

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Desert
Annual Congregational Business Meeting, May 16, 2021
Minutes

Attending:

BOD Attending by Zoom Meeting: President Jane Zaun, 1st Vice President Carol Lavoie, 2nd Vice President Linda Savard, Treasurer Jerry L'Hommedieu, Secretary Rod Belshee, Director-at-Large Mack Rogers, Director-at-Large Bob Rancourt, Minister Reverend Barbara Fast and Assistant Minister Ian Riddell.

Meeting minutes:

Establishing a Quorum:

Thirty-five members are needed to have a quorum. There were 62 members (and 5 friends) in attendance by Zoom. In addition, there were 4 mail-in ballots received, for a total of 66 members. President Jane declared the quorum requirement met.

Virtual Meeting Remarks: President Jane

President Jane read the *Statement from the President on the Virtual Meeting* (which is attached as an appendix to these minutes) to establish the legality of holding this meeting on Zoom. She also explained the use Election Buddy to conduct the vote. Voting will open at 12:30 PM and will be open until Monday at 12:30. She then reviewed the meeting agenda.

1. Opening and Chalice Lighting: President Jane

Jane called the Annual Congregational Business Meeting to order at 11:18 pm PST by Zoom Meeting. Jane led a reading while she lit the chalice.

2. Report from the President on the Business of the Church: President Jane Zaun

President Jane submitted a written report (attached).

President Jane shared that the year presented many opportunities and much to be grateful for. She expressed gratitude to the Production Team who recently worked to understand the Facebook stream interruptions. She acknowledged and thanked the Care Team for calling everyone in the congregation and checking on them and caring for friends and members with food, phone calls and cookies throughout the year. She expressed gratitude for Carol and Peter for the great auction and Bingo Night held on zoom.

The aim of Board and committees was to keep the church together this year as we stayed home to be safe from Covid-19. Lifespan Spiritual Education and Stewardship helped keep us together with many offerings on zoom. Rod Belshee has put in many hours of research to figure out how we can do a multi-platform service once we are back in the building for services. Jane expressed great gratitude to him for this and to Rob Duwors for the Spirit Grant proposal that enabled us to fund our new AV equipment, and thanked Steve Kerr for all his prep work in getting the building ready for installation of our new equipment. We are not sure when we will be back in the sanctuary for Sunday services.

A new ministry was started at the church this year, the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Ministry (DIBM). Their vision will lead us into our future here at UUCOD. Change is coming.

In closing President Jane, urged us to hold on to the dreams they will become our reality.

3a. Report from the Minister on the State of the Church: Reverend Barbara Fast

Reverend Barbara submitted a written report (attached).

She highlighted that Shared Ministry at UUCOD has expanded and is owned by the community. Developmental Goals were embraced and accomplished, and those that remain have become strategic goals.

Don't be afraid of some change. Don't be afraid to be the change. Don't be afraid to be changed.

Reverend Barbara recounted the trauma we have experience this year. We have lived through unprecedented times. We adapted to meet the challenges, we endured the pain and loss and we took up the challenges to as the poet wrote to *change each other's despair into hope*.

Reverend Barbara praised the congregation, the Board and DIBM for starting the long journey toward reducing racism in ourselves and our community. She thanked all of the amazing people who have done so much to keep programs going throughout the pandemic, from Lifespan Spiritual Education to Social Justice to Sunday Worship and so much more.

She welcomed and praised Reverend Ian. She closed by remarking how exceedingly grateful she feels for these three years.

3b. Report from the Assistant Minister: Reverend Ian Riddell

Reverend Ian submitted a brief written report (attached). He thanked congregation for welcoming him, and the Care Team and Rev. Barbara for their shared ministry with him. He is grateful for his time working with the Worship Committee, the Lifespan Spiritual Education Committee, and the choir. He has gratitude for being able to be in partnership with Reverend Barbara in discussing

Widening the Circle and attending Beloved Conversations. He is looking forward to the coming year and is excited about future.

3c. Report from the Assistant Minister: Reverend Don Stouder

Reverend Don submitted a brief written report (attached). President Jane summarized his report, which reflected on the incredibly challenging year this has been for Chaplains in health care.

