



**UCCI**

# **2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The importance of an Annual Report that highlights the significant events of the prior program year cannot be understated. As a congregation that seeks to make a difference in our world, an annual report serves as one of the vehicles to help articulate and deliver on this hope. In the pages that follow, there will be updates on our progress toward our eight congregational Ends. We have named these as the horizon toward which we are moving by any means necessary. Over a five year period, we will find many ways to make progress in these areas and it will take all of us to get there.



The Ends Committee had wished to offer greater quantitative data in this year's Annual Report. However, due to COVID-19 some of those plans were hindered and therefore a more qualitative summary will be presented instead. Beyond summaries of the various programs and initiatives we have completed in the 2019-2020 program year, there will also be short summaries that outline the work of our ministry and governance at UUCCI. Both the ministry and governance of our congregation are essential toward effectively upholding our values, embodying our mission, and fulfilling our Ends.

May this Annual Report offer encouragement to the vitality and importance of our community. May it be informative, inspiring, and energizing for our work in the year ahead. The 2020-2021 program year will definitely be one like no other. But together, we can stay focused on what matters most.

I am so grateful to serve as your minister and to be on this journey, together.

With Gratitude,



Rev. Nic Cable

UUCCI Minister

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



*Not Pictured: Jeff Wiltrout, Treasurer; Sondra Bolte, Vice President  
(Joined the Board in March 2020 to complete the terms of JaneAnn Gifford and Beth McNeely, respectively)*

In UUCCI's 50+ year history, when transitions and challenges arise, we have always embraced them as new opportunities. Little did we know, back when your current Board began our term, just exactly how difficult these transitions and challenges would be.

This Annual Report is a testament to the commitment and passion of Rev. Nic Cable and his very capable staff, Nancy Olson and Kim Wadholm, my fellow Board of Trustees members, and the many congregants who have stepped up to ensure that we continue this mission.

We hope you will see from reading it that UUCCI has met the challenges of COVID by continuing to live out our mission to be a community of hope and courage, where we celebrate love and work for justice.

In the beginning of our shutdown, we were concerned that we might not be able to address the Ends that we worked so hard to develop as a congregation. I hope you will agree as you look through this Annual Report, we have risen to the occasion. Our Ends may not look how we were envisioning them in the beginning, but our Program Guides attest to the creative, innovative programming we offer.

- We have opened ourselves to deeper human connections by reaching out and supporting one another through our Care Team and Connections Network, and recently formed Geo Clusters;
- We have created dynamic congregational gatherings albeit through ZOOM;
- We have been able to align our resources appropriately, given this situation;
- We are cultivating deep and intentional partnerships with those groups who share our values;
- And given the growing unrest in our nation, UU's continue to SHOW UP – siding with love by working to overcome injustice in all its forms.



As we often say, “If we get this right, we will never go back to normal”. UUCCI is getting it right! Our Board is as excited as everyone for us to be back in our sanctuary to hear Rev. Nic and our musicians and to share coffee hour and conversation. But we couldn't be more proud of the ways that we have carried on.

We know our mission is attainable as we continue to work together.

