

A Report on Our Ministry in 2021

Committee on Ministry

Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces

December 11, 2021

Our mission: To gather to inspire spiritual growth, care for each other and our community, seek truth, and work for justice in the world.

A Report on Our Ministry in 2021

Each year the Committee on Ministry (CoM) of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces (UUCLC) presents to the congregation a report on the strength of the church's ministry over the past twelve months. Each report summarizes evaluative data obtained during the year, draws implications, and presents recommendations about the church's ministry for church leadership and the membership at large. These reports respond directly to the charge given to the CoM in the By-laws: to "help strengthen the overall quality of the ministry of the Society."

This report presents the CoM's findings regarding the state of the ministry of the UUCLC in 2021. It makes comparisons with the findings from 2020, arrives at conclusions, and makes recommendations for a strong ministry in 2022.

Methodology

Note: In this report we use the term "ministry teams" to refer to those groups under the direction of the minister (such as Caring, Facilities, and Hospitality) and to distinguish them from those Committees that are defined in the By-laws to be directed by the Board (Finance and Stewardship) or the Congregation (Leadership Development, CoM, and Ministerial Search).

Information reflected in the CoM annual reports can have several sources: end-of-year reports from ministry teams, committees, the Board of Trustees (BoT), the Minister and staff; and other timely evaluations, such as surveys, conducted as necessary by the CoM during the year.

In 2021, the CoM conducted a brief online survey using Google Forms to examine the experiences of church members and friends during COVID. The survey, conducted in the spring, did not attempt a wide-ranging investigation of congregational opinions and concerns; it asked only two questions:

- How did the COVID pandemic affect the ministry of the UUCLC?
- What are three things you learned from the church's response to the pandemic that can positively affect our ministry in the future?

Responses were subjected to a thematic analysis.

Also, in the fall of this year, the CoM solicited written reports from all ministry teams and standing committees, from the BoT, and from the minister and staff as to their goals, actions, and outcomes during the year. The CoM asked that the reports include the following information:

- The mission of the committee, ministry team, or staff member
- Goals for 2021 and how they supported that mission
- Activities in 2021 and how they supported those goals
- Successes and how they were measured
- Problem areas
- Goals for 2022.

Additionally, the CoM sought input from several task forces.

Obtaining an accurate list of the active committees, ministry teams, and chairpersons was not simple, and several were omitted from the original solicitation for end-of-year reports. The CoM is grateful to those groups who responded quickly, despite time pressures, when this error was discovered.

Both Membership and Stewardship are currently without a chairperson. Reports were not created for those committees. Aesthetics is inactive. No report was submitted for one ministry team, the Roundtable.

The CoM received the following reports:

- BoT
- Committees and Ministry Teams
 - Caring
 - CoM
 - CUUPs
 - Facilities
 - Finance
 - Gallery
 - Hospitality
 - Leadership Development
 - Library
 - Social Justice
 - Sunday Services
- Task Forces
 - 8th Principle Project Team
 - Safe Opening
 - Fall Auction
- Staff
 - Minister
 - Office Administrator
 - Director of Music
 - Director of Religious Education

Responses and reports were analyzed to discern common themes. Where possible, the CoM compared activity reported in 2021 to that reported in 2020.

The full reports of the survey, the BoT, all responding ministry teams and committees, the task forces, and the minister and staff are appended to this report.

Pandemic Survey

The online survey conducted by the CoM yielded 69 of a possible 199 responses, for a response rate of 35%, which may not reflect the opinions of a majority of the church membership.

Those who did respond generally agreed that face-to-face relationships suffered during the time of enforced isolation, but they accepted the changes necessary to keep everyone safe. They were pleased to learn that the church could continue to function in a crisis, and appreciated the efforts of the minister, staff, and members in adapting to change so quickly and well by turning to Zoom for uninterrupted worship services.

Respondents recognized that Zoomed services broadened our community to include other congregations and attendees in other locations. While they do not want to depend entirely on Zoom technology for services and activities, they saw the advantages of continuing to use it to reach a wider audience, even after the church reopens, and to enjoy guest speakers in other locations, who bring new viewpoints and enrich understanding.

Some respondents expressed concern about interrupted ministry team functions during the pandemic and wished for improved church communications.

The CoM recognized the importance to members of being together and recommended the resumption of in-person activities when feasible, according to Safe Opening guidelines, while transitioning to a hybrid model of service and activity delivery that facilitates attendance by guest speakers and others unable to be physically present. The CoM also recommended recognizing the minister, staff, and members who worked especially hard to keep the church functioning despite COVID restrictions. The CoM suggested further study about effective communications and committee and ministry team functions.

End-of-Year Reports

Although the COVID pandemic has extended far into 2021, the sudden demands and steep learning curves that characterized our 2020 operations have eased somewhat, and the BoT, staff, committees, and ministry teams have worked hard to function smoothly, despite continuing pandemic restrictions. These unusual circumstances have forced everyone to continue to be patient, flexible, and creative, and to adapt to frequently changing circumstances. Many plans and activities that were put on hold in 2020 remain on hold in 2021, but the work that keeps the church going has been largely successful. The CoM salutes and thanks those hardworking people who have brought about these successes.

Successes in 2021

The ministry achievements singled out below are examples of the UUCLC at its best.

- **Uninterrupted Operation During the Pandemic**
UUCLC has continued its ministry without interruption, a significant achievement. Our doors have been open for worship every Sunday, virtually at first and actually after September 5. The pulpit has been shared by Rev. Kacela, a series of guest ministers, and members of the congregation, who presented meaningful and thought-provoking messages. Sunday Service members have served unstintingly as Service Associates and leaders. Every service has been enhanced by either live or recorded music, thanks to the

efforts of the Director of Music and the Choir. Increased technical expertise of the staff has helped make the services smoother. The congregation has fully adapted to the necessity of Zoomchurch and Zoommeetings; while not as satisfying as in-person interaction, being together online is no longer perceived as unusual and often seen as convenient.

Many other church functions have continued regularly, largely online, organized, scheduled, and publicized by the Office Administrator. The CoM is grateful for her efforts to keep the congregation connected through production of *The Light*, Week-at-a-Glance, and announcement emails.

- **Safe Reopening and Transition to Hybrid Services**

Thanks to the efforts of the Safe Opening task force, UUCLC opened its doors again for in-person worship services in September, while continuing to Zoom worship services for those unable to attend in person. The Safe Opening task force studied information from the CDC, NM Department of Health, local public health officials, and emerging information about the COVID virus to arrive at a series of safety guidelines that would minimize health risks and enhance members' sense of safety and security. Among other recommendations, the task force mandated masking indoors at the church and recommended that attendees be fully vaccinated.

The congregation has accepted and carefully complies with the guidelines, which include careful spacing of seating and limiting all singing to the masked Choir. The Hospitality ministry team has developed an outdoor coffee hour procedure that allows the congregation to enjoy safely the face-to-face interactions they have missed so sorely. The Gallery has transitioned from virtual exhibitions back to in-person exhibitions, with safety measures in place.

- **Adoption of the 8th Principle**

Beginning in 2018 with workshops and Adult RE discussions, a dedicated group of members led the congregation through a series of worship services, Roundtables, in-person and virtual casita meetings, learning programs, and workshops, all leading to the unanimous vote of the membership to become one of the first 100 UU congregations to adopt the 8th Principle:

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

The CoM and the congregation are grateful for the continuing hard work of the 8th Principle Project Team and the Multicultural Awareness Group.

- **Successful Auctions**

The COVID pandemic created serious challenges for the annual auction, historically the church's most lucrative fundraiser and an essential component of the annual budget. Once again, the church showed its adaptability and managed to work around the difficulties by reimagining the event.

The church's first virtual auction of donated items, in the spring of 2021, raised nearly \$9000 towards the 2021 annual budget, from bidders both inside and outside the church community. The Office Administrator managed and implemented the auction, which was smoothly conducted through Mesilla Valley Estate Sales. Following the safe reopening, the Finance committee coordinated the Fall Auction of Events and Services, a well-attended outdoor event that included breakfast and entertainment, and raised \$8,822 towards the 2021 annual budget. Together, the two auctions yielded a sum approximately equivalent to that raised at in-person auctions in prepandemic years.

- **Balanced Budget**

With the help of the two auction events, \$44,944.65 in federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funding, and a \$15,000 New Mexico Cares grant, the Finance committee managed to maintain a balanced budget despite several unforeseen expenses and the loss of several contributing church members.

- **Renovation of Sanctuary**

The COVID closure provided the opportunity to perform a much-needed renovation of the church sanctuary. The project, estimated at \$50,000, was managed by the Facilities ministry team, and included the removal of old carpet and asbestos tiling and the necessary asbestos abatement. It also included installation of new flooring, replacement of windows, improvement of audio and video systems, and building of raised platforms for the Choir and for video. The sanctuary is now a brighter, quieter, more functional space.

- **Growth of Religious Education Program**

The COVID pandemic that limited in-person activity for much of the year did not deter the RE Director, RE teachers, or the youth themselves from continuing to be involved in various RE activities and to make meaningful contributions to worship services. The program has doubled the number of enrolled students, who are building friendships and increasingly paying attention to the teachings of RE, both inside and outside the church.

- **Continued Social Justice Generosity**

In addition to supporting the 8th Principle effort, church members made significant contributions to social justice initiatives such as Tents to Rents and to the four Change for Change recipients. The Social Justice ministry team also sponsored the creation and stocking of a Little Free Pantry to help those in our community who struggle with food insecurity.

The church saw other achievements in addition to the major successes mentioned above. Small and large, these efforts support our mission and strengthen our community.

- Visitors are frequent at worship services, for which Reverend Kacela continues to receive positive feedback.
- Seven people have signed the Membership Book so far in 2021.
- The Leadership Development committee found nominees for seven of eight open BoT or committee positions, and educated nominees in the responsibilities of those positions.
- Members continue to live UU values by supporting social justice programs such as litter pickup and the activities of the Animal Advocates subgroup.
- More committees and ministry teams than in 2020 are finding connections between their own mission statements and that of the church, so that the work of the UUCLC can be more focused and coordinated to serve common purposes.
- More committees and ministry teams than in 2020 have set mission-related goals for the coming year and have plans to work to achieve them, a sign that they are becoming more intentional and focused in their work.
- CUUPs continued regular monthly meetings, virtually by Zoom and in person after September.
- To facilitate decision making, reduce conflict, and educate the congregation about church structure and function, the CoM developed a new [UUCLC organizational chart](#) illustrating policy governance and the church structure called for in our By-laws.
- The Sunday Service ministry team provided Service Associates for an astounding 51 services, led 7 services, and collaborated on nearly 20 more.
- Choir members stepped in to continue music at worship services during the sabbatical of the Director of Music.
- Members and friends enjoyed a cookie delivery, coordinated by the Caring, Membership, and Hospitality teams.
- Members attended several useful training sessions conducted by the minister, and the BoT participated in leadership training.
- The BoT and several ministry teams received regular and timely financial information from the cohesive and collaborative Finance committee.
- RE students became more aware of the value of RE teachings and connections.
- The Caring team developed an informational brochure to increase awareness of the kinds of help that are available through the church.
- The church database is current and accurate, thanks to the greater proficiency of the Office Administrator, who worked hard to help the church stay connected with its members.
- The Gallery has booked exhibitions through December of 2022.

Challenges in 2021

The noteworthy achievements outlined above do not mean the church ministry has been without challenges this year. The reports received by the CoM indicate that COVID continues to compromise certain aspects of our operations, particularly leadership training, hospitality functions, facilities improvements, and worship. Our sense of close community has been disrupted. The reports indicate that the church also faces challenges unrelated to the pandemic. Additionally, several problems that were noted in 2020 remain unsolved in 2021. The issues noted below are of concern.

- **Lack of Volunteers**

In 2020, four committees reported that they did not have enough volunteers to manage the time or tasks before them. In 2021, along with the BoT, five committees or teams stressed this difficulty: Finance, Leadership Development, Hospitality, Sunday Services, and RE. Additionally, two critical groups—Stewardship and Membership—remain unstaffed, with no chairperson and few members. It appears as if paid staff members are shouldering extra work for which members have volunteered in the past.

- **Lack of Financial Support**

As of this writing, budget estimates for 2022 are necessitating uncomfortable discussions and difficult decisions about trimming church operations and ministerial hours in the coming year. Rev. Kacela has attempted to inspire more contribution with his excellent three-part workshop on Time, Talent, and Treasure, but only 13 people attended.