4. Reports from the Standing Committees:

Rod Belshee submitted a written report, and highlighted a few items, including building shutdown and re-opening, Covid-19 protocols, and resuming work parties.

The Finance report was shared by Sarita Gonzales. She highlighted the successful Pledge Drive, very good attendance at Finance meetings, and the Committee commitment to supporting the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Ministry (DIBM). They will work toward bringing a proposal to the Congregation to retire the mortgage. They are in need of someone to lead pledge drive for the coming year. And they plan to look at finance policies and fundraising.

The Membership report was shared by Randy Steele. The Committee reaches out to visitors as well as new members. New classes will be offered in October via Zoom and will include DIBM with new member training.

The Social Justice Committee report was shared by Denise Janssen Eager. She shared that Covid-19 did not stop them; they persisted in their work using Zoom. She summarized and thanked many who participated in Social Justice activities including those not on the committee.

5. Approval of the Church's Operating Budget for FY 2021-22:

Jerry L'Hommedieu shared the proposed budget for the coming year. He shared that budgets are a best estimate of what we will have and what we will need. The Finance Committee and the Board have been working on Budget since January. The coming year's budget is about \$35,000 more than this year's budget as we expand to a full-time ministry and increase our administrative staffing. We will apply some of this year's excess revenue to help cover the deficit. He thanked everyone for their generosity this year.

A member asked if there is rental income in the budget? Jerry replied yes, \$16,000, however we may get more. We are currently being conservative on those numbers. Sarita added that this budget was carefully gone over by the Finance Committee, who unanimously believes this is a doable budget.

The lack of candidates for the Treasurer position was briefly discussed. The position has been restructured to reduce the workload, notably through the addition of an Administrator with more skills and more hours. However not having a Treasurer could create legal problems for us. Members are encouraged to contact Jerry to discuss the opportunity, and he has volunteered to help the new Treasurer get up and running.

6. Elections to fill the following vacancies on the Board of Directors:

Joni Paddock, representing the Nominating Committee, introduced the following candidates:

- a) President – Linda Savard (for a 2-year term)
- b) 1st Vice President – Hiroshi Yamaguchi (for a 2-year term)
- c) 2nd Vice President – Linda Moretti (for year 2 of a 2-year term)
- d) Treasurer – Open Position (a 2-year term)
- e) Director at Large – Robert Rancourt (for a 2-year term)

7. Election to fill vacancies on the Nominating Committee

- a) Jane Zaun (for a 2-year term)
- b) Carol Lavoie (for a 2-year term)

8. Other matters that may arise during the meeting

Members took the opportunity to thank President Jane for her service and leadership in a very challenging year.

9. Extinguish Chalice and Adjournment

Jane adjourned the Annual Congregational Business Meeting at 12:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rod Belshee, Secretary
assisted by Linda Savard, 2nd VP

June 15, 2021
Date Approved

Addendum to Board of Directors Meeting Written Reports of President, Ministers and Standing Committees

Attachments

Written Reports President, Minister's, and Standing Committees

- a) Statement from the President on the Virtual Meeting
- b) President Jane Zaun's written report
- c) Minister Reverend Barbara Fast written report
- d) Assistant Minister Reverend Ian W. Riddell's written report
- e) Affiliated Community Minister Reverend Don Stouder's written report
- f) Facilities Committee Chair Rod Belshee's written report

a. Statement from the President on the Virtual Meeting:

Good Morning,

Welcome to our 2nd Virtual Annual Business Meeting. We are conducting this meeting under the California State Non-Profit Law that permits virtual meetings.

We remain virtual rather than in-person because of continuing health concerns created by the Coronavirus pandemic. Some time in our future, hopefully next year, we look forward to having our Annual Business Meeting in person in our Sanctuary.

We have again utilized one of the UUA recommended online systems called Election Buddy. **MEMBERS (who have not already voted by absentee ballot)** will receive an email at 12:30 PM today that contains a link to Election Buddy, for online voting. When you open the link, the ballot will come up. It is very easy to navigate through it. If you forget an item, the system will remind you and you cannot submit the ballot until you have completed what you forgot.

Once you have submitted your ballot, you cannot return to change an entry.

The system will not permit you to vote twice.