Sincerely,

*Cate Hyatt*

Cate Hyatt

UUCCI President

# UUCCI VALUES, MISSION, ENDS

## Values

Nurturing Community with Love and Compassion

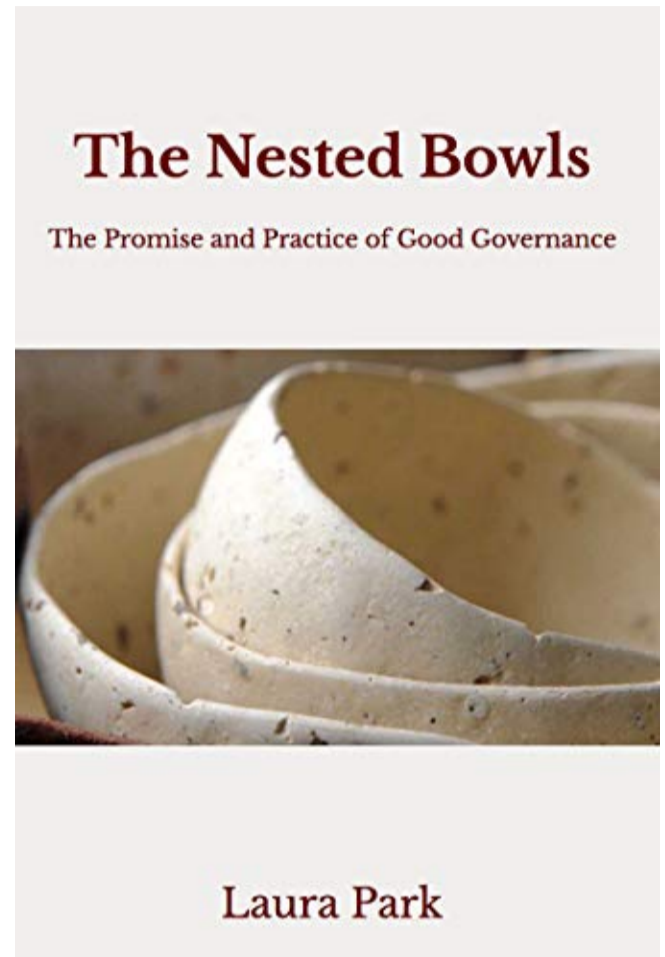
Freedom of Spiritual and Intellectual Growth

Openness to the Mystery of Life

Courageous Thoughtful Action

## Mission

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbus, Indiana, is a community of hope and courage, where we celebrate love and work for justice.



## Ends (2019-2024)

As individuals, as a congregation, and in the wider world, we:

1. Open ourselves to deeper human connection.
2. Support each other, as Unitarian Universalists, in our lifelong journey for truth and meaning.
3. Create dynamic congregational gatherings that open hearts and minds.
4. Build a culture that engages and supports all levels of involvement.
5. Align our resources to ensure that we are most effectively fulfilling our Mission and Ends.
6. Cultivate intentional partnerships through mutual respect and collaboration.
7. Nurture a vibrant interfaith community that positively transforms the Greater Columbus Area.
8. Side with love by working to overcome injustice in all its forms.

# INTERPRETATION OF ENDS

**The Guiding Question:** What specific, measurable differences will we make and for whom by some identified time in the future?

**Our Answer:** As individuals, as a congregation, and in the wider world, we:

## 1. Open ourselves to deeper human connection.

**One of the most important gifts of life is finding human connection.** And yet, deep human connection is surprisingly elusive, sometimes messy, and always vulnerable. In our modern technologically driven society, deep relationships are hard to nurture and sustain. At UUCCI, we prioritize the importance of not only our relationships, but the depth of our connections with each other. We ask, “how can we be courageous and be open to the transformative power of love that is found in our human connections?” It is from our connections that we experience the beauty and preciousness of life.

## 2. Support each other, as Unitarian Universalists, in our lifelong journey for truth and meaning.

**At UUCCI, we believe we are all lifelong learners.** From birth to death, we are on a journey for truth and meaning and we choose with gratitude to take that journey with others. Truth and meaning is not dictated, nor singular, within our community, but rather it emerges organically and with integrity in the mind and heart of every person. Our support of one another is grounded in both humility and encouragement, recognizing that truth and meaning may look very different for everyone. In learning and growing together, our journeys are more meaningful and well-travelled.



### **3. Create dynamic congregational gatherings that open hearts and minds.**

When we gather as one community, something special is possible. Sunday mornings are a time when we come together to experience the vibrancy of community and the preciousness of life. Sunday morning is the heartbeat of our lives together and from the quality and dynamism of these experiences, we move and make meaning in other areas of the congregation. It is important to care for our collective life together, not just on Sundays, but through other programs, where we can feel connected to the wider UUCCI community.