- **Confusion about Organization**

Conflicts have arisen from confusion about lines of authority and responsibility, indicating a persistent misunderstanding about how the church functions under policy governance. Policy governance as reflected in our By-laws indicates that the BoT is responsible for developing and guiding policies, and the minister is responsible for guiding church operations and ministries that adhere to those policies.

However, members, including some on the BoT, often do not understand who makes which decisions, and they default to the BoT. For example, the Facilities report states that the team takes direction from the BoT as well as the minister, but it is the minister who has responsibility for managing ministry teams. The BoT mistakenly empowered the Facilities team, not the minister, to manage the sanctuary renovation. Further, the BoT does not appear to understand that the three Congregational Committees (Leadership Development, Ministerial Search, and CoM) are independent of the BoT and answer to the congregation.

An additional effect of not understanding the church organization is that when members do not know whom to approach regarding a given decision, they often act independently to solve perceived problems. The result is self-appointed groups of problem solvers who are responsible to no one but claim authority in certain areas.

- **Strained Relationships**

Several reports indicated that relationships are strained in some sectors of the church community, affecting particularly, but not only, the Facilities team, the BoT, and the minister. The church's Covenant of Right Relations is not always being followed, as when decisions about the sanctuary renovation were made without inviting input from the minister.

- **Poor Coordination**

When the church adopted By-laws that structured the church on a policy governance model, the Church Council ceased to exist, and with it, the functions of committee coordination, cooperation, collaboration, and especially communication. Both in 2020 and in 2021, reports from several committees and teams, especially Hospitality and CoM, note this lack and cite resulting operational difficulties.

- **Inadequate Communication**

Perhaps related to the lack of committee and team coordination, church communications have proved difficult in 2021, as they did in 2020. Communications from the church office to the wider congregation are thorough, but communications among church entities (committees, ministry teams, the BoT, the congregation) are often missing, problematic, and not deemed necessary. The result is confusion and conflict.

Hospitality, Caring, Finance, CoM, Social Justice, and the BoT have all noted this issue.

- **Lack of Responsiveness**

Reports from the CoM, the Finance committee, and the Facilities team cited a lack of responsiveness and cooperation from the BoT, the administrative staff, or the minister. Information and decisions were not always forthcoming in a timely manner.

- **Uncommunicated Goals**

Ministry priorities for 2021 were not communicated to the congregation or to the committees and teams, making it difficult for them to plan work related to common purpose.

Conclusions

In 2021, the very real successes of the UUCLC must be qualified by some very real concerns.

- **Declining Commitment**

Success in 2021 has not always translated into ongoing commitment from the membership in terms of contributing its time, talent, and treasure. There appears to be a reluctance to share the serious responsibilities of belonging to a church community. The many benefits of membership in our church do not come about by magic. The CoM

reminds members that they have a duty to contribute reasonable amounts of their resources to support the ministry of their church.

- **Forgotten Covenant of Right Relations**

The CoM also sees a loosening of commitment to the church's Covenant of Right Relations. Members are not always demonstrating respect in their intentions or interactions, and this has created discontent, anger, hurt feelings and at times a toxic environment, all of which have no place in our church.

- **Lack of Coordinated Common Purpose**

Although more committees and ministry teams are setting goals, those goals do not always serve any articulated common purpose. This is not surprising as information about annual church goals has not been publicized by the BoT. There is no vehicle for communication among the committees and teams, contributing to a lack of coordinated action and synergy. When we are not directing our efforts towards a common purpose, the work of the UUCLC is far less effective than it might be.

- **Misunderstanding of Lines of Responsibility**

The CoM observes that most members do not comprehend the significant differences in church governance resulting from the By-laws change to support policy governance. The UUCLC retains a strong cultural tradition of having the BoT control most church operations and decisions, as if UUCLC were still a small fellowship. As stated earlier, under policy governance, the BoT is responsible for developing and guiding policies, and the minister is responsible for guiding church operations and ministries that adhere to those policies. However, there is widespread unawareness of where lines of responsibility and authority lie. Some teams appear to be operating independently, without awareness that they represent ministries of the church and thus operate at the minister's direction. Other groups seem to be operating with no direction at all.

Recommendations

The CoM makes the following recommendations to the membership of the UUCLC.

- The CoM recommends developing a robust, multiyear strategic plan that focuses on rebuilding the commitment of members to the UUCLC. Such a plan should include a growth strategy that helps new members find their place in the church and educates them about the responsibilities of membership, expected participation, and financial support. The plan should also include ways for existing members to reexamine their response to those responsibilities and to recommit to the church and look to its future.
- The CoM strongly recommends that the church renew its Covenant of Right Relations through a series of church services and workshops to remind members of how right relations are manifest. If strained relationships persist, the CoM recommends investing in a consultant to lead us back to right relations.

- To reduce conflict and increase understanding about the workings of the UUCLC, the CoM recommends that information about the structure of the church be publicized through a Roundtable presentation and workshop to explain the concept of policy governance and to clarify the lines of responsibility within the church.
- When goals for the coming year are set forth for the church by the BoT and the minister, the CoM recommends that they be prominently publicized—from the pulpit, in print, and in meetings—so that each committee, ministry team, and church member can find ways to work towards and support them. The CoM repeats this recommendation from its 2020 report.
- The CoM recommends the reestablishment of a strong Membership ministry team to help the church grow its membership through recruitment and retention activities in collaboration with other ministry teams and with the Stewardship and Leadership Development committees.
- In the interest of furthering common purpose, the CoM recommends the rapid development of a vehicle for ministry team coordination and communication, under the in-person management of the minister, so that team representatives can come together in a body to discuss their plans and collaborate on ways to further church goals.
- To help develop commitments to the church, the CoM recommends that the church consider expanding stewardship education into a year-round process that puts more focus on all elements of good stewardship, not just the pledge drive. For example, members should be encouraged to reevaluate what they have to offer in terms of time, talent, and treasure as their own resources, circumstances, and limitations change over time. The CoM repeats this recommendation from its 2020 report.
- The CoM recommends that information about current committee and ministry team needs and about the state of church finances be publicized prominently and often. Members may not know what kinds of help are needed, and they may not understand what financial resources are necessary to keep the church functioning. Members cannot be expected to volunteer or pledge in an information vacuum.

Appendix: Reports from Committees, Ministry Teams, and Task Forces

- [Pandemic Survey Report](#)
- [Board of Trustees](#)
- Committees and Lay Ministry Teams
 - [Caring](#)
 - [CoM](#)
 - [CUUPs](#)
 - [Facilities](#)
 - [Finance](#)
 - [Gallery](#)
 - [Hospitality](#)
 - [Leadership Development](#)
 - [Library](#)
 - [Social Justice](#)
 - [Sunday Services](#)
- Task Forces
 - [8th Principle Project Team](#)
 - [Fall Auction](#)
 - [Safe Opening](#)
- Staff
 - [Minister](#)
 - [Office Administrator](#)
 - [Director of Music](#)
 - [Director of Religious Education](#)

UUCLC 2021 Membership Pandemic Survey Report

Committee on Ministry

Background

To monitor and improve the ministry of the UUCLC, the Committee on Ministry conducts an annual evaluation and produces a report of its findings. This year (2021), COM decided to examine the experiences of church members and friends during the pandemic by asking the following two questions through an online survey:

1. How did the COVID pandemic affect the ministry of the UUCLC?
2. What are 3 things you learned from the church's response to the pandemic that can positively affect our ministry in the future?

COM's decision was based on the timeliness of these questions in relation to the church's response to the pandemic and its projected return to face-to-face services and other activities.

Methods

One COM member served as the survey administrator. The survey was created in Google Forms and sent via e-mail to all 203 members and friends (henceforth to be called 'members') in the church database. Two COM members published a notice in *The Light* informing members in advance that they would receive the survey through e-mail. Members also received three follow-up reminders about the survey through *Week-At-A-Glance*. Four members and friends had incorrect e-mail addresses, so their surveys came back to the survey administrator. Church Administrator Cheri Coffelt was informed of these incorrect e-mail addresses. A couple of members who communicated they didn't receive the survey were sent the link via e-mail.

Our methods yielded 69 of a possible 199 responses for a response rate of 35%. The survey administrator and another COM member conducted a thematic analysis of the responses. More specifically, they reviewed the responses to the two questions and developed themes under which the responses best fit. They discussed and strived for consensus when categorizing each response. For Question 1, respondents determined the number of effects they wished to discuss. For Question 2, respondents were limited to three things learned. Theme-categorized responses and their frequencies are summarized in the following tables. Some themes had opposite or otherwise highly-related versions of that theme. These were listed together in the tables to facilitate interpretation.

Results

Table 1. How did the COVID pandemic affect the ministry of the UUCLC?

Nmbr.	Theme	<i>f</i>
1	Personal face-to-face relationships suffered	28
2	Zoom enhanced participation	24
3	Dependence on Zoom/tech damaged participation or the perceived value of participation	22
4	We accepted Zoom and/or the virtual world	6
5	Members, the Minister, and/or staff adapted or adapted well	12
6	Adaptation in some areas was poor	1
7	Our UU community became broader (e.g., through joint services with other UU congregations and an auction open to the public)	9
8	Committee functions were impeded	5
9	Committee functions continued or were enhanced	4
10	The ministry of the church at-large was less personal	4
11	The minister could've provided more personal outreach	4
12	The service burden increased for the most dedicated members or staff	4
13	The closed campus and/or diminished activities gave the impression we were defunct	4
14	Welcomed programs like monthly check-in's were discontinued	4
15	Music and /or congregational singing suffered	3
16	We lost members	3
17	We gained new members	1
18	Church outreach improved in some areas	2
19	There was possible proliferation of confusion and/or misinformation	2
20	The ministry improved	1
21	There was a benefit to reflective time provided by forced isolation	1
22	Volunteerism increased	1
23	We sought and received external funding	1
24	We waited too long to reopen	1
25	A closed campus gave us time for remodeling and maintenance	1
26	We had insufficient follow-up regarding non-participants	1
27	The church became more Minister, staff, and committee than congregationally centered	1
28	Made us more creative	1
29	Attendance and/or participation tapered off	1
30	Members came forward informally in response to the needs of other members	1
31	We stayed safe	1
32	Conscientious response was unclear in meaning	2
33	No response or no opinion	2

Table 2. What are 3 things you learned from the church's response to the pandemic that can positively affect our ministry in the future?

We learned that:

Nmbr.	Theme	<i>f</i>
1	We could adapt quickly and/or well to change	21
2	Zoom/technology enhances the availability of services and/or other activities	21
3	Zoom/technology made it possible for the homebound and out-of-towners to participate	8
4	Too much Zoom/technology can be burdensome and/or cost participation	2
5	Zoom/technology is consistent with environmental responsibility	1
6	Guest speakers and/or shared services broaden understanding and appreciation	13
7	Face-to-face interaction is essential regardless of the availability of technology	11
8	Individual members responded to the needs of others and/or the congregation	7
9	Effective communication within the congregation was a positive	5
10	We need to improve our communications	3
11	It was prudent for church leadership to prioritize safety and shut down the church	5
12	We can follow health guidelines	2
13	Check-ins should be reinstated and/or continued post pandemic	4
14	The break provided an opportunity to maintain and/or upgrade the physical plant	3
15	An online auction had positive results	3
16	We effected improvements (e.g., food pantry) in spite of the pandemic	3
17	The Minister needs to increase outreach to members	3
18	The Minister adapted well during the pandemic	2
19	The church's commitment to social action increased and/or remained strong	2
20	The pandemic reinforced the importance of committees	2
21	We should make changes based on committee successes and failures	1
22	We interacted in more ways than in the past	1
23	Members continue their financial support during difficult times	1
24	We need to intentionally re-involve those who have dropped away due to dependence on technology	1
25	The combination of internal collaboration with external collaboration on services is ideal	1
26	Moving forward, we should focus on intergenerational activities	1
27	We should reach out to young families	1
28	Many congregants are committed to working with youth	1
29	Covenant groups help to fill the gaps and/or improve community	1
30	We should reschedule Roundtables for the morning	1
31	We should plan an in-gathering activity to bring people back to the church	1
32	Community can exist without face-to-face interaction	1
33	We need to focus on small group interactions going forward	1
34	Staff expansion met technical needs	1
35	We need high quality audio equipment	1
36	There is no going back to just in-person services and activities	1
37	The people, not the building, are the church	1
38	People want to hear what church leaders have to say about important matters	1
39	We need to make our facilities, talents, and programs available to a larger community	1
40	Children's stories enhance services	1

41	The new RE Director is very effective	1
42	We need to be more intentional about inclusion	1
43	The church should be left open 24 hours	1
44	I had more time to study and reflect on UU materials	1
45	Staff availability helped	1
46	Most programs were brought to a stand still	1
47	Conscientious response was unclear in meaning	3
48	No response or no opinion	3

Conclusions and Recommendations

Because the response rate to the survey was 35%, we shouldn't assume that the non-respondents would've had similar or different answers than those of the respondents. However, the respondents gave rich and thoughtful answers that are useful to the church ministry. Our recommendations will focus on those themes with the highest frequencies from the thematic analysis of the data and themes related to them. The survey had two questions to facilitate its administration and the subsequent thematic analysis. The conclusions and recommendations are the product of considering the results from both questions together.