The Election Buddy System will be open until Monday, May 17 at 12:30PM so please cast your vote prior to that time. By Tuesday, May 18th, we will have tallied all the votes and will email you a report of the election.

b. President Jane Zaun's written report:

As I pondered what words represented this past year for me. I remember some of the words on the stones under beautiful statue that Gene Kain donated at the Church. Words expressing the loss, grief, sorrow, change. Those words resonated with me also. In addition, other words kept coming up for me: **Opportunity, Generosity, and Gratitude.**

The transformation of our Worship Services to include online FB Live Streaming is presenting an opportunity for outreach to our local community as well as a broader public welcoming. Some of our new members found us on FB Live. And sometimes we are on Zoom like today where we can wave at each other.

I am told with the recent interruptions in FB live streaming, the tech team including a copyright team, have spent hours and hours scanning equipment, researching, exploring how to move forward in this new environment where hackers and algorithm BOTS wander the internet causing problems.

We owe deep gratitude to our Production Team and Worship Committee for their dedication in bringing these services to us.

Even those of us with limited tech skills had the opportunity, well more of a necessity, to learn zoom. For some of us, learning Zoom was a big deal. Thanks to our technology wizards for their assistance.

We took every ZOOM opportunity to stay together and build our community.

Our Care team called every one of us. We offer so much gratitude to every Care Team member who supported us through the losses and grief, with calls, cards, food, cookies, zoom visits. They held us in love through this time.

And FUN---Oh Boy it did not take us long to figure out how to have fun on Zoom. The Auction and Bingo were amazing... generosity and laughter flowed freely. It was marvelous; I have such good memories of those nights.

Keeping our community strong and growing has been a top goal for all of us.

Many of us for years have desired more adult RE classes. Well, Zoom brought us that opportunity also. Much Gratitude for our Lifespan Spiritual Development Team and the extraordinary events they brought us with classes like Building Your Own Theology, book discussions, Tai Chi, Diversity 101, coffee and conversation, and movies like *Mama Gloria* that we watched yesterday.

And our Stewardship Committee and Social BUUterflies have joined in with creating opportunities for us to connect with each other.....Sunday Together, Happy Hour, Let's Get Together, Art Talk. Gratitude to all the members of Stewardship.

There are those among us who are dreamers and visionaries. The idea to continue live streaming worship when we eventually return to the Sanctuary prompted an exploration of an Audio-Visual project.

Rod Belshee envisioned, researched, consulted, attended dozens and dozens of virtual church services, designed, brought together interested members and friends thus began the AV project. We owe Rod our deepest gratitude for his generosity of time and talents to make this happen.

Rob DuWors lent his immense skills to writing the grant. Many of you generously donated a lot of your treasure to match the grant. It was a watershed moment when the Spirit Level Foundation approved our grant. AV purchase and installation is underway.

We all owe a special gratitude to Rod and Rob. In addition, a special thanks to Steve Kerr for the prep work he is doing prior to installation.

Some of us just participated in a PWR conversation about UUA's visioning a multiplatform approach to "Church" and Worship: Simultaneously in-person and through a virtual platform. Well, we are already on our way thanks to our dreamers and visionaries.

The opportunity for Widening our Circle is led by our Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Ministry; they are also dreamers and visionaries as they lead us on a journey to create a multicultural, anti-racist beloved community. Special Gratitude to Sarita, Hiroshi, Lance, Fran, Sandy, Rob, Diana, and Rev. Barbara for participating in the inception of this Ministry.

Well, in my vision, we are a remarkably skilled and dedicated group of people who are generous with our time and talents. Held close by our Covenant we journeyed with Rev Barbara and Rev. Ian this year experiencing the stressors of 2020 together. We are in a transition time, again in a time of change. Rev. Barbara is leaving for full retirement. And we welcome Rev. Ian as our lead Minister. As time goes on, during the re-entry, we will create our new normal.