### **4. Build a culture that engages and supports all levels of involvement.**

One of the best ways we learn and make meaning in life is through serving others. We encourage everyone to be involved at UUCCI, not only because we believe in the power of shared ministry, but also because we each have so much to offer the community and the world. In developing and sustaining lay leaders, we focus on nurturing a culture where service and getting involved in our community is easy, meaningful, adaptive, and ultimately transformative for each person. Through this culture of engagement, we can sustain our ministry, our community, and further our Mission and Ends in the world.

### **5. Align our resources to ensure that we are most effectively fulfilling our Mission and Ends.**

A vibrant Mission and Ends are brought to life through tapping into all of the resources of our community. We choose to value abundance over scarcity, hope and courage over pessimism and fear. We believe we can and do make a difference in the world. Our resources, or sources of life and energy, are found in financial assets and annual contributions, and they are also found in the shared ministry of our lay leaders and staff. By better aligning our resources as a community, we can tap into the full potential of our resources and gain greater missional integrity and financial confidence as an institution.





## 6. Cultivate intentional partnerships through mutual respect and collaboration.

We partner with people and organizations locally and globally to further our common values and goals in the world. Our ministry doesn't happen in a vacuum, but rather we take our ministry with us wherever we go in society. Partnerships, like relationships, require close tending and care, recognizing that without mutuality and trust, they will not be sustainable. Thus, we work to build lasting connections through collaborative efforts and shared programs. Partnerships take time; we are committed to the hard work of staying in relationship with organizations as we grow together.



## 7. Nurture a vibrant interfaith community that positively transforms the Greater Columbus Area.

When we create bridges to connect people across traditions, we are able to learn about our shared values, our distinct differences, and live more meaningful lives. Unitarian Universalism values the wisdom of all religious, spiritual, and philosophical traditions. Through interfaith engagement and community building, we foster greater understanding and appreciation of one another, and show the vibrancy of our diversity within the wider community. Along with our religious partners, we are nurturing an interfaith campus and community not just for our own benefit, but to help promote our common values of compassion and service to the greater Columbus area. Together, we can model the beauty of pluralism and the hope for a better tomorrow.

## 8. Side with love by working to overcome injustice in all its forms.

Love is the greatest force in the world. At UUCCI, we harness love to address injustice in its many forms locally and globally. Committed to courageous action and anti-oppressive education, we work at an intersectional understanding of injustice. Thus, we engage in both direct action and systemic long-term change-making within and beyond the walls of our community. In doing so, we incubate new imaginations and new structures for shaping our lives and our world that are grounded in liberation and love.



# MINISTRY

Our ministry at UUCCI is broken into five areas: Sunday Services, Lifespan Learning, Courageous Action, Hospitality Network, and Administration. Each of these areas provide our community with programs and tools for connection, growth, and service to self and others. As the late UU minister, the Rev. Gordon B. McKeeman wrote, “ministry is all that we do together.” At UUCCI, all of our ministry, at its best, is toward the embodiment of our Mission and the fulfillment of our Ends. Here are some of the highlights from this past year.



## SUNDAY SERVICES

During the 2019-2020 program year, the Sunday Services Team welcomed two new Worship Associates to the team: Pam Lee and Lori Swanson. While we were sad to lose the wisdom and skill of Bob Pulley and Diane Spofford, we were grateful for the gifts they brought to the team over the years. Along with Lori and Pam, the Sunday Service Team continued to build chemistry to meet whatever challenges we were to face last year.

Little did we know, we would move to a completely online format for Sunday Services in March 2020. This presented both challenges and opportunities for learning and growth. We finished the program year with several months of quality online services that incorporated technology to enhance the experience. While we wish we could be together in our lovely sanctuary, we have done a remarkable job in transitioning to the online realm, while also creating a level of connection and intimacy that we all need during this time.