Conclusions

A primary outcome of this survey was learning the importance of face-to-face services and activities to our members (Item 1 in Table 1 and Item 7 in Table 2). There is also strong support for a hybrid delivery model employing both face-to-face and internet-based modalities (e.g., Zoom, YouTube, etc.) when we return to face-to-face services and activities (Item 2 and maybe 7, Table 1 and Items 2, 3, 5, and maybe 6 in Table 2). We also observed a strong current of opposition to dependence on Zoom (Item 3 in Table 1 and Item 4 in Table 2). However we had no reason to conclude that there was opposition to a hybrid delivery model.

The respondents appreciated the effective adaptation and efforts of the Minister, staff, and members to changes brought on by the pandemic (Examples: Item 5 in Table 1 and Items 1 and 8 in Table 2). Appreciation was expressed for guest ministers and joint services with other congregations (Item 7 in Table 1 and Item 6 in Table 2). We also see a recognition that the changes that were made during the pandemic were necessary to keep us safe (Items 11 and 12 in Table 2). It is interesting to observe that responses to some themes like effective communications (Items 9 and 10 in Table 2) and effective committee functions (Items 8 and 9 in Table 1) had an apparent cancelling effect. It should not be assumed that an apparent cancelling effect is cause for disregarding strong feelings on either side of the question.

Recommendations

1. Recognize and respond to the need for face-to-face services and other activities where safe and feasible.
2. Further develop a hybrid delivery model that optimizes face-to-face and internet-based modalities.
3. Recognize the Minister, staff, and members of the congregation for their adaptations and hard work during the pandemic.
4. Continue the practices of involving guest ministers in services and holding joint services with other congregations.
5. Follow the guidelines developed by the Safe Opening Task Force and approved by the Board of Directors for the safe reopening of our church.
6. Conduct further study to determine how to resolve strong oppositional feelings among the congregation on some issues like effective communications and committee functions.

Submitted by COM members Tom Dormody and Weeden Nichols

[Back to Top](#)

Board of Trustees Board 2021 Report to COM

Committee Mission

Together with the Minister, the BOT works to help the Church follow its mission and vision (from P&P Manual, Governance). The BOT is the governing body entrusted with safeguarding the church's human and material resources through responsible oversight and sound decisions.

Annual goals and how they supported the mission

- a) **Pandemic Recovery Tasks** - The BOT appointed a Safe Reopening Task Force which was instrumental in helping our church safely reopen in September 2021. Encouraging and supporting efforts to develop a quality hybrid (live and virtual) program became a priority. Quality and consistency improvements are still needed.
- b) **Community Engagement** - The Board recommended and gained congregational approval for increased funding for RE to make possible expanding the program and training the new DRE. New family involvement in exciting activities is rejuvenating the congregation. The BOT encourages and supports outreach efforts including the many Social Justice projects. The BOT approved opening a neighborhood free food pantry on church property.
- c) **Sanctuary Renovation** - The BOT approved applications for two Payroll Protection Program loans and a New Mexico Cares grant. Success in obtaining these one-time funds supported personnel-related expenses that enabled us to recommend and gain approval from the congregation to undertake a significant and long overdue sanctuary renovation program. Many safety concerns were dealt with in a pleasingly aesthetic manner.
- d) **Building Capacity** – Fundraising beyond the pledge drive was helped by the online auction thanks to our Church Administrator's hard work and the generous participation of congregation members in donating items and bidding on those items. The return of the Services Auction brought a much-needed spark to reignite the joy of gathering as a community as well as providing revenue. Thanks to Katie Fitzgerald, who chaired the event, all members of her Services Auction Committee, and to the members who provided and/or purchased services.

Annual activities and how they supported the goals

- a) **BOT Training using the UUA Congregational Board Member Training/UUA Lab** – This training was an excellent way to increase understanding of the many aspects of Board leadership, but it was time-consuming. We plan to use an edited version of this training starting with bringing back a Retreat at the beginning of 2022 and supplement with shorter training sessions throughout the calendar year.
- b) **Completed Ministerial Evaluation** -- The Ministerial Relations Subcommittee worked collaboratively with the minister to develop surveys; gather responses from the BOT members, church committees and staff members; analyze the data and present the data summaries and summary report and recommendations to the BOT; and discuss the report

and recommendations with our minister. A tremendous debt of gratitude is due Board Member John Seeley, who led the survey development and analysis process.

- c) Human Resources Policy Approved -- The HR Policy Review Subcommittee (Bob Pipkins, Sara Thomas and Katie Fitzgerald) reviewed the draft Human Resources Policy begun by a previous board, collected needed information, and received approval for the finished product to from the minister and BOT.
- d) Budget Process – This annual task is one of the most important activities of the Board, possible only with the tremendous help of our Finance Committee. This year it was necessary to work even harder to produce a balanced budget which addresses the current shortage of both financial and volunteer resources.
- e) Stewardship – The BOT graciously agreed to help with follow-up calls, announcements to the congregation, and tracking and analyzing our progress toward the financial goal for the 2022 pledge drive. Our minister and Office Administrator were also instrumental in this effort.

Successes and how they were measured

(covered in the text above)

Problem areas

- a) Board turnover and training – Every year with one third turnover and at least an additional one or two other members leaving due to personal reasons, the need for training limits early productivity. A board retreat at the start of the calendar year will be resumed in 2022 – in person we hope! – to help with orientation, training and team building.
- b) Bylaws no longer fit our current congregational size and volunteer availability – a task force will be established in 2022 to recommend needed revisions to our Bylaws.
- c) BOT Evaluation was not completed due to competing demands for our time and attention. Developing and implementing a 360-review process will be an important goal for 2022.
- d) We need to develop a stronger collaborative relationship between Minister and BOT and to embrace the responsibility we share to help the Church follow its mission and vision.
- e) Continuing work is needed for better communication and relationship building throughout this organization. We must establish policies and processes that keep UU values at the forefront. Regular collaboration with the BOT, Minister and Committee on Ministry is the only way we see to tackle these systemic problems.

Goals for the Coming Year

(see Problem Areas above for Board-specific goals)

A Work Products working group (Sally Atkinson, Tom Dormody, Marie Sauter, and our minister) reviewed our Current Policies and Procedures regarding Annual Work Products expected from the Board and provided many helpful suggestions. Using this guidance, the Board approved the following Top Ministry Priorities (Vision of Ministry) for 2022 –

- 1) Pandemic Recovery Tasks
 - Optimizing the hybrid delivery model for worship (virtual and in-person options)
 - Rebuilding community/community-in-person post-Covid Continuing collaborative worship services with other UU congregations /ministers that feature our spiritual sources and principles
- 2) Adult Learning and Education
 - Offering Congregational study groups/learning circles on UUA Commission on Institutional Change (COIC) Report Widening the Circle of Concern.
 - Identifying and developing learning opportunities for other topics of interest and concern to UUCLC members
- 3) Building Capacity
 - Examining and clarifying processes for fundraising beyond the pledge drive
 - Broadening opportunities and training for lay leadership and volunteer service
 - Helping the congregation take ownership of membership recruitment & retention
- 4) UUCLC's Community Engagement
 - Expanding RE involvement
 - Expanding the UUCLC presence in the community through interfaith work and involvement in community efforts such as refugee resettlement projects
- 5) Improving Quality of our Ministries
 - Effectively communicating at all levels
 - Listening and learning from one another
 - Clarifying goals and priorities
 - Collaborating with other committees to maximize impact
 - Connecting volunteers to our mission

Prepared by Susan Hychka, Sara Thomas, and Sally Atkinson

[Back to Top](#)

Caring Committee Year End Report - 2021

1. Committee Mission

The Caring Committee enhances the internal ministry of the church by partnering with our minister in responding to expressed needs and concerns of members and friends, and raises congregational awareness that caring is the responsibility of each of us.

2. Annual goals and how they supported the mission

- Continue to respond to requests for assistance in the areas of meal preparation and delivery, transportation, emergency pet care, hospital and home visits, greeting cards and telephone calls.
- Due to the Pandemic provide Wednesday Caring Conversations on Zoom.
- Expand communication about the help available to members and friends.
- To have a Compassion Care Team on board by January with trained volunteers to give specific outreach in pastoral emergencies (illness, grief counseling, emotional turmoil, etc.)

3. Annual activities and how they supported the goals

- Probably due to COVID, there were not as many requests for assistance, but the committee responded to the few that came to our attention.
- With the dedicated leadership of Katie Fitzgerald, the Caring Conversations continued through July, with a small but loyal group of attendees. These were “advertised” in the Week at a Glance.
- Co-chair Joan Dormody led the development of a new tri-fold Caring Committee brochure (with some outside help) to inform the congregation on what we offer, provide a form for members to fill out if they can help with our needs, and provide a form for members to request help from the committee. Seventy-five of the new brochures were distributed to the membership at the 2021 church auction in October, and Co-chair Hale Huber presented an overview of the brochure to those present.
- The goal to have a Compassion Care Team was discussed and the committee members felt that it was beyond the scope of the committee at this time.

4. Successes and how they were measured

- Ten church members received help from the Committee during 2021. This support was considered a success if the person indicated that they received all the help they needed.
- Several cards were sent out to members with condolences and get well wishes.

5. Problem areas

- Communication of the help offered by the Committee to church members and friends is often difficult.
- Getting members and friends to ask for the help they need is an ongoing problem.

6. Goals for the upcoming year

- Participate in one or more Sunday Services to remind our congregation that we are here to help, and to provide an opportunity for our members to sign-up to provide assistance, if possible.
- Develop a “system” or method of reaching out to members who we do not see very often, to check on their well-being and needs, if any.
- Investigate the possibility of restarting the Caring Conversation Zoom groups.

- Keep closer contact with the other Ministries of the church and discuss ways to work together.
- Keep better measures of the activities of the Committee.
- Provide help to more members and friends of the church.
- Inventory the medical equipment available at the church and make sure there is a system for keeping track of equipment loans.

Submitted by Co-chairs, Hale Huber and Joan Dormody

Other Committee members: Katie Fitzgerald, Susan Hychka, Reba Montera, Vijay Bhalla, Judy Holmes, Susan West, Robert Severance, Lori Miller, Cindy McLaughlin, Lisa Stevens, and Rev. Kacela (ex-officio)

[Back to Top](#)

UUCLC Committee on Ministry

2021 Annual Program of Work Report

Committee Mission

The Committee on Ministry (CoM) strengthens the overall quality of the ministry of the Society and educates the Society about its mission, vision, goals, and covenants.

Annual Goals and How They Supported the Mission

The CoM had four major goals for 2021 that supported the committee mission.

1. Revise the policies and procedures for the CoM.
This goal was undertaken to clarify the CoM's role in strengthening the overall quality of the ministry of the Society.
2. Conduct an online membership COVID-19 pandemic survey.
To strengthen the ministry of the church and educate its leaders, the CoM conducted a timely survey related to the church's response to the pandemic and its projected return to face-to-face services and other activities.
3. Develop an [organizational chart](#) for the church that illustrates policy governance and the structure called for in the bylaws.
This goal was undertaken to strengthen the overall quality of the ministry of the church by providing church leaders and members a visual tool for understanding how the church is structured and can optimally operate under with its policy governance-based bylaws. The chart will also assist the CoM in its educational and conflict management roles.
4. Conduct the annual survey of church committees.
To strengthen the ministry of the church and educate its leaders, the CoM conducted its annual survey and analysis of the missions, goals, activities, successes, problems, and 2022 goals of church committees.

Annual Activities Supporting the Goals

The activities below are numbered the same as their corresponding goals in the above section. The CoM also took on a couple activities that went above and beyond these goals. These are described in item 5.

1. The CoM revised its policies and procedures and presented them at the May 2021 Board of Trustees (BoT) meeting. The BoT voted to "accept and support the CoM's Policies and Procedures submitted by the Committee on Ministry." In October, the CoM submitted to the BoT an amendment to Article VII, Section 3 of the bylaws

describing the role of the CoM that matches the new language in our revised policies and procedures. The BoT will present the bylaws amendment for a vote by the congregation at the 2021 Annual Membership Budget and Business Meeting. The policies and procedures will be made available for the congregation on our new webpage.