Speaking of re-entry, I know everyone is wondering when we will be back in the sanctuary on Sunday morning. Our Covid Protocol Team has researched best practices in the UUA, CDC, and County Statistics and provided us with guidance this whole year on our Phased Covid Protocols. Our most recent Phase I Indoor Protocols do address indoor gatherings except for Sunday Worship services; they are posted on the Webpage. We all want to return to in-person Worship services, and we want to balance inclusivity with being good stewards of our health and safety. The installation of the AV equipment is part of our consideration as are vaccinations. Although we have no specific answers at this time when in-person Worship services will resume the Board keeps apprised of changes and will advise you when we know.

This is the closing of my term on the Board. Out of the 2 years 2/3 or 16 months have been in during the Pandemic. This year's Board has served entirely during the Pandemic. We have worked well together. While we attended to the business of the Church and created our new Strategic Goals, we enjoyed and appreciated each other.

For me, the opportunity to make new friends, deepen existing friendships, and be of service on the Board has been the joy in the journey.

I have overwhelming gratitude to the Board members for journeying with me. For lending your leadership and support to steady the boat and navigate the waters. Carol Lavoie, and Jerry L'Hommedieu, are also leaving the Board in June, but Linda Savard, Rod Belshee, Mack Rogers, and Bob Rancourt along with the new Board candidates will continue to bring you their steady hand in guiding this community through the re-entry process and all that entails.

In closing, I would add hold on to the dreams and visions for they become our reality. Thank you.

c. Minister Reverend Barbara Fast's written report:

Sustaining Connection, Widening the Circle, Gratitude

The "State of the Church" report is to be presented by the Minister, "assessing the Church's performance in meeting the past year's objectives..."

It's useful to be required to give an annual report. It is an aid to refreshing recollection as to how much has been accomplished as well as seeing that which remains to be done. I think of a State of the Church report partly as a state of the Spirit of the Church report. From where I am, it appears that the state of the Shared Ministry at UUCOD has expanded and is owned by the community. Developmental Goals were encouraged by the work of the BOD and committees, and refined at the Church Council. Those that remain have become strategic goals, as the developmental ministry comes to a close.

Don't be afraid of some change. Don't be afraid to be the change. Don't be afraid to be changed.

We have lived through unprecedented times. We adapted to meet the challenges, we endured the pain and loss and we took up the challenges to as the poet wrote to *change each other's despair into hope.*

Briefly: Mass shootings, rising rates of hate crimes against black, Hispanic, immigrants and Asian Americans. The never-ending police violence against POC, BLM protests. RBG's death. The rush to seat another justice. The election, get out the vote efforts, the fears about voter suppression, the lies about voter fraud, the outcome of the election, the truth about the election, the lies about the election, legislative efforts to suppress future voting. Efforts to overturn a duly elected president culminating in the Insurrection Jan 6th. Efforts to recast what happened.

Two presidential impeachments and two acquittals. Democracy at risk.

Fires, Rolling blackouts. Fires. Cautions. Covid precautions. Homeschooling. Covid Surges. Holidays on hold. No hugs. Covid variants, Covid vaccines, vaccinations.

Individual loss, grief, fear, hope.

I say to point out what we have lived with and through and that we have managed so much and persisted...is huge. A Miracle. That this space, this place, this congregation, your community, meant so much to so many of you, that you have supported, worked, considered, listened, called, prayed, sang, spoke up, spoke out, wept, laughed, mourned and celebrated and persisted, resilient and caring.

Widening Vision/ Renewing Strength

A focus of this year has been our Developmental goal to become an anti racist multicultural community. In my June 2020 report to the BOD I wrote, "the UUA is ...moving to confront and

remove barriers that prevent this faith movement from living the fullness of its principles. . . . I suggest we include in our developmental goals an intention to become more inclusive as we listen, see, understand and seek to dismantle aspects of our white culture.” *We ourselves must change.*

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Ministry.

The Strategic Goal of Diversity and Inclusion is an enduring sustainable ministry strategy to assess and address racist and discriminatory systems and build a culture of diversity, inclusion and belonging in our community. For me it is one of the most challenging and hopeful goals we could set for ourselves.

Over three years ago, at ICD, a few folks, gathered to develop a Waking up White program. Fran Hoag was core program developer. I was part of that process and we invited UUCOD folks to attend. A follow up program, led by Lauren Nile, was held.