In the 2020-2021 program year, we will focus on tech volunteer sustainability and creative ways to sustain our Sunday Service vitality as we enter an uncertain timeline due to COVID-19.

# LIFESPAN LEARNING

## Children and Youth Lifespan Team

The Children and Youth Lifespan Team continued to oversee children and youth programming; coordinate and collaborate with other areas of the congregation; and initiate programs and activities to meet the needs of a growing group of families with children and teens. The team has also sought to increase opportunities for multigenerational exchanges and involvement.

Along with providing programming every Sunday for infants through 6th grade and supervision of teens, highlights from the 2019-20 Children and Youth church year include:



- Successful 2019 Peace Camp, with 40 children, 8 teen volunteers, and 20 adult volunteers.
- Our Whole Lives (OWL), the UU and UCC flagship sexuality education program, included 12 middle school youth from UUCI and First Presbyterian Church and 3 adult leaders.
- Children and teens developed and presented the Holiday Pageant from the story The Winter Candle.
- Our May Youth Service gave our teens a chance to share their perspectives on hope. It was the first youth service in a very long time and was accomplished under Covid19 restrictions.
- Expanded 1st Friday Fun Night: involvement of other teams in providing meals, theme evenings (Chili Cook-off, Halloween, game night).
- Parent Night Out supervised by adult and teen volunteers.
- Raising Unitarian Universalist group continued to meet monthly and maintain a Facebook presence.



- Expanded child care availability to support parents and caretakers participation. 11 teen child care workers provided care: Sunday morning nursery and classrooms, 1st Friday Fun Nights, classes, workshops, and Chalice Circles.
- Teen child care workers assisted with the special Children's Room at the Holiday Market.
- Teens initiated and provided child care for area teachers during the fall education rally at the statehouse.

## Adult Lifespan

Lifespan learning in the adult arena began the 2019 church year with a newly formed Adult Lifespan Team. The team's primary purpose is to identify, assess, curate adult learning opportunities for UUCCI. The team proceeded to create and develop program guides for fall and winter/spring. The program guides have provided a medium for:

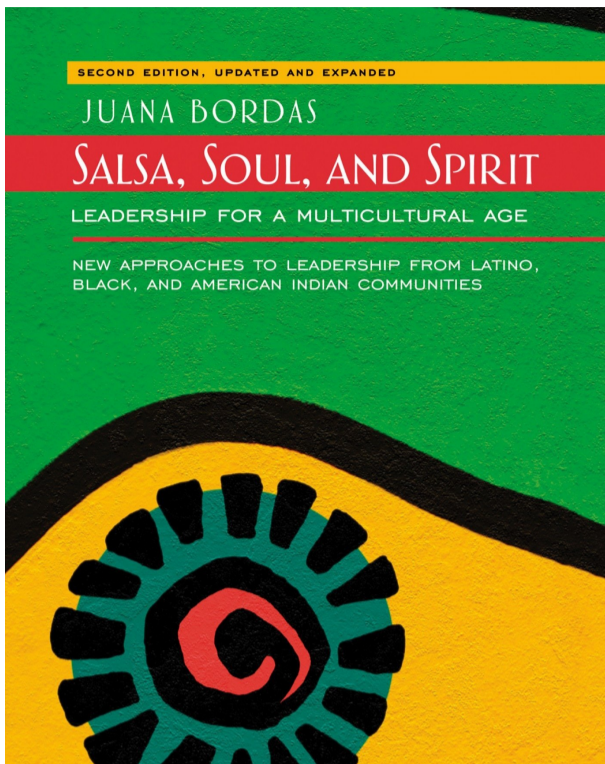
- raising awareness of learning opportunities available through UUCCI programs and ministries;
- collaborating with other teams and groups – both within UUCCI, the wider Columbus community, and other UU organizations;
- developing new programs to meet adult learning needs;
- providing opportunities for congregants to share their knowledge and skills;
- supporting the development of structures and systems to facilitate adult learning;
- promoting programs and ministries through Friday Reminder, newsletter, and Adult Team table on seasonal Sunday mornings.