2. The CoM conducted an online membership COVID-19 pandemic survey using Google Forms technology and reminders published in *The Light* and *Week-At-A-Glance*. 35% of church members submitted responses to the following:
 - a. How did the COVID pandemic affect the ministry of the UUCLC?
 - b. What are 3 things you learned from the church's response to the pandemic that can positively affect our ministry in the future?CoM members Tom Dormody and Weeden Nichols conducted thematic analyses of the qualitative responses to the two questions and wrote a report that was shared with the Minister, BoT, and Safe Opening Task Force. The report will be made available to the congregation on our new webpage.
3. The CoM is completing an [organizational chart for the church](#) to illustrate policy governance and the structure called for in the bylaws. The chart will be shared with the BoT and made available to the congregation on our new webpage.
4. The CoM is conducting an annual survey and writing a synthetic report on the missions, goals, activities, successes, problems, and 2022 goals of church committees. Joan Pipkins and Cassie Calway are coordinating with committee chairs, Susan Bagby is composing the first draft of the report, and other members assist are with editing the report. Thanks to all. When completed, the report will be sent to the BoT and made available to the congregation on our new webpage.
5. Above-and-beyond-the-goals activities:
 - a. The CoM was invited to an August 4 special BoT meeting to discuss findings in the CoM 2020 Annual Report. In that meeting, the BoT agreed that church committees “need a mechanism for sharing goals and proposed activities with other committees and for discussing possible ways to collaborate” (from the BoT’s written notes of the meeting). The CoM later agreed to address this need through retreats for committee chairs (see 2022 SMART Goal 3, below).
 - b. The CoM is working with the church’s tech guru, Makala Pinkham, to construct a webpage to post our reports and other products for the congregation.

Successes and How They Were Measured

All of CoM’s 2021 goals were achieved. The successes below are numbered the same as their corresponding goals and activities in the above sections.

1. The CoM is now operating under and educating the congregation (starting with the BoT) about its revised policies and procedures.
2. Major findings from the membership COVID-19 pandemic survey were 1) learning the importance to our members of face-to-face services and activities, 2) that there is strong support for a hybrid delivery model employing both face-to-face and internet-based modalities when we return to face-to-face services and activities, and 3) that there is a strong current of opposition to dependence on Zoom. Generally, the results supported the

church's decision to adopt a hybrid delivery model of face-to-face and online delivery modes for services and other programs.

3. The revised [organizational chart](#) will be a tool that church leaders can use to facilitate decision making and reduce conflict. It can be used to educate the congregation about how the church is structured following policy governance as called for in our bylaws.
4. The CoM conducted its annual survey of and is writing a synthetic report on the missions, goals, activities, successes, problems, and 2022 goals of church committees. When available, major findings from the report will be added to this annual CoM program of work report.
5. The CoM will have a webpage to communicate its reports and other products to the congregation.

Problem Areas

Despite several problems, the CoM had a productive and positively-spirited year.

1. During the year, the CoM experienced some problems using Zoom technology which were solved when our monthly Zoom link was published in Week-At-A-Glance.
2. Due to her heavy load, Cassie Calway passed the role of committee chair to Tom Dormody in September. Thanks for your dedicated leadership, Cassie.
3. The online membership pandemic survey received only a 35% response rate. We'll strive for at least a 50% survey response rate on our 2022 online survey.
4. The CoM's independence in addressing ministry needs and roles beyond listening to complaints and managing conflict may be unknown or misunderstood by many. The establishment of the CoM webpage and ongoing education of the congregation should improve understandings of the independence and roles of the CoM.
5. BoT and the Minister did not appoint new CoM members in a timely fashion. Hence, the CoM was operating without a full complement of members for much of the year.

SMART Goals for the Upcoming Year

The CoM followed the Minister's recommendation to develop SMART goals for the coming year. SMART goals are designed to be **S**trategic, **M**easurable, **A**mbitious, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime-based. As the CoM works to strengthen the overall quality of the church's ministry, we also recognize that visionary goals, such as strong ministry, may not always be quantifiable, especially in the minds and hearts of the membership. We may see improvements in our ministry that do not result from any given SMART goal, but that are nonetheless significant and favorable outcomes. In addition to the four SMART goals set forth below, the CoM will be alert to the ministries of the UUCLC for these less measurable, but still positive changes.

1. To help clarify goals and priorities for the UUCLC [**S**], the CoM will create an annual report [**M**] of the ministries of all the church committees [**A**], with recommendations for ministry in the coming year [**R**], in time for the 2022 annual business meeting [**T**].
2. To encourage coordination and synergy among the committees [**S**], the CoM will host up to two retreats [**M**] for all committee chairs [**A**] by the end of September 2022 [**T**], possibly focusing on such topics as writing and sharing SMART goals, performing goals-

based budgeting, exploring opportunities to collaborate, writing annual reports, and conducting effective meetings **[R]**.

3. To listen and learn from one another **[S]**, the CoM will create and conduct an online survey **[M]** regarding a salient issue of ministry (such as communication, pastoral care, or implementing the Eighth Principle); obtain responses from at least 50% of the membership **[A]**; and socialize the results, analysis, and recommendations for improving the quality of our ministries **[S, R]** by the end of May 2022 **[T]**.
4. To help educate the congregation in the specifics of our church's structure **[S]**, by midsummer 2022 **[T]** the CoM will conduct a Round Table session **[M]** about policy governance for 30 church leaders and members **[A]** and will archive the presentation for those unable to attend and for later reference **[R]**.

Membership

The 2020 Committee on Ministry was (in alphabetical order):

Susan Bagby (Elected by the congregation, term ends at the end of 2022)

Cassie Calway (Chair through August) (Minister appointee, term ends at the end of 2021)

Peggy Devlin (Board of Trustees appointee, term ends at the end of 2023)

Tom Dormody (Chair from September) (Elected by the congregation, term ends at the end of 2023)

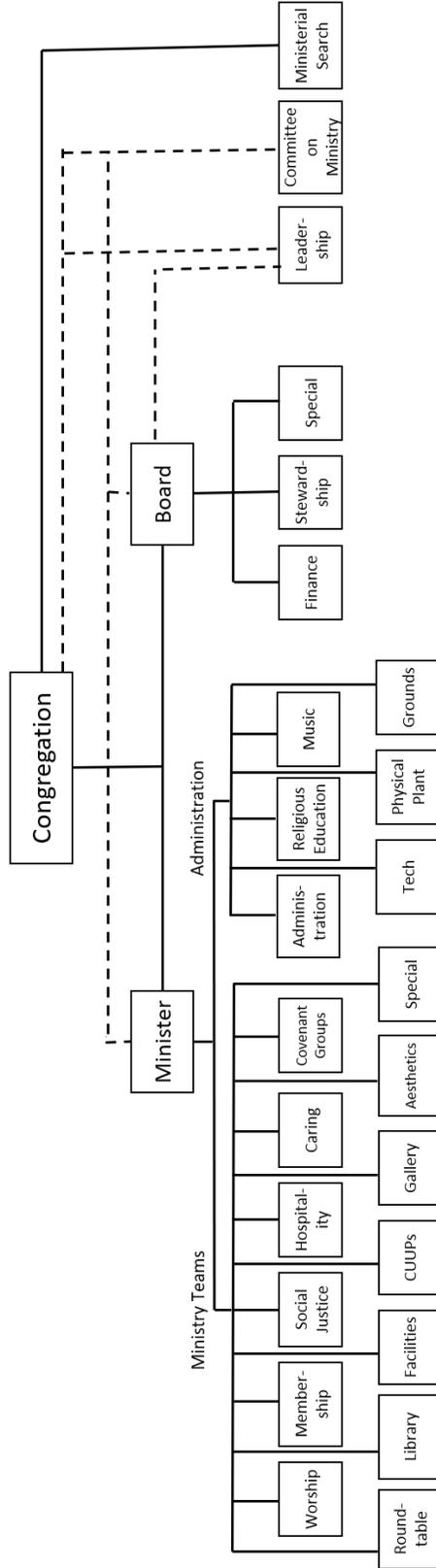
Weeden Nichols (Minister appointee, term ends at the end of 2023)

Joan Pipkins (Board of Trustees appointee, term ends at the end of 2022)

Thank you all for your great work on the Committee on Ministry.

Tom Dormody, Chair

Organization of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces



[Back to Top](#)

DRAFT

As conceived by the Committee on Ministry, based on the By-laws. December, 2021.
 This visual depiction of the units and lines of decision making/authority in the church is
 not intended to depict all possible lines of communication that are encouraged as we
 work together.

CUUPS

1. Committee Mission: The mission of CUUPS is to provide a space for Pagan and earth friendly practitioners to gather. We also provide two services a year Yule and Beltane to the UUCLC congregation in accordance with the 7th principle and UU sources.
2. Annual Goals and how they support the mission: The goal of the group is to meet 12 times a year, 8 of these meetings are rituals for holidays and the rest are informative or educational meetings. We also have a goal to recruit new members. These goals support our mission to provide a gathering space for fellow practitioners and education to members of the community at large and the congregation.
3. Annual activities and how they supported the goals: the group has continued to meet every third Saturday and provide both educational and spiritual activities.
4. Successes and how they are measured: the group continued to meet during the pandemic, with zoom we were able to include members that have moved out of the Las Cruces area. We have even able to meet every month and the membership has continued to take turns learning. Since we have begun meeting in person we have had some new members and supported Pagan Pride Day in October of this year.
5. Problem Areas: CUUPS has a continuing problem of recruitment, we have never been able to find the perfect formula to retain new members or attract members of the congregation. We would also like to find a way to continue to include our members that are no longer in the Las Cruces area.
6. Goals for 2021: to continue to meet monthly, recruit new members and provide services to the congregation.

[Back to Top](#)

2021 REPORT FROM THE FACILITIES COMMITTEE TO THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

1. Committee Mission

The Mission of the Facilities Committee is to evaluate the physical condition of the UUCLC campus and make recommendations to the Church Board or Church staff for maintenance, repairs, corrections or additions.

2. Annual Goals

At least twice a year the Committee does a survey of the Campus noting problem areas or things that need attention. The Committee also responds to concerns voiced by members of the Congregation, the staff and the Minister.

3. Annual Activities

The Committee creates a prioritized list noting both the tasks and who would be responsible for carrying them out.

Occasionally the Committee, at the direction of one of those two bodies, will perform that maintenance, or make those repairs, corrections and additions.

During the 2021 year the Committee proposed to the Board (and ultimately to the Congregation) the spending of a large sum of money to do a number of repairs and renovations to the Sanctuary and the Gallery. (See attached Proposal for Rehabbing the Sanctuary.)

With the approval of the Board and the Congregation, the Committee let contracts, supervised construction and installations, and oversaw the entire rehab.

4. Successes and how they were measured

The Sanctuary is cleaner, brighter, quieter and safer than it ever has been. The new sound system is far superior to the old system, both its sound sensitivity and sound quality. The Choir and Chalice table storeroom has been cleaned and refurbished. The Gallery emergency exit door has been upgraded to safe operation. And the entire project came in on budget.

5. Problem Areas

The few problems encountered were delays in receiving materials from suppliers and the reluctance of a few individuals in the Congregation and one staff member to cooperate with the Committee on this project.

6. Goals for the upcoming year

Our goals continue to be the evaluation of the physical condition of the UUCLC campus and to make recommendations to the Church Board or Church staff for maintenance, repairs, corrections or additions. We will be meeting at the end of the year to do our survey and make recommendations for the 2022 year.

Proposal for Rehab of the Sanctuary.

Our Congregation is in an interesting position right now. The Church is technically closed, but we are conducting Worship and much of our regular business, like Board meetings, Committee meetings, and Choir, through internet connections.

This pause in our normal operations gives us a rare opportunity to rethink how we should do church. Should we continue with just one service per Sunday? How can we handle the discussion that the Round Table generates? Are our children being adequately served by our programming? What can we do about music as part of worship when it seems that group singing only creates cacophony?

There seems to be general agreement that regardless of when we resume regular operations we should continue to use ZOOM to reach those populations like shut-ins, or people on vacation, or folks who live at a distance and who may find it difficult to come to Las Cruces.

But while that system gives us a temporary connection with each other, there is no doubt that most of us would prefer to meet and greet in person as soon as it's safe to do so.

Depending on which predictions you subscribe to, we will be able to start facing in face-to-face meetings soon (in a month or two) later (sometime in the Fall) or perhaps much later (not until next year.)