Last Summer appalled, outraged and grieving the murder of George Floyd, and too many others, reviewing and learning from the UUA Commission Widening The Circle of Concern report I checked in with Sarita Gonzales to see if she thought that folks of color here at UUCOD might find an affinity group for mutual support useful. She did. That group began meeting last summer, named itself BIOPOC and continues its important ministry.

The Diversity Inclusion and Belonging Ministry was created in September 2020. Constituted in October, and began meeting Nov 16. Its charge is to be *an enduring sustainable ministry to assess and address racist and discriminatory systems and build a culture of diversity, inclusion and belonging in our community.*

It is doing so much good work. Part of that ministry is to bring a lens of to all areas of congregational life and suggest changes that will foster a community that is truly diverse and affirming of BIOPOC individuals and families and those who have been traditionally marginalized in our culture. To borrow from the poet: *What would it mean to live in a community whose people were changing each others' despair into hope...We ourselves must change it.*

Current members are Pres. Jane Zaun, myself, Sarita Gonzales, Hiroshi Yamaguchi, Rob DuWors, Sandy Sladen & Fran Hoag. Diana Leslie was an important member of the organizing group.

A session to facilitate a BOD /Minister/ DIBM covenant took place and that Covenant will be considered at the next BOD meeting. Thus far, after a significant Church Council presentation, DIBM members are consulting with the Membership, Justice, Lifespan and Worship teams thus far.

As part of this enduring effort The UUA through Meadville Lombard offered the Beloved Conversations program of which I participated in the Fall, as well as others and more are attending this Spring. We are seeking ways to put money where our values are to support this effort, so that those who cannot afford it may be a part of this challenging, purposeful beautiful and good program and share the learning here at UUCOD.

The Building is Closed but The Church is Open

Worship: Looking back over the Arc of the past year it still is shocking to recall the exuberance in person Sunday March 8th Sunday morning- from worship to BBQ – then to go empty house on March 15th. There remains for me a deep sense of loss...not being able to be in the room where the miracle we call worship takes place, but virtual worship has offered opportunities we would not have had otherwise.

I have always preferred Multi Voiced Services as a core part of Shared Ministry.

In the past year, we have presented more than several multi-voiced services including: PRIDE 2020, American Spring, Honoring Our Ancestors, Grateful for Caring, Stars, What Does Your Spirit Magnify, Sacred the Body, Our Anniversary service included personal sharing and painted stones at Genes Sculpture, Volunteer Appreciation Sunday, Flower Communion. Our BIOPOC group led worship & DIBM & I co-created a Where Do we Go From Here service on MLK Sunday. We were moved and informed by powerful services led by guest worship leaders: Rev Tania Marquez and Rev Tet Gallardo as well as UUA worship, among others..

Last summer Rev Dr. Don Stouder generously introduced us to the Widening the Circle Report and let us meet his son after which we decided to offer closed captioned sermons. Great gratitude to Rev. Ian Riddell for his inspiring worship, his compassion and religious imagination as well as being a thoughtful colleague.

So many of you stepped up to share your witnesses for the Pledge Drive, and the Share the Plate introductions. It is not easy to go before a video screen and record yourself but without your introductions and the ability to have virtual worship, the STP presentations would not be so powerful.

The goal of widening the circle of worship leaders, music, and other content to more fully reflect and educate our community about multiple cultures is progressing.

Working on the services of multiple voices takes time and discernment, but it has been important to me that we center the voices of those who are impacted most directly by issues about lack of full inclusion as well a threatened civil rights, whose voices we, as an overwhelmingly white congregation, may forget to create space for.

A recognition of the land where we are, singing Fuente De Amor, and now the BIOPOC arch lighting may seem like small things but they are significant because worship is where we consider aspects of life that have the highest worth to our wholeness. They can begin to add up to a widening of the circle of our welcome and our worship experience as well as multicultural touchstones as you continue to move forward.

I thank everyone who has shared leading and creating worship. Thank you to volunteer leadership of Worship team! A special thank you to Joni and Sarita who have spent time seeking worship leaders, clearing materials, and shepherding the worship experience. Thank you to Bob, Hiroshi, Peter, Betty, Bryna, Derek, Sarita, Joni!