During these months of the pandemic, the team continued to meet and sought out new ways to support learning and stay connected via Zoom and socially distanced, small group gatherings. The Adult Team continues this foundational work into the 2020-21 church year.



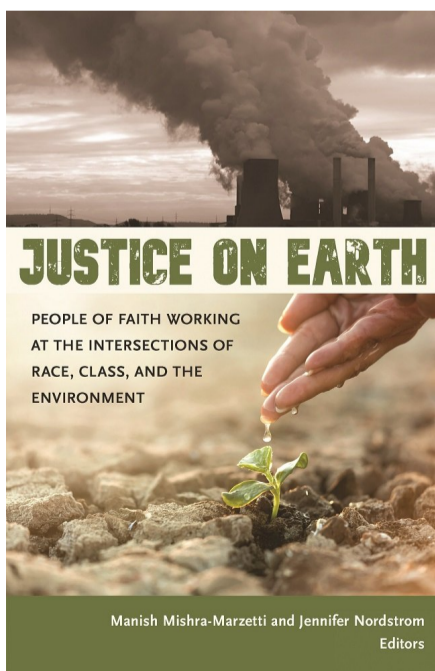
## COURAGEOUS ACTION



The Courageous Action Council represents the intersectional collaboration among our five areas of justice work within and beyond UUCCI. These commitments help us as we work to “side with love to overcome injustice in all its forms.” Several programs were done in collaboration this year, and our Share the Plate nominations process was facilitated by the CAC with guidance from the minister. Most notably, the Courageous Action Council began planning for a congregation-wide cultural competency retreat for Spring 2020. This collaborative planning team brought members from various areas of the congregation to ensure a good cross-section of our community would feel invested in the project. Due to COVID-19, we have had to push back the retreat until Spring 2021.

### Racial Justice Team

In 2019-2020, the Racial Justice Team offered many programs and activities, including a couple books reads on various racial justice issues. They deepened their leadership team and collaborative nature to ensure sustainability as a team. RJT has moved steadily toward a more systemic understanding of justice making, including understanding and addressing how institutions (including UUCCI) embody practices that uphold white supremacy culture.



### Environmental Action Team

A major collaboration this past year was offering a three part series with the Racial Justice Team that focused on the 2019-2020 UUA Common Read, *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersection of Race, Class and Environment*. This assisted in furthering our understanding that injustice and oppression is compounded across areas of society. EAT also supported the Pollinator Park project in Columbus and began the recertification process for being recognized as a Green Sanctuary through the UUA.

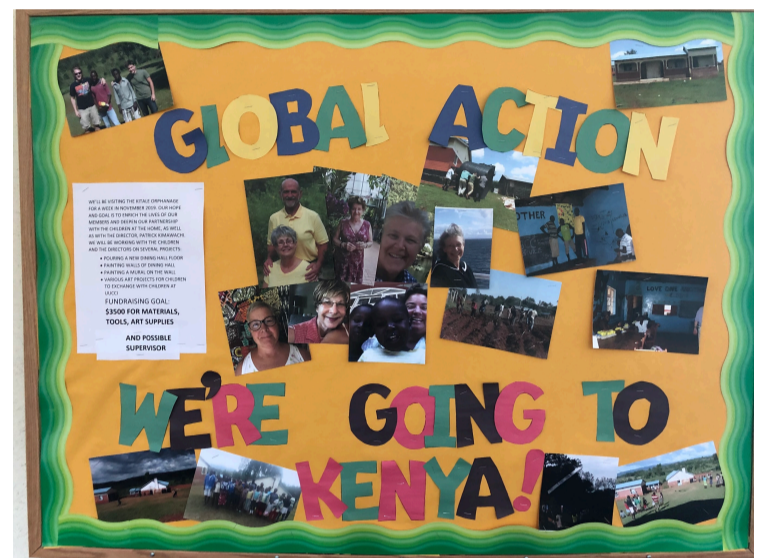


## Hot Meals Program

UUCCI is a major partner in the Hot Meals Program in Columbus, which address food insecurity in our community. Over a dozen members and friends of our community participate in this monthly program that has become even more essential during COVID-19.