Nevertheless, we should be prepared for the eventual opening of our Sanctuary and the resumption of Worship, Roundtable and RE. The Library and the RE Building are in good shape. They've been cleaned and maintained on a regular basis throughout our temporary shutdown. But the sanctuary is another matter.

The Problems:

Although the building that contains the Sanctuary is basically sound, the Sanctuary itself has a number of deficiencies.

- The carpet is repository of dirt and germs. It's at least 20 years old. Yes, it has been cleaned. No, that didn't make much of a difference.
- Beneath the carpet is an old vinyl tile floor which contains asbestos in the mastic and probably in the tiles themselves.
- The single pane windows in the room are not up to standard for thermal efficiency, safety or security.
- The audio system is obsolete.
- There is no good system for hearing enhancement
- Our video system is only adequate for ZOOM.
- Lighting is inadequate for good audience visibility and marginal for video production.
- Sight lines for the audience are poor, especially for those in the back of the room.

Possible Solutions:

- Strip the carpet, remove the old tile and abate the asbestos. The people who did the asbestos abatement for and the demolition of the old apartments are able to do this.

- Cover the floor with new ceramic tile. A local contractor is lined up.
- Replace all the windows with double pane, frosted glass, retaining the special panels with their religious symbols. We have two good estimates.
- Hire an audio engineer to recommend and purchase a new audio system. James Caulfield has already done most of the research on this.
- Enhance the access of those who are hearing challenged with a Hearing Loop in the floor. Again, a recommendation from Caulfield’s research.
- Hire a video consultant to recommend a quality video system that could be used for performance, recording and future distribution.
- Hire a lighting consultant to recommend lighting for both better audience viewing and improved video production.
- Build a raised platform at the performance end of the Sanctuary to support the podium and the Choir.

Estimated Costs in USD*

• Floor covering removal and asbestos abatement	7,257	
• New ceramic tile floor installed		16,500
• Window replacement	8,800	
• Audio consultation, equipment and installation	11,500	
• Hearing Loop	2,500	
• Video consultation	2,000	
• Lighting consultation, equipment and installation	2,000	
• Construction of raised platform		500
Total estimated cost	\$51,057	

Rationale:

- The flooring removal/replacement is a health and safety issue.
- The window replacement is a safety, security and energy conservation issue.
- A Hearing Loop is a quality of life issue.
- A new audio system would improve our ability to serve our congregants as well as give us better quality sound for distribution.
- A professional video system would give us higher quality output for future distribution and recording.
- We’ve made plans for future expansion, but now times are different. We do not know what to expect in terms of revenue or growth. However, we can offer a well functioning facility, and the ability to do church well, with these much needed renovations.
- The Sanctuary is currently not in use and no firm timeline exists for the return of live services to the building. Now is the time to do this.
- This is an investment in the work and the future of the Church.

*Actual costs are available from the Finance Committee or from the the Facilities Rehab budget.

[Back to Top](#)

Finance Report to Committee on Ministry

November 15, 2021

by Katie Fitzgerald, chair

Mission: The mission of the Finance Committee is to oversee and manage the resources that support the church's mission; report financial activity to the Board; and ensure the budget is followed. The Finance Committee is convened by and accountable to the Board of the Trustees.

Annual goals and how they support the mission

- Monthly review of income and expenditures to ensure budget is followed, report to BOT
- Semi-annual review of Endowments
- Annual development of budget for next fiscal year prior to the end of current year

Annual activities and how they supported the goals

- Monthly review of income and expenditures to ensure budget is followed, report to BOT plus two additional presentations at the request of the Board
- Semi-annual review of Endowments and investments (subcommittee with members from BOT and Finance)
- Regular statements to committees to report use of allocated funds: Gallery, Facilities and Social Justice receive reports on monthly basis
- Develop budget for review and approval by Board of Trustees and then adoption by congregation at its annual meeting: this process included informational meetings for church members to preview the budget and ask questions: this year, we revised the budget to include capital improvement project which was approved by the BOT and the congregation

Successes and how they were measured

- We maintained a balanced budget despite some unforeseen, unbudgeted expenses.
- The Finance committee is a cohesive, collaborative group that maximizes each other's strengths for the good of the whole. Diane, forecasting; Shirley, institutional memory and endowments; Steve, investment and facilities management; Mark, grant writing and budget management; Katie, organization and public speaking.

Problem areas

- **REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS:** In the past, stewardship had a separate committee with its own chairs and team. The chair was chosen by the Board and acted separately from the Finance Committee but collaborated with the Finance committee as needed. The email from the Committee on the Ministry requesting this report clearly states Finance/Stewardship. There needs to be long range planning about how and who operates the stewardship duties. As currently constituted, the Finance committee is too small to take on this additional responsibility.

- **COMMUNICATION:** As I write this report, I am awaiting information from the administration regarding where we stand with the current pledge drive. This is Monday, the committee meets on Tuesday and without that key information it is almost impossible to prepare for tomorrow's meeting in a clear, cogent way. This is not the first time my efforts to work efficiently have been stymied by e-mails or phone calls that are unanswered or the response comes long after the need has passed.
- **LACK OF RESPONSE:** There are a few duties assigned to the Finance committee that are required to happen on an annual basis. One of these is the financial annual review. Despite requests for volunteers from the BOT and the congregation, there were none. We adapted to the situation and did a review of a certain type, but it was not the comprehensive, objective examination that generally passes muster in financial circles.

Goals for the coming year

- Develop and maintain a Year at a Glance timeline to include important events, i.e. financial review for 2021, quarterly reports to committees, fundraising, budget development, etc.
- Identify and implement two new fundraising events or projects
- Review existing vendor contracts with eye to potential savings
- Develop price structure and rental guidelines. Promote sanctuary as performance venue for hire.

[Back to Top](#)

Gallery

The mission of the Tombaugh Gallery is to reach out to the wider community so that a variety of fine art can be enjoyed within a welcoming faith community. The gallery brings people into our church, sometimes resulting in new members. The gallery provides an opportunity for our members and friends to be moved both emotionally and thoughtfully, while providing area artists an attractive venue with a reasonable commission.

The Tombaugh Gallery can also be a way to express the values of our church. For example, we have offered exhibits to individuals with disabilities, to incarcerated young men, to an artist-in-residence at the Organ Mountain Desert Peaks Monuments. We are happy that we have been able to provide financial support to NMSU art students.

During the pandemic we were able to showcase exhibits through Facebook and Instagram. We are very glad that we were able to open the gallery in September to artists in person. We have exhibits planned through December 2022. The committee is most thankful to members of the congregation for coming to openings and often purchasing art work. The 30% commission pays for the promotional postcards, and an ad in the Ink. We also put 10% of commissions into the general fund, as possible.

[Back to Top](#)

Hospitality Committee

Church Mission

To gather to inspire spiritual growth, care for each other and our community, seek truth, and work for justice in the world.

Church Vision

To be a transformational force for love and justice in our community.

Hospitality Committee Mission

To make all who come to our church feel welcome in an informal setting.

Hospitality Vision

To offer opportunities for our congregation and visitors to get to know each other better in order to strengthen our beloved community.

Annual Goals

1. Host the UU Coffee Hour serving refreshments in a welcoming environment every Sunday.
2. Entice more members to join the Hospitality Committee.
3. Update our list of bakers and volunteers for when pandemic conditions lessen.
4. Take a semi-annual inventory of the amount and condition of supplies (platters, serving bowls, plates, cups, bowls, silverware, plastic utensils, paper and plastic plates and cups, napkins, cloth tablecloths) and keep the supply closet in order.
5. Inform the congregation what the Hospitality Committee can do for them.

Annual Activities

We were “on hold” from March 2020 until September 2021 when the church opened up again. The pandemic made it impossible for the Hospitality Committee to carry out our normal annual activities.

In prior years we organized Pie Sunday, and Soup and Salad Sunday. In 2018, Hospitality organized the Thanksgiving lunch. Hospitality also worked with other Committees to help with their special events like pot luck dinners, sandwich lunches, and some evening events. We also organized and hosted Coffee Hour each Sunday after every service.

Successes

During the height of the pandemic we worked with the Caring and Membership Committees to provide decorated bags filled with homemade baked goods, and delivered to congregation members.

Strategizing on Zoom before the reopening about how to conduct COVID safe Coffee Hours. Guided by the Safe Reopening Task Force recommendations we devised a plan for our Committee to conduct the Coffee Hour safely and efficiently outdoors.

Hosting Coffee Hour every Sunday with only four members. Keeping Coffee Hour simple has allowed our Committee to be able to host these social times and leave the church by 12:30pm after cleaning up and putting away tables and chairs.

Problem Areas

We are not inspiring people to become members of the Hospitality Committee, or commit to a once a month, or every two months service for Coffee Hour.

Recruiting someone with good computer skills would help us tremendously. A brochure advertising the Hospitality Committee's assets would be a way to help boost our committee membership. There is also a need to create standardized donation forms for food and kitchen items as well as scheduled events.

There is no cooperation or coordination in the use of the kitchen work space, refrigerator, cooking utensils or storage closet. There has been a very casual attitude about using the kitchen and supplies without coordinating with the church office or the Hospitality Committee. This gives us some surprises at times that we would like to avoid.

Unsolicited generosity causes some problems: everything from gifts of kitchen items and decorations, to spur of the moment food donations. The problem is Hospitality is not asked if we need or want these donations and often we don't. There is no recognition that people should contact either the church office or a person from Hospitality to see if there is a need for what they want to give.

We need another cabinet in the storage closet. Lack of dedicated space for storing other committees items in the supply closet complicates the access to our storage cabinets and the stacked tables and chairs stored there.

There is no garbage disposal either in the sink or the dishwasher, which is a plumbing limitation. The dishwasher takes some training to operate properly. You need to start the machine heating thirty minutes before you need to use it to achieve the proper temperature to do the first wash. The temperature gauges are on the bottom of the front of the machine and are hard to read. The redeeming feature is that it does do a very fast wash cycle once it heats up. Also, if you don't know that there is no garbage disposal in the dishwasher you can create a huge mess and unsanitary conditions. You must wipe off all the food from the plates into the trash, rinse the dish or cup, then put it in the dishwasher.

Budgeting is a guessing game right now. It is expensive to buy commercially prepared food every Sunday. Due to safety restrictions for COVID we can not have home bakers donate food. The donations of baked goods as well as contributions to our donation boxes helped to supplement our budget so we could sponsor events. Without the home baked items and the less than stellar donations of money in our boxes we have less money to work with.

With the rise of COVID cases in our county and in the state we will have to see how the variants are playing out to know when we will be able to accept home baked items again and hold safe all-church events.

Goals for 2022

1. Improve the visitors experience at our church by partnering with Greeters, and Membership Committees to form a Welcoming Team. Having a “team of members” will help us keep the visitor engaged and make it harder for us to just drop a visitor after the service.
2. Adding enough new members to the Committee to give everyone every other Sunday off.
3. Advertise what our Committee does and can do for the church through a brochure, articles in the Light, and speaking to the congregation.
4. Host three to four events during the year if COVID possible (they could be seasonal or themes).
5. Have a dedicated contact person for the Hospitality Committee for donations.
6. Create a standardized form scheduling events and one for food donations. It will make it easy for people to identify the ingredients used in the items. We are trying to be very careful to keep our church members and visitors healthy.

[Back to Top](#)

UUCLC Leadership Development Committee

2021 Annual Report

Committee Name: Leadership Development Committee

Prepared by M. Sauter and reviewed and approved by the LDC Committee

November 7, 2021

Committee Members:

Chair: Marie Sauter, James Caufield, Janet Pitt, and Mary Whittemore, Linda Peterson, Rabbitt Loring

A big Thank You to all of the members of the 2021 Leadership Development Committee for their enthusiasm and participation and in an all-hands effort!!

Committee Mission: The Leadership Development Committee shall be responsible for identifying, nurturing, training, and otherwise preparing leadership for the congregation, including the preparation of a slate of candidates for the election of Trustees at the Annual Membership Business Meeting. The Slate of candidates shall be reported to the Board of Trustees and shall be published in the newsletter prior to the Annual Membership Business Meeting.

The LDC held meetings on Zoom the third Monday nights of each month. James Caufield was our note taker (Thanks James!).

Goals for 2021:

1. Preparation of a slate of candidates for the election at the Annual Membership Business Meeting (December 2021) that is reported to the Board of Trustees and published in the newsletter prior to the Annual Membership Business Meeting.
2. Nurture, train, and otherwise prepare leaders for the congregation.