All aspects **virtual worship** demand creativity, time and technical problem solving skill. There are also limitations that we wrestle with. None of our streaming or ZOOMing worship would be possible, without Margaret, Sandy, Jack, Sue, Jonathan. **Thank you thank you thank you to Vikki and Michael. Thank you for battling bots and being steadfast.**

MUSIC: Choir on Furlough has been gathering since June 17th. Thank you Jonathan, Mel and Katy . Choir meetings are not just about singing. They are a small group ministry and another way we stay connected. All of you give generously of your vocal talents that require the utmost bravery, to record as a soloist with the music track in your ear! You give your time and talent to serve the spiritual health of this community.

Jonathan Fast -Thank you for the choral conducting, extensive music mixing of the sound tracks, and for sending my sermons to the upload file on Dropbox!

AV – Thank you Rob and Rod and those who gave money. I tell UUs elsewhere what you have achieved and they are amazed and envious and want to know how you did it!!

LIFESPAN SPIRITUAL GROWTH has been such a successful endeavor in breathe of programming and skill of adapting to technical challenges. It has been a developmental focus and we have had a quite amazing 2 years of growth! Especially this year! The Adult Spiritual Growth Team shepherded so many programs, and importantly supported program presenters, ministers and lay, with detailed information and reminders, congregational communications and technical support! Thank you Rob DuWors! Peter Mathews! Fran Hoag! and Carol LaVoie!. Thank you Presenters. Offerings of Poetry, and Tai chi come to mind and out continuing weekly offerings, thank you Sheryl, Barbara, Peter. Rev Ian offered classes in CARE and Imperfection, I offered BYOT 1 & 2 and weekly Metta Meditations.

Our anti racism DIBM Lifespan programming continued with fall programming led by Lauren Nile, and this Spring's Lifespan integrated the Beloved Conversations into our supported offerings, along with a themed book group and included community outreach with MamaGloriatheFilm about a black transactivist Gloria Allen, who came to our Q & A panel along with Eric Orcelas(SSDC) Lisa Middleton, PS Mayor Pro Tem, Luchina Fisher the Film's Director and Writer and myself. Thank you Gloria Kapp and Fran Hoag.

Chalice Circles were beautifully sustained by the Facilitators Ray Deveaux, Michael Allen, Bryna Blum, Linda Moretti, Linda Savard, Diana Leslie, and Steven Toporoff. Diana and Steve too the lead in administering and composing the monthly themes this year. Clearly, our goal of expanding the concept of Stewardship as a congregational ministry well beyond its financial meanings has been sustained and grown in significance and ownership.

Some other notes:

Church Council moved to not only enhance communication between ministries of the congregation but to facilitate and support a process of raising consciousness & awareness by educating and

expanding shared ownership of chosen congregational goals. The presentation by the DIBM is the recent example.

COM has sought to work through the challenge of creating covenantal policies around how we treat one another. Thanks to the dedicated work of Barbara Storms, Rob DuWors and Kevin Brandt the committee has sent to the BOD a Right Relations Policy, which has been one of the Developmental Goals since I arrived here. We also hope to send the BOD a Destructive Behavior policy shortly.

Membership: Membership had the challenge of doing its core mission in the midst of a pandemic that prevented folks from being in the building. And yet they persisted! During Covid we welcomed seven new members joined and were welcomed in a virtual ceremony. The committee has grown. There is so much that Membership does that is not seen by the larger congregation. It is my hope that with the new administrative position some of the tasks can be taken off the shoulders of the volunteers and done by staff. Thank you Randy Steele and Mel Wilkinson for your leadership. DIBM consultations are underway and are sincerely sought.

CARE: Last year we began to adapt the Pastoral Care Associates into a Care team. I will offer my sincere thanks to the CARE team Rev Ian for their enlarging ministry this year.

JUSTICE

Social Justice has had a very strong year. I list some highlights briefly and you have a report from our dedicated chair, Denise Janssen Eager and Co Chair Mack Rogers.

Built on PRIDE and Environmental Justice and led a strong and congregation wide UU the Vote Effort. They are incorporating a DIB Ministry lens to inform their choices. The Environmental Justice focus choices are based on environmental impacts to communities of color that have been disproportionately adversely impacted. Thank you to all on Justice and to the leadership of Denise Jansen Eager and Mack Rogers for enlarging the ministry of STP through Cong Voting.

