

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

This year has been a real challenge in so many ways, and yet our beloved congregation ZOOMed our way through business meetings, small groups, Soul Matters, book clubs, exercise, quilting, and we were able to minister to each other; just not face to face.

Our second year with Rev.Cathy was even more fruitful than our first. Her Transition Team, along with the Ministerial Search Team, have brought us to a most promising position. Her Friday night Vespers were often a spiritual experience, and became very important to many of our congregants. Classes on antiracism, leadership, book study, and more kept her busy, and she never lost sight of her purpose - to prepare us as a Congregation for our new settled minister. What a wonderful teacher and guide for us!

We are happy to now have that settled minister, Alex Jensen, who will join us in August. The promise of this bright, young man will, I'm sure, guide us into changes that will stretch us all. Onward and Upward!

Our Vocal Ensemble has continued to offer us wonderful, albeit virtual, music to add to the beauty and joy of many of our Sunday services. Our fabulous Music Director, Renee Russell, has led the singers through weekly rehearsals and used her excellent website, Renee Russell Studio.org, as a firm base for the VE to continue growing as singers. This is in addition to her computer skills in bringing to the services such lovely images with the music.

Children and Youth RE Director, Betsy Hammerberg, due to Zoom limitations, has switched to 'techy' of the year, while coordinating our Zoom Sunday Services. Betsy's story time has many fans, both young and old, and her work with our children will start up again soon.

Adult RE Director, Alison Ernst, has partnered with Rev.Cathy for many offerings; writing classes, antiracist studies, studying Unitarian principles, leadership classes, plus writing classes on her own. We are so grateful to have her teaching us in so many ways.

New this year is our Office Administrator, Guy Molnar. Guy also covers Accounting, as health problems forced Glenda Corning to retire. Guy has done so well, while fighting some health problems of his own. Everything is new to him, and pretty much done on computer, not face to face, which has made it a challenging, lonely job for him. Susan was a hard act to follow, but Guy is doing a fine job of juggling all his responsibilities.

Our Board of Trustees has met once a month this year, with a second Discernment meeting, as needed. We have published a monthly informational column in the Beacon, prepared some Bylaw changes to be voted on at the Annual Meeting, begun plans to re-open with the recommendations of the Re-Opening Task Force, established a Ministerial Discretionary Fund, adopted Program Council and Outreach Policies, tightened up the website for our new minister, and begun work on streaming our services.

Our congregational Committees are meeting virtually. We are so grateful for the continued work of the Sunday Services Committee arranging services to sooth, challenge, support, guide, and educate, through Rev.Cathy's sermons and lay-led services. Some committees have had a rather quiet year, while others have continued to reach out to our community; when volunteers and financial support were offered; Safe Harbor, Tuesday lunches, Social Justice, Community Needs. Program Council has provided a way for various committees to keep in touch with each other and the Board.

We have made it through another challenging year. It now feels to me that we are well on our way to move forward with Alex Jensen, our antiracist work, our Outreach programs, our small group friends, and the re-opening we have been hoping for. I feel the energy building in our Congregation, and look forward to these New Beginnings.

July will bring you a different Board and a different President. It has been a distinct growth period for me, as well as most of us. We are a congregation based in love, equality and justice, and this coming year should renew our spirit, keep us growing, and encourage us to move forward. As Mary Oliver wrote, ...open your life, open your hands.