Activities:

1. Prepared of a slate of candidates for election at the Annual Membership Business Meeting
 - a. The LDC advertised the open leadership positions for 3 months in The Light to generate interest.
 - b. The LDC recruited for 8 vacant bylaw positions to be voted upon during the 2022 election at the Annual Membership Business Meeting. The LDC worked hard to recruit candidates for the vacant congregational positions. Candidate biographies appeared in the November Light.

The LDC obtained commitments for 7 positions but was unable to fill the remaining (8th vacant position) a 3-year term BOT position, after canvassing about 25 UUCLC members. While not the best situation, the LDC views the upside of this in that during

the annual business meeting, there will be one vacant BOT position for which we may accept nominations from the floor. Candidates for the Board of Trustees,

Three (3) 3-year terms:

1. Katie Fitzgerald
2. Gary Cockerel
3. Vacant

Two (2) 1-year terms:

1. Sara Thomas
2. Kris Northcutt

Candidates for the Committee on Ministry: No positions were recruited for.

Candidates for the Leadership Development Committee

3 2-year terms:

1. Marie Sauter
2. Scott McLaughlin
3. Claire Shawhan

c. The slate was presented to the Board of Trustees president on 10/23/2021

e. The slate and bios of candidates were published in the November Light.

2. Nurture, train, and otherwise prepare leaders for the congregation.

a. As part of the nomination process of the candidates for office, LDC members educated nominees about their roles on the respective leadership committees.

b. LDC prepared for and presented the 1/10/2021 UUCLC worship service, with theme of 'Find Your Inner Leader'. LDC was proud and pleased with the outcome.

c. Nurture, train, and otherwise prepare leaders for the congregation. To this end LDC researched UUA Harvest the Power material for a congregational training opportunity.

d. LDC submitted a Youth themed gift basket for the spring virtual auction with lots of fun activities.

e. The LDC conducted follow-up surveys of leaders finishing terms of office (2020) and reviewed the results. LDC will issue a survey to the 2021 outgoing members.

f. LDC created an annual to-do and planning calendar by month to stay on task.

3. Greatest challenges this year:

a. Finding willing and able members to accept nominations for the BoT, COM, and LDC.

b. Presenting training opportunities for leadership development. In consultation with Reverend Kocela, LDC determined that due to the Pandemic, LDC would postpone

implementing the “Harvest the Power” leadership training program. LDC determined that the content was designed for in person training opportunities.

4. Zoom continued to work well and is necessary for committee meetings with COVID-19, but just isn't the same as face-to-face meetings.

Plans for 2022: The LDC's goals will remain the same for the LDC as in 2021. Other activities will be determined by the newly constituted LDC in January 2022.

2

[Back to Top](#)

Library Committee Report December 2021

Committee Chair: Rabbitt Loring

Members: Sara Thomas
Nancy J Anderson
Elena Espinosa

Library Volunteers:

Nancy L Anderson	Lisa Peterson
Madge DeFee	David Rice
Judy Holmes	Linda Rogers
Pam Keller	Carol Winkler

Mission Statement

The mission of the library is to inspire spiritual growth and to support community members in deepening their knowledge and understanding of our UU principles in the context of the greater world by maintaining an appropriate and timely collection of books.

Goals for 2021 (and how each supported the mission)

1. Keep the library open and available for the use of our members.
2. Add more titles to our collection, primarily in the area of Racial Justice.
3. Refurbish the old book cart to use for the Diane Taylor collection of books to be sold to supplement a budget for the library to acquire current titles.
4. Re-establish the book club (that had to be put on hold because of COVID restrictions) to give members an exciting venue for spiritual growth and deepening knowledge.
5. Increase the Library Committee membership to add more voices to our decision-making.
6. Write a regular column in The Light each month.

Activities (and how each supported the goals)

We painted the old book cart, fixed its shelves and added a lock box for book purchases. Signage explains Diane Taylor's wishes to have the sale of her books support the church. It is now generating funds for the church and for the purchase of new books in the absence of a budget line item for the library.

We scheduled library volunteers for two hours on Tuesday and Thursday, which required managing keys and schedules.

We revised the Mission Statement for the library.

Successes (and how they were measured)

We were able to have the library open to church members and friends two days a week for two hours each day for the entire year. We provided a notebook for people to sign in as a means of contact tracing should that ever become necessary. Gloves, masks and hand sanitizer were always available for everyone's safety.

The library has become a central focal point for church members to drop off items for the Little Free Pantry, to leave their aluminum cans to support our four-legged ministry, and to leave items

for pick up. It serves as a meeting area for committees. It is used to lay out Auction lists and to display truffle sales.

The UUA recommends a book each year called the Common Read for congregations to read and discuss, plus many other timely titles. Several dozen of these recommended books, including *Breathe*, *Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, *White Fragility*, *Waking Up White*, and *Caste*, I have purchased personally and donated to our collection. The UUA has also suggested that we all read *Widening the Circle of Concern* and discuss it as a congregation. The Board of Directors has generously added a dozen copies for Board members and community members to study.

We have found a volunteer, Elena Espinosa, to re-establish the book club in the near future. She will focus on topics that encourage us to take action according the 8th Principle that the church has recently adopted. The library already has many books appropriate to this venture. Elena has also agreed to join the Library Committee!

A second book cart has been donated, which will enable us to display some books for sale in the church foyer. This should generate more interest in the library, as well as provide another source of funds.

Regular columns were included in the Light most months. Many people have told us they read this column and are interested in what is new in the library.

Problem Areas

The main problem area for the library is funding. Since there is no available money from our slim budget, we have to rely on sales from the book cart and books donated by myself or from the community.

Plans for 2022

1. Open the library for more hours so that the business of the church can continue to expand in this venue.
2. Add current titles to our collection, primarily in the area of Racial Justice, to assist members in finding ways to implement the 8th Principle in their lives and in our church community as a whole.
3. Re-establish the book club and allow it to meet safely indoors.
4. Establish a study group to read and discuss the UUA Common Read and find ways to make it relevant to our community.
5. Establish a study group to read and discuss *Widening the Circle of Concern* and bring forth ideas for change to the congregation.
6. Open the library before and after Sunday services to have the Diane Taylor Book Cart more available for the congregation to purchase books.
7. Continue a regular column in The Light.
8. Augment the sections in our collection that have few books by using our account with COAS.

[Back to Top](#)

Social Justice Committee

In response to your request of October 1, the Social Justice Committee of UUCLC has prepared this report for 2021 and forecast for 2022. This document is prepared with the benefit of input from Jane Asche, Susan Bagby, Shirley Davis, Elwin Nunn, David Steele, Jan Thompson and Carol Winkler. Our report addresses the six bullets identified in your request.

1. Committee Mission: To create awareness, build community and effect systemic change for a more just and sustainable world for all living beings. (adopted by SJC in 2017). [Community encompasses the UUCLC, Las Cruces/southern NM, the nation or the world.]

We believe that our mission is consistent with the church's mission (current website). "Our Mission: To gather to inspire spiritual growth, care for each other and our community, seek truth, and work for justice in the world."

2. Annual goals and how they supported the mission.: The SJC did NOT establish specific goals for 2021. Due to the COVID pandemic, our committee has met by Zoom.

3. Annual activities and how they supported the goals:

- **8th Principle/Antiracism**: The 8th Principle Team, like the Multicultural Awareness Study and Action Group, was an outgrowth of the Southern NM UU Social Justice Collaborative which was established by our UUCLC Social Justice Committee 3 years ago. In November of 2021, two years will have passed since the Social Justice Committee, working with Rev. Kacela, organized the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Workshop which was held on November 16, 2019. Both the 8th Principle Team and the Multicultural Awareness Study and Action Group were the two follow-up initiatives to the 2019 IDI Workshop which have been chaired by Rodney Sauter and Shirley Davis, respectively. Members of the 2021 Social Justice Committee have participated in both groups and Shirley Davis is a member of our current SJC.
- **8th Principle/Antiracism**: Organized by Rodney Sauter, Kellie Ingram, Dave Rice and Shirley Davis, with the impetus provided by Rev. Xolani, a workshop was led by the Rev. Andrew Johnson (5/22/21). This workshop was attended by 21 from our congregation, including 5 from the general congregation, 5 staff or Board members, 6 from the 8th Principle Team and 5 from Multicultural Awareness group.
- A reenergized **litter-pickup** program was launched. When possible, this effort has collaborated with RE youth.
- The **Animal Ministries (See separate addendum to this report)**
- **Refugees and Immigrants**: UUCLC is being given the opportunity to practice radical hospitality as we did during the 2019 influx of asylum-seekers. So many of us participated in big and little ways to welcome migrants as they moved on to their sponsors throughout the U.S. This time, it is to welcome AND HELP SETTLE refugees right here in Las Cruces. Lutheran Family Services (LFS) in Las Cruces is a designated Refugee Resettlement Office. We have been told to expect 100 Afghans and 250 refugees from many other countries beginning in late November. Already, we have 8

volunteers signed up to work as a UU Team to assist the families in learning about our community and to act as an extension of the regular LFS staff.

- **A Little Free Pantry (LFP)** at UUCLC was established following an enthusiastic, generous response to an appeal to UUCLC in service for MLK Day. The LFP helps address food needs in our immediate community (the LFP is usually emptied within 24 hours).
- **Change for Change:** In the face of COVID restrictions, we used a special Zoom meeting to poll the congregation for selection of charities to benefit for our special offerings. The charities selected include My Friend's Place, El Calvario Immigrant Advocacy Center, Soroptimists International and La Casa (Domestic Abuse shelter).
- **Tents to Rents:** SJC urged members of UUCLC to support the Tents to Rents fundraiser by the Community of Hope. In raising approximately \$2,500 our congregation exceeded our goal by 150%!

4. Successes and how they were measured: I have included indications of successes in the bulleted list under point 3.

5. Problem areas:

- We believe that success of our SJ effort needs wider participation and support. For example, initial enthusiasm for the LFP has waned. We recognize that use of our unsupervised LFP has raised questions about use, but the team believes that benefits outweigh the concerns.
- The constraints of COVID crisis have discouraged interaction with those in need and in group efforts like meal preparation for immigrants (?). This has probably discouraged interfaith interactions but we have not had initiatives which challenged our inhibitions. (We note that this is a component of the BOT's Ministry Priorities (#4).)

6. Goals for the coming year

- **The 8th Principle and Antiracism:** We have discovered that many of the past social justice initiatives in our church, which have flourished for often a decade at a time, have been made successful by engaging the church membership in general, going far beyond the membership of the SJC. Since this strategy has worked so well in the past, it leads us to believe that this should be an ongoing goal of the SJC, especially as it relates to the 8th principle.
- **The 8th Principle and Antiracism:** Organize and invite the Community to a "Read On" February (Black History Month) afternoon featuring each person choosing a reading by a BIPOC author. This would be based on Kay Wikel's example of Feb 2019. Measure of success – at least 10 people attending whom we have not met previously.
- **Broader statement of SJC goals:** We will continue and improve the activities cited in bullet 3. Hopefully, suppression of the COVID pandemic will enable us to resume several activities which have been suspended.
- **Refugees and Asylum-seekers:** In addition to hands-on engagement with the families in an ongoing program (noted above), there will be other needs that will involve our

congregation such as providing transportation on occasion, planning intergenerational activities that will include our refugee families, fundraising to purchase new or used household furnishings, looking for housing and job opportunities for the many families coming to our city, etc. More Teams mean we can welcome more families.

- **SJC process:**
 - ***Congregational participation in SJC initiatives:*** *To work toward broad engagement of the congregational members in all initiatives related to social justice within our church and the broader community.* Educate ourselves and the congregation about what is desired for more involvement in Social Justice for the congregation – such as survey of congregation, Sunday Service led by SJC, feature our UUCLC history of personalities. Measure of success – listen to the congregation, accumulate comments and see 4 more people who attend the SJC meetings.
 - We will be more deliberate in measuring our efforts. Measures can include number of people served, number of people participating, financial support and hours of volunteer effort. Counting or measuring collaborations with other community groups might be worthy of measuring. (Have we taken leadership on an issue in LC?)
- **Goals, Mission and Vision:** We will revisit the Vision for SJC.

Ad hoc Recommendation: At one time UUCLC had a Council on Ministries which brought the various ministry teams together. We believe that such a Council could improve communication and collaboration within UUCLC.

Respectfully submitted by: David Rice, Chairperson of Social Justice Committee of UUCLC

[Back to Top](#)

Sunday Services Committee

Annual Report to the Committee on Ministry for 2021

Committee Mission: “Sunday Services works with the Minister, Director of Music, Director of Religious Education, and other committees and groups within the church to structure meaningful Sunday services.”