Sacred Grounds – has been a beautiful bright spot in my heart and it gives me a sense of great blessing that it continues. Thank you Rod Belshee, Steve Kerr, Diana Leslie, Leslie Gebhart, Hiroshi Yamaguchi, Jack Fitzsimmons and those I don't see.

A Ministry of Appreciation allows that some things did not get done.

Some goals still await. Staffing issues held us back. Several of you took on the burdens of the administrative and technical needs that hold this community together. The great news is that you created an enlarged role for the church administrator who begins June 1 and with her, staff support for BOD members and volunteer efforts.

RE for Children and Youth did get organized twice, did not get implemented, but not for lack of trying. Many hours the first year, meeting with multiple teams of people, meetings calls, structuring a flexible program, with Denise, calls to families, we could not seem to get the timing right. And no

one applied for the modest position. Folks sought council from regional UUA staff. We considered alternatives to Sunday morning programming (as are other congregations).

Then came Covid and we discovered that streaming on public platforms involves different restrictions for use of materials than in-house worship. Rev Ian and I briefly structured a program for virtual children's time, weekly music & story worship zooms, that did not become a reality b/c of an inability to find a person willing to coordinate with families. If you have been frustrated, you are not alone. If you feel this is a loss, I do too. We do too. We are finite.

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What I want to take with me when I leave is how much we did accomplish and how Shared Ministry is alive and healthy in this community and wish you well on the changes you will make, the ministries you will sustain or expand and the many kindnesses you will bestow upon one another.

I want to appreciate this Board Of Directors! Jane Zaun, Big thank you! More than words can express. And Jerry L'Hommedieu! Man of god may be your last name in French, but for this congregation, Jerry is a Man of his Word.

I could thank each of you and were we in the room together I would find a way to tap your shoulder and say thank you. Thank you Thank you, Robert Rancourt, Mack Rogers, Carol Lavoie, Linda Savard, and Rod Belshee! Welcome Linda to the Presidency and Hiroshi and Linda Moretti to the BOD as Carol and Jane step down and onto Nominating.

Let now offer a big appreciation to the dedicated big hearted Reverend Ian Riddell, who is staying here with you as your incoming Minister. He has brought his years of experience, his gifts for worship and his love of ministry to our community. It has been my honor to serve with you Rev Ian and to experience your presence, clarity, and generous ministry.

From the time of my first service with you..when I looked out to try to see what time it was and exclaimed..."You don't have a clock". and proceeded to point out mid sermon you needed a clock at the back of the sanctuary, and you put one up! to the interview..the hire..the goals and the councils, retreats, the lunches, I have been exceedingly grateful to be serving with you. I have truly valued the working relationship I have had with your two board presidents, Sarita Gonzales and Jane Zaun.

I began with and I leave with gratitude.

Let the tasks you have chosen for your focus in the times ahead bring you into a larger sense of community, deeper connection with each other and those people and creatures around you. May you for all the tasks, give yourselves time to let the joy bubble up, effervesce and lift your spirits, celebrating each other, the work you do, the effort you make.

To you and all those who will find their way here seeking a place of sanctuary and resistance, a place to grow a soul and help heal the world, I wish for you a full and healthy life, and hope that you know peace, love and the satisfaction of years well spent.

That is the religious path...

Now – Go in peace. Keep the faith. Share the love. Bless everyone, no exception. Include yourself.
Thank you.

Rev Barbara

d. Assistant Minister Reverend Ian Riddell's written report:

It certainly has been a year, hasn't it? You welcomed me leading worship with you a little more than a year ago and then I started as your assistant minister in September. You gave me such a warm, generous welcome and I'm grateful to have been sharing ministry with you and with Rev. Barbara this past year.

I have seen this shared ministry in the work of our care team who come together to nurture and support the members of our community when life brings challenge and struggle. So many thanks to Bryna, Margaret, Roz, Linda, Larry, and Frank for your commitment and the love that you bring to this ministry you do.

I have seen this shared ministry in our lifespan spiritual development team and the classes they imagined and supported as participants grappled with perfectionism, learned about how to listen better to the stories of our lives, and how to keep good boundaries in our community life.

