419)</u>	<u>(215,917)</u>

**UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**
**STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS  
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31**

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u> (Reviewed)
Cash flows from financing activities:		
Payments on:		
Loan from donor restricted fund	\$ (24,628)	\$ (22,387)
Long term debt	(419,330)	(126,607)
Capital lease obligation	(10,576)	(6,876)
Donor contributions restricted into perpetuity	<u>(44,984)</u>	<u>(79,737)</u>
Net cash used in financing activities	<u>(499,518)</u>	<u>(235,607)</u>
Net increase in cash	15,656	103,714
Cash, cash equivalents and restricted cash, Beginning	<u>526,480</u>	<u>422,766</u>
Cash, cash equivalents and restricted cash, Ending	<u>\$ 542,136</u>	<u>\$ 526,480</u>
Reconciliation to statements of financial position:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 542,136	\$ 462,772
Cash restricted for long-term purposes	<u>-</u>	<u>63,708</u>
	<u>\$ 542,136</u>	<u>\$ 526,480</u>
Supplemental disclosure of cash flow information:		
Cash paid for interest	<u>\$ 69,451</u>	<u>\$ 75,565</u>



STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES  
YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31

UNITY CHURCH OF ST. PAUL

	2019				2018 (Reviewed)			
	Management and		Fundraising	Total	Management and		Fundraising	Total
	Program	general			Program	general		
Salaries	654,838	193,284	63,165	911,287	645,447	156,634	62,107	864,188
Payroll taxes and benefits	154,236	42,162	12,283	208,681	176,740	42,751	17,054	236,545
Total salaries and related expenses	809,074	235,446	75,448	1,119,968	822,187	199,385	79,161	1,100,733
Program expenses	518,685	4,210	30,143	553,038	490,198	2,486	9,094	501,778
Interest	66,251	2,534	546	69,331	73,592	2,815	606	77,013
Other professional fees	95,436	17,142	450	113,028	62,223	57,755	-	119,978
Utilities	66,256	2,360	508	69,124	62,224	2,007	483	64,714
Unity consulting fees	47,929	-	-	47,929	52,371	-	-	52,371
Dues and subscriptions	61,174	46	22	61,242	55,444	60	15	55,519
Professional development	7,430	4,482	1,657	13,569	23,783	3,986	2,797	30,566
Repairs and maintenance	36,008	1,106	238	37,352	51,944	1,361	327	53,632
Supplies	26,450	11,464	1,161	39,075	24,070	8,559	1,155	33,784
Insurance	25,079	959	207	26,245	25,021	874	210	26,105
Bank fees	-	16,576	-	16,576	-	17,265	-	17,265
Telephone and communication	10,679	1,786	596	13,061	10,909	1,926	642	13,477
Office equipment	-	9,240	-	9,240	-	5,556	-	5,556
Property tax assessments	9,379	96	20	9,495	9,399	82	20	9,501
Total expenses before depreciation and loss on sale of equipment	1,779,830	307,447	110,996	2,198,273	1,763,365	304,117	94,510	2,161,992
Depreciation	250,548	9,700	2,174	262,422	246,182	8,819	2,214	257,215
Loss on sale of equipment	-	35,117	-	35,117	-	18,330	-	18,330
Total expenses	2,030,378	352,264	113,170	2,495,812	2,009,547	331,266	96,724	2,437,537
Percentage of total expenses	81%	14%	5%	100%	82%	14%	4%	100%