Goal for 2021

At the end of 2020, we did not know how long we would be doing remote services in 2021. Nor did we know what ‘hybrid’ platforms we could make available. Therefore, in keeping with the Mission of SSC, our Goal for 2021 was simple.

‘We will work with the Minister and Staff of UUCLC to consider and find solutions for whatever challenges the church faces in 2021, in order that meaningful worship continues.’ (From last year’s Report)

Our intention was to be collaborative and flexible as we did not know what contingencies we would be dealing with.

Annual Activities

An **online training** was held in 2 blocks for Service Associates in February 2021. 7 members of the SSC, most of them relatively new, attended.

Materials were made available in electronic form intermittently throughout the year to Service Associates. SA Scripts were updated a number of times to keep them relevant. SA Scripts were also revised for hybrid services, so that congregants both in the church’s sanctuary and on Zoom would be addressed and feel included. September 5, 2021 marked the re-opening of our Sanctuary and the in-person presence of a Service Associate.

Because we collaborated with several Guest Ministers and Speakers this year, a process was started by which the visiting Minister received a **Welcome letter**, including contact information for persons in the upcoming service, as well as a template of the Order of Service. Although some of this information is also communicated by Rev. Kacela to the Guest Minister(s), this process hopefully smoothed some bumps in the road for everyone involved when a Guest is speaking for us.

Successes

We believe that uninterrupted provision of Service Associates and Service Leaders is the best measure of the Committee’s success. A summary of our efforts is below. It included our past participation during 2021, as well as projections through the end of this calendar year.

Service Associates assisted in **51 Sunday services**. 34 of these services were virtual only. 17 were hybrid services. SAs also assisted in 2 special services (Good Friday and Christmas Eve).

Committee members **led 7 Sunday services**, and **supported 3** other individuals or committees to lead 3 more services.

Committee members welcomed and collaborated with **10 Guest Ministers and Speakers**.

Committee members **collaborated in 4 joint services** with other congregations. All these were virtual services.

Problem Areas

One of our co-chairs resigned last November. Additionally, several members of the SSC chose to no longer participate in services. This decrease in our numbers started last year but became more apparent during 2021. Some members of the SSC have not yet returned to the Sanctuary, so this too has also curtailed the number of available volunteers to be Service Associates. This possible decrease was noted as a possible challenge in last year's report.

Plans for 2021

The most pressing and important challenge for the SSC is recruitment. The current Chair will be resigning from that role at the end of this year, although she will remain on the Committee. There are approximately 5 SSC members who are able to participate on a regular basis as a Service Associate or Leader. There are about 3 others who are only occasionally available. As you can see from the statistics above, we simply do not currently have enough people to reasonably share the need to assist in services.

It is my opinion that having a lay person involved in Sunday worship is an important tradition of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces. However, we need more volunteers to be Service Associates.

Otherwise, the SSC will continue our Mission - to help provide and support meaningful worship services for the congregation.

Submitted on 11/14/2021 by Maggie Locatelli, Chair, SSC

[Back to Top](#)

The 8th Principle Congregational Presentation

Deepening Our Commitment to Building Beloved Community in Las Cruces and Beyond

The 8th Principle

“We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”

8thprincipleuu.org

UUCLC’s Ongoing Journey Toward Spiritual Wholeness

- **March 18, 2018:** Mosaic Makers Workshop: *Moving from White Supremacy Culture to The Beloved Community, Part 1*
- **2018** Adult RE Discussions on *Centering* and *Waking up White*
- **April 29, 2018:** Called Rev. Dr. Xolani Kacela
- **August 25, 2018 to March 7, 2020:** Southern NM Social Justice Collaborative
- **November 16, 2019:** Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Workshop
- **February 2020 – Ongoing:** Multicultural Awareness Group
- **March 2020 – Ongoing:** 8th Principle Project Team
 - Led 2 Worship Services
 - 1 Roundtable with Dr. Dulcinea Lara
 - Facilitated Casita meetings with Multicultural Awareness Group
 - Ongoing participation in the 8th Principle Learning Community led by Paula Cole Jones and Bruce Pollack-Johnson
- **October 2020:** “Black and Brown Lives Matter” Sign
- **March 2021:** 8th Principle Virtual Casita Meetings (5 meetings, 8 facilitators, 36 participants)
- **May 22, 2021:** Multikulti Workshop (approx. 30 participants)
- **Ongoing:** Numerous other worship services, roundtables, etc.

[Widening the Circle of Concern Implementation Plan FINAL 6.21.21.docx \(uua.org\)](#)

Study/action guide: [Widening the Circle of Concern | UUA.org](#)

Additional congregational resources are available: [Institutional Change Congregation Resources | UUA.org](#)

8th-Principle-related Actions of Immediate Witness, Statement of Conscience, and the Proposed Article II Responsive Resolution passed at General Assembly here: [Business Agenda | General Assembly | UUA.org](#)

For more on the ongoing work of the [Article II Study Commission | UUA.org](#)

Adopting the 8th Principle

- The 8th Principle Project Team proposes a congregational meeting in September, or when it best fits with our church calendar, to vote on the adoption of the 8th Principle at UUCLC.
- Let's act on the sign in our parking lot!
- Let's add our voice to the chorus of nearly 100 other UU congregations and organizations that have already adopted the 8th Principle!

[Back to Top](#)

SUMMARY REPORT 2021 FALL AUCTION AND PANCAKE BREAKFAST

event date 10/30/2021

Report 11.7.21

K. Fitzgerald

During late spring a committee was convened to plan a Fall Auction of Events and Services by the chair of the Finance Committee, Katie Fitzgerald. Members of the committee included Jan Thompson, Sally Atkinson, Steve and Susan Hychka, Sara Thomas and Bill Fitzgerald. Early on the committee was determined to NOT have this event like the spring auctions usually held by the UUCLC. Just coming out of COVID isolation the emphasis was on bringing the community together, having fun, and raising some money for the church.

Planning began in June with weekly ZOOM meetings of the committee. It was clear in order to comply with the COVID guidelines and protect everyone's health, this event would need to be held outdoors. That led to the purchase of three easy up tents (costs were covered by donations from members.) These tents would be governed by Facilities and thus available to any committee who needed them in the future. The first date chosen for the auction did not allow sufficient time for volunteers to come forward with donations, so the auction was scheduled for late October after the sanctuary had been reopened and we had time to adequately communicate our plans to everyone.

The 2021 Pancake Breakfast and Fall Auction is history and what an event we had! The Lush Life Quintet set the tone with upbeat music that set our spirits dancing. The pancakes were good and the company the absolutely best! We served 119 people; as the materials were donated, the entrance fee yielded \$595 profit.

Bidding in the silent auction was brisk but nothing compared to what happened during the Live Auction --- bidding went through the roof particularly for Elwin's Truffles which were a HUGE HIT. Elwin had provided some samples and as one friend put it, "I never had a chocolate truffle for breakfast before- it was GREAT! I will have to do that again."

Two events drew so much interest that the hosts volunteered to offer a second seating: Nancy Anderson and Charlie Scholz' Wine and Tapas and the Hychka's Greek Dinner. We had a private donation of \$200 from one of our members and others said "keep the change" with their entrance fees.

While it is hard to measure congeniality and community, many attendees noted what a good time they had, how they enjoyed getting together and the band was a good idea as were the tents. This informal feedback was useful to the committee. Plans are already underway for the next auction *A Night at the Races* to be held on May 5, 2021.

Final tally for this event—

Gate	\$ 595
Donations	261
Silent Auction	5,210
Live Auction	2,921
AUCTION Gross	\$8,987
Fee for band	165
Net Income Auction	\$8,822

Net gain over \$ 8,800 --- many thanks to our wonderful donors, terrific volunteers and the community, who came out to make it such a special event.

[Back to Top](#)

UUCLC Safe Opening Task Force Report and Recommendations, July 6, 2021

Task Force Members and Representation: Peggy Brown (Hospitality), Joel Brown (RE), Peggy Devlin (member at large), Joan Dormody (Caring Committee), Tom Dormody (Committee on Ministry), Katya Gonzalez (member at large), Kellie Ingram (RE, staff representative), Maggie Locatelli (Sunday Services and Choir), and Dave Steele (Task Force Chair).

Background:

On Sunday, September 5, 2021 UUCLC is scheduled to resume in person worship, fellowship (e.g., coffee hour), Religious Education, Round Table presentations, committee meetings, and social events (e.g., Gallery openings), etc. Board President Susan Hychka directed the task force to formulate guidelines for the safe reopening of the congregation based on the guidelines of CDC, NM State Department of Health, local public health officials, and emerging information about the natural history of the COVID virus and its variants. Susan stressed that in reopening our goal is to minimize health risks and enhance members' sense of safety and security.

Preamble:

As members of the Safe Opening Task Force, we are sensitive to the reality that the pandemic has been a difficult time for virtually all members of the congregation and that it has taken a psychological toll. While we all look forward to getting back to “normal,” some church members may feel vulnerable and anxious about reengaging in in-person gatherings. No one knows what the future holds for the pandemic. Because of the emergence of new variants of the virus and the fact that there is considerable variability across the country in vaccination rate and adherence to other mitigation guidelines, case rates and hospitalization may surge in the fall or winter. There is no telling when the CDC and WHO will be able to confidently deliver the message that we all want to hear: “The pandemic has ended! COVID is no longer a threat.”

We value our relationships within the congregation and want to create a sense of safety and security for all of us to renew friendships with one another through our engagement with the church community. We acknowledge that the recommendations listed below may seem overly stringent to some. However, we make these recommendations in an effort to include those among us who are anxious about re-engaging in church activities because they feel at particular risk due to age or preexisting medical conditions. In our judgement continued mask wearing, for example, is a small price to pay to make it possible for others to feel more comfortable to participate in church activities. By making small sacrifices for one another we demonstrate our love and our commitment to the belief in the “inherent worth and dignity of every person.” In this spirit, the Task Force unanimously encourages the Board and minister to translate the recommendations it adopts in the form of a *covenant* that church members will enter into and observe for the duration of the pandemic.

Recommendations:

- 1- We strongly encourage all church members, friends, and attendees to be fully vaccinated by the September 5th opening of in person church activities. Vaccination not only protects oneself, but

contributes to the health, safety, and sense of security of members of our church community. Fully vaccinated is defined as follows: Administration of the single dose Johnson and Johnson preparation followed by a two week stay at home period; OR both administrations of the Pfizer or Moderna preparations at the prescribed intervals followed by a two week stay at home period. It should be noted that the best medical evidence available indicates that persons who have tested positive for the virus and have recovered also need to be vaccinated to minimize the risk of re-infection.

- 2- For the health, safety, and sense of security of all members of the congregation, we expect all persons attending indoor church activities to wear properly fitting face coverings, regardless of vaccination status. Disposable masks will be made available to persons who do not have their own face covering.
- 3- Masks will not be required of vaccinated persons participating in outdoor activities or events, unvaccinated persons, however, should wear masks and observe social distancing at outdoor events.
- 4- Recognizing that people have varying levels of comfort about close physical contact with persons outside of their own households, we recommend the adoption of a “red, yellow, green” dot system attached to one’s name badge to communicate personal preferences/comfort with physical contact: a red dot indicates that the individual does not wish touch in the form of hugs, handshakes, kissing, etc; a yellow dot indicates that the individual is comfortable with elbow or fist bumping; and a green dot indicates that the individual is comfortable with handshakes, hugs, and close contact.
- 5- Children and adults participating in RE instruction and programs are expected to wear masks at all times and to practice good hand hygiene through hand washing or the use of hand sanitizers.
- 6- Hand sanitizing stations should be installed and stocked at entry points for all campus buildings including the lobby, sanctuary, RE Great Room and classrooms, and Library/Administration building.
- 7- Indoor meeting spaces should be properly ventilated to maximize the free flow of air and dispersal of microscopic particulate matter. When weather conditions permit this may include leaving doors and/or windows partially open, ceiling fans and heating/air condition units activated’
- 8- Clearly visible, readable, and unambiguous signage should be created and posted throughout the campus notifying persons of UUCLC safe opening requirements and expectations.
- 9- Worship services and Round Table presentations should continue to be made available through ZOOM or other live streaming technology for remote access by those who are unable to attend such events. We further recommend that these events be recorded and archived for asynchronous access.
- 10- “Safe Opening” recommendations should remain in place until the United States CDC formally declares an end to the pandemic.

[Back to Top](#)

Minister and Church report for CoM for 2021

Rev. Xolani Kacela

November 16, 2021

1. Committee Mission:

To gather to inspire spiritual growth, care for each other and our community, seek truth, and work for justice in the world.