I have seen this shared ministry in the steadfast faithfulness of our worship and production teams this past year, learning how to bring powerful and meaningful worship to our community in the face of separation. And it's been a great joy to sing with the choir who faced the challenges and pain of not being able to physically sing together - and brought us joyful and heartfelt music under Jonathan's leadership. And I have seen this shared ministry in your growing commitment to widening the circle of our concern and embracing a ministry of welcoming, belonging, and inclusion. I'm heartened by the number of our people who have been participating in the Beloved Conversations curriculum. You'll hear from them in the coming months.

I have to share gratitude and appreciation to Rev. Barbara as well. I'm so grateful for the partnership of this ministry we've shared this past year. I'm grateful for the care and support we've been able to offer each other and those we've been serving together.

And looking forward to the next year together, I am grateful for the opportunity to continue our shared ministry in new ways together, doing the work of building the beloved community in our hearts and in our community.

e. Affiliated Community Minister Reverend Don Stouder's written report:

As for 2020, the year began with good intentions for providing the Care Team with some increased training and opportunities for peer to peer learning, but Covid-19 quickly changed those plans. Because of a layoff early in the Covid pandemic, I was able to provide an increased level of pulpit coverage through the spring and summer, and I enjoyed helping to roll out the "Widening the Circle of Concern" report through a series of sermons and discussions. Rev. Ian was brought on in the nick of time, as once the fall hit I was asked to join Reliance Hospice helping to provide grief support to most of the families that lost loved ones at Eisenhower Medical Center because of the pandemic. This was, and continues to be, one of the most difficult times of my career as a minister and chaplain. I am grateful to UUCOD for the support during this difficult time, which is only now starting to calm down.

f. Facilities Committee Chair Rod Belshee's written report:

a) Handyperson

1. Monday work parties, suspended due to covid, resumed outdoors at the end of March
2. We have about seven participants, including two new ones
3. General grounds cleanup, light trimming, remove dead shrubs, weeding
4. Replaced four failed landscape lights and two pole lights
5. Remove sand from doorways after wind storms

b) Irrigation

1. Initial state
 1. Years of neglect
 2. With a very dry rainy season this year much of the vegetation was very stressed, with several dead bushes and with few blossoms for the iguanas to eat
 3. Of eleven irrigation valves, only four were working and two were leaking
 4. There were leaky irrigation pipes, and perhaps half of the drip emitters had failed or broke
2. Current statement
 1. All eleven valves are working, none leak
 2. All leaks in pipes are fixed
 3. We have fixed the emitters for most of the trees
3. Plans
 1. We will finish repairing emitters for the rest of the trees, to protect that valuable investment and maybe reduce disease in the Palo Verdes
 2. Repairing the rest of the emitters is not planned, perhaps deferred to be part of Sacred Grounds

c) Covid response

1. Closed the building, including removing all food, cleaning and propping open refrigerators, ...
2. Cut off power to many appliances, re-configured thermostats, ...
 1. UUCOD has been a net power generator since the end of summer!
3. Reduced cleaning service and other expenses
4. Posted covid signage and setup sanitation station
5. Tracked (weekly) Covid guidance from County, State, CDC and UUA
6. Developed phased protocols and advised the Board
7. Hung banner advertising Facebook services

d) Building re-opening

1. Flushed all water lines and fixtures, flushed water heater
2. Will have Desert Air flush HVAC with outside air

e) AV

1. Secured \$20K AV matching grant
2. Detailed plan, focusing on limited number of volunteers
3. Traced and labeled every cable in the building (coax, Ethernet, mics...)
4. Built gear rack
5. Installed new, faster internet
6. Reworking gear plan from last Fall, accounting for new introductions, parts shortages and long lead times

f) Sacred Grounds

Installed Gene's latest Art in the proposed Garden of Hope

A few people are rebuilding energy to restart the Sacred Grounds initiative

Thinking about concepts for the patio and Celebration Garden, including a greenscape alternative for the patio Jack sent out a wonderful newsletter to 39 people

- Insight Community of the Desert
 - We provided storage space when they lost their lease.
 - ICD is making a \$250/month donation