2. Annual goals and how they supported the mission

We create inspiring worship that: helps people make meaning of their lives within loving community; encourages people to participate fully and often in church life, bring friends and family, generates 10% more attendance, motivates members to fulfill their pledges (90% collected), and activates 3 more SAs over the course of CY 21.

Result: I continue to receive positive feedback on worship. Would like to see more new members and new pledges. We did add new SAs.

UUCLC is known as a caring place that encourages spiritual development & community-building as measured by robust program attendance, 1 new Fresh Start covenant groups, and at least one congregation-wide SJ effort that addresses some systemic problem in our community by May 31.

Result: We didn't activate the Fresh Start groups as hoped for. No reason, except not intentional enough. SJC exceeded expectations with several initiatives to dismantle systemic issues, to include: overflowing a partner church with food donations (can goods); providing support to immigrant communities; and opening the Little Free Pantry.

We attract new people (young families, POCs, neighbors, and LGBTQ) to church as measured by signing 5% more members, recording a 5% increase in overall program participation, and 10% increase in our volunteer base by Dec 31.

Result: New people are coming, especially visitors. We've had new people sign the book, but they have not pledged robustly. Our volunteer base needs shoring up.

3. Annual activities and how they supported the goals

Worship – Weekly worship featured Soul Matters themes, seasonal programming, and special days such as Valentine's Day. We had several preachers from non-UU spiritual traditions and several guest UU ministers. We added new SAs, who worked hard. We need to recruit more or use them less to avoid burnout.

We continued with joint worship with several congregations.

We returned to in-person worship on Sept 5.

RE – See DRE's report.

Music – See Dir. of Music's report.

Admin – See Office Amin's report.

Auctions – two auctions netted about \$17k and generated high levels of participation

Volunteer Appreciation – Acknowledged Top 10 volunteers

Stewardship – Theme: Set Your Sails for 2022 – the verdict is out.

Webinars – xk led several sessions of training and adult education for committee chairs and all interested.

4. Successes and how they were measured

MLK, Jr. Service with UUC of Las Vegas; several collaborations w/XK's colleagues, such as Animal dedication led by Rev. Russell Eleven, UU Animal Ministry Chaplain; healing circle for BoT facilitated by PWR consultants; UUCLC at UUA General Assembly; Safe Reopening TF

developed protocols for reopening; Dir. of Music took sabbatical & music kept playing; and RE increased visibility substantially in worship.

Re-opening was excellent; measured by robust attendance and dual platform worship capacity.

Sanctuary renovation completed in Oct; measured by new aesthetics, sound and video.

8th Principle adopted after year-long preparation, study and, planning. Paula Cole Jones, speaker.

Hired new staffers and bid farewell to two: Knut Brekke & Sara Reyes; measured by successful transition of new staff and continuity in workflow. Both departures were due to new opportunities taken.

Funding for UUCLC ministry was on-budget throughout the year. A success in itself.

Many committees are robust and performing at an elevated level: Caring Team, CoM, SJC, LDC, Board, Facilities, Hospitality

5. Problem areas:

Anticipating drop in pledges due to broader economic issues facing community, such as inflation, unemployment, and ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Need committee chairs for Greeters and Membership Cmtes

6. Goals for the upcoming year

To be determined by the BoT based on recommendations from Working Group subcommittee.

[Back to Top](#)

Office Administration Report for Committee on Ministry

By Cheri Coffelt

11/15/2021

I. Mission of your sphere of work.

My mission as the Church Administrator is to support the UUCLC staff and congregation in their mission to be a welcoming spiritual community, guided by love and UU principles, emphasizing inclusiveness and social justice.

Some of the ways I influence and contribute to the mission:

- A. To create an positive atmosphere of friendliness, kindness and compassion to the church and community members.
- B. Assist the minister and staff in their goals and priorities in ministry to the congregation.
- C. To help engage the church members and attendees in the service of the church and to assist them with their endeavors to serve the mission of the church.
- D. To maintain accurate financial records and keep the membership database current to better serve church operations and the committees.
- E. To ensure the needs of members and attendees are made known to the appropriate staff members and committees.
- F. To ensure the facilities of the church are in good condition and the appropriate individuals are aware of any problems or needs.
- G. Ordering of office and custodial supplies and needs of the staff to facilitate their work.

II. Annual Goals and how they supported the mission

- A. Create a welcoming atmosphere in the Church Administration Office by ensuring callers and visitors are greeted warmly and assisted in a timely manner. This obviously supports the vision to be a welcoming community.
- B. Create and maintain procedures to organize and create SOP's for the Church Administrator. By having procedures and organization we can efficiently work toward our goals without being hindered by obstacles caused by chaos.
- C. Fellowship 1 database kept current and updated each week. This database keeps a list of our members, visitors and attendees. It is a very important piece of our equation to serve others.

III. Annual activities and how they supported the goals

- A. The consistent sometimes seemingly boring tasks of recording donations, visitors, updating the member information, plays an integral role impacting the entire church and staff. Without accurate organized records and information we are unable to fulfill our mission goals.

- B. The virtual auction in May raised awareness of the UUCLC in the Las Cruces community and gave church members an opportunity to engage. It raised almost \$9,000 and was a win/win for our church.

IV. Successes and how they were measured

- A. Assisted the minister with administrative tasks and keeping the congregation engaged.
- B. Operated the church office during the pandemic.
- C. Kept members informed of events and schedules
- D. Assisted in editing and compiling the Light
- E. Managed and implemented the first Virtual Auction for the UUCLC
- F. Made the bank deposits for the Finance Committee from January to June
- G. Weekly financial reports to the bookkeeper and Finance Committee
- H. Became more proficient with our database and website helped keep them updated.
- I. Assisted with the Stewardship 2022 Campaign.
- J. Assisted with the Reopening of the Church
- K. Found new ways to engage and connect with our congregation during the pandemic
 - Week at a Glance
 - Cards and notes to those who were ill or celebrating special birthdays.
 - Asked members to submit photos for social media
 - Created New Year's photo card and mailed to congregation
 - Worked with the Membership Committee and efforts to stay connected with members.
 -

V. Problem areas

- A. I sense there is an element of discontent among some of our congregation and it seems to spill out from individuals, creating a toxic environment. We need to create an atmosphere of love and support and refuse to engage in behavior that does not uplift and build toward our goals. I believe as individuals who have a leadership role in the congregation the Board of Trustees and Committee Chairs should set an example for the type of behavior we want to see from our members.
- B. Security/Safety on Campus – this remains to be an important area of concern, both from Covid and vandalism.

VI. Goals for the upcoming year

- A. Continue to create a welcoming atmosphere in the Church Administration Office by ensuring callers and visitors are greeted warmly and assisted in a timely manner.
- B. Create and maintain procedures to organize and create SOP's for the Church Administrator, and to train others in procedures.
- C. Fellowship 1 database kept current and updated.

[Back to Top](#)

UUCLC MUSIC REPORT—2021

Catherine Massey, Director of Music

The music program for the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces continued to thrive, albeit carefully, during 2021. Throughout the year we followed all the protocols and best practices available in terms of finding ways to keep the Choir connected and providing quality music for worship each Sunday.

In January, February, and March the choir continued to meet weekly on Zoom, sharing joys and sorrows, singing warmups and songs, and using special resources for enrichment. Since many music professionals were accessible through Zoom sessions, I was able to do a singing workshop with UU jazz singer, composer, and Berklee School of Music professor Jeannie Gagne in Boston, and regularly sing chants of Hildegard von Bingen with Devi Mathieu of the Bay Area. Some of these resources were sharable with the choir.

For worship we continued using what we learned the previous year. Through my membership with Association for UU Music Ministries I kept informed about COVID protocols for singers and gained access to quality music videos produced and/or gathered by my colleagues. We relied on these to use during Zoom worship, in addition to providing live song leading and the use of a few UUCLC Choir anthems recorded on DVDs of previous services. We collaborated with guest ministers, other congregations, and our own lay leaders to support remote worship services with good music each Sunday.

Beginning in April and May the choir moved into a hybrid mode. We continued meeting weekly on Zoom, and those who felt comfortable and able met biweekly in person to sing together. We met outside and in the church lobby, masked, distanced, and not singing for more than a half hour. From these meetings the choir provided recordings which we used in Zoom worship, and we also experimented with performing live (remotely) one Sunday morning from the lobby.

In August we went back to weekly choir rehearsals to prepare for our hybrid worship Ingathering in September. We instituted the protocol of using the choir or songleader for the hymns, asking the congregation to hum only. The choir was there for that first service in the sanctuary, and then I went on sabbatical for a few weeks. Maggie Locatelli coordinated music for worship in my absence, and I know we are all very grateful for that.

Upon my return the choir has resumed weekly rehearsals and singing for worship whenever I am there. I am happy to report that we have added two new members to the choir, and our in-person numbers are approaching normalcy. I believe as long as we are attentive to the latest informed protocols we will continue to feel comfortable and safe about singing together. That is our plan for the rest of the year.

[Back to Top](#)

Religious Education

Mission Statement for RE-The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces Religious Education Program is to develop strong, committed Unitarian Universalists through creation of a learning environment which engages our youth in living our UU principles, and offers opportunities for connecting with each other and the larger community.

2021-2022 Religious Education Committee Annual Goals

1. Sustain the RE Program using safe, social distancing throughout the pandemic:
2. Develop a plan and safely transition to in-person classes when feasible. This plan will include any steps planned by the UUCLC leadership for a transition to in-person worship.
3. Build connections within the UUCLC and the community.
4. Foster spiritual growth of RE members through workshops and study of curriculum models

Annual Activities-

During 2021 RE held one hour Sunday classes through Zoom every Sunday until the return to in-person classes where we have remained hybrid.

Starting in **January of '21** RE began a curriculum on **World Religions**, where we had a monthly guest speakers join us via Zoom to discuss their preferred religion.

RE had a **Val-Pal Program in February '21** which saw both youth and RE adults participate.

In honor of **2021 Black History Month** the youth gave reports on hidden historical figures.

February '21- May '21 saw RE attend Truffle Making sessions at UUC member Elwin Nunn's home.

RE began a **Mural Curriculum in the Spring of '21**, which included a walking fieldtrip aimed at learning more about NM's local artist and murals.

With collaboration from a local boy scout troop, RE began work on the UUC mural in **March of '21**.

An **Easter Event** was held on the church campus in **April of '21**, which included an egg hunt and the art and construction of the **Little Free Pantry**.

With help from UUC members and volunteers RE held a successful **Makers Camp in June of '21** on the church campus.

In **July of '21** RE held weekly events in person and online, including game day and mural painting.

In **Aug, Sept, Oct, and Nov of '21**, RE has held **Mural Paintings Events** for the youth.

Youth participated in the **October '21 UUCLC Auction**.

RE youth & adults alike participated in the **October '21 Southern NM Pride Event**, running the booth and marching in the parade holding the UU Flag.

RE held a Trunk or Treat on **10/31/21**

Plans for **Nov & Dec of '21** include Art Night, Gift Box Making, Candle Making, Cards for Vets, a Christmas get-together and more.

Success has been measured in a multitude of ways. Of course, building the program up from 2 to 5 to 7 to 11 enrolled students has been an achievement, especially considering the availability pandemic.

The youth's involvement in community has been complicated given the pandemic yet has resulted in many contributions including the youth's decision to donate funds from the Holiday Box program as well as their decision on the theme of the UUC mural. Here success was measured by the youth's own abilities to make those decisions based on the teachings of RE. Lastly & possibly personally- Success has been measured by the youth's willingness to be involved in class and activities without prompts. Friendships have been established and continue to grow. Support for each other has been seen at sporting and art events outside of the church. The youth have recognized that RE is fun and educational and want to be present for it.

Problem Areas-Religious Educations main problem area as of now (besides the constant ability to adjust to the pandemic) is church member & volunteer involvement.

While several adult members have reached out to volunteer their time and or offer support by donating supplies and or skills, the program needs volunteers to thrive.

Reestablishing TFAA has been RE's attempt at engaging with the congregation and to remind folks that Religious Education is continuously growing and adjusting to the times.

Goals for Next Year-

-Continue to sustain and grow the RE program while safely transitioning back into indoor classrooms.

-Offer a new curriculum to the older youth using the **Indigenous Peoples History of the US** course.

-Seek out routine classroom & event volunteers, establishing a connection with RE and UUCLC members.

-Finish the RE mural.

-Build greater connections within the community.

-Offer the youth in a monthly /bimonthly" curriculum for all" night.

- Foster spiritual growth of RE members, youth and adult alike through workshops and study of curriculum models.

[Back to Top](#)