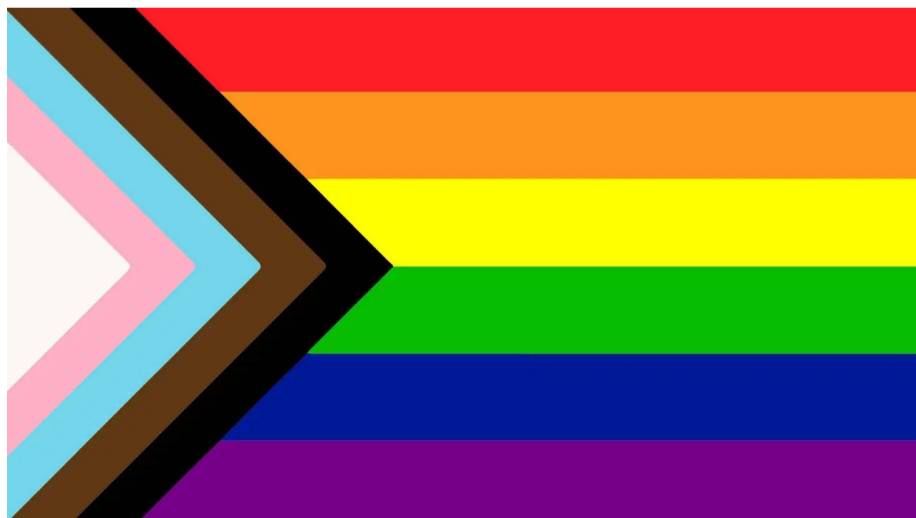
## Global Action Team

The signature program of the Global Action Team last year was a service trip to our partners in Kenya. Members of our community went to serve alongside Pastor Kimawachi and his church, which supports an orphanage in Kitale. Upon returning, an adult class was offered for sharing stories of the trip as well as a Sunday morning service for the whole congregation.



## Welcoming Congregation

While the Welcoming Congregation curriculum is not currently in rotation at UUCCI, we remain committed to being a welcoming community for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. In 2019-2020 we partnered with several local congregations to celebrate not only LGBTQ+ Pride, but also the continued attainment of equal rights for all persons in our community.



# HOSPITALITY NETWORK

The Hospitality Network is a collection of ministry teams, programs, and initiatives that aim to foster support, connection, and warmth throughout our congregation. The three major components of the Hospitality Network:



## Pastoral Care Team

The ministry of the Pastoral Care Team focuses on supporting our members and friends who are going through some type of hardship or transition. They offer rides to medical appointments, send well wishes and warm food to people who could use some love and support. More than that, the team strives to center care and compassion at the heart of our shared ministry at UUCCI. In this regard, each person in this community is a part of the Pastoral Care Team.

## Membership Team

During the 2019-2020 year, we welcomed several new members to our community, as well as attracted visitors and friends to get more connected at UUCCI. Membership is not just about the possibility of signing the membership book; it is about finding pathways for engagement and meaning-making for all people who come through our doors (physically or virtually).



## Sunday Morning Hospitality

The energy and vitality of our community is most visible on Sunday mornings. It is the time when we gather as a larger community for pre-service fellowship, engaging Sunday services, coffee hour, and programs. What makes this time so warm and welcoming are the numerous volunteers who offer hospitality to visitors, friends, and members of UUCCI. From greeting and orienting newcomers to preparing coffee and treats after the service, the Sunday morning hospitality teams show the best of who we are as a community.

## ADMINISTRATION

Throughout the 2019-2020 year, we refined and created many new administrative processes to help support UUCCI's ministry. These improvements had differing levels of visibility, but they all were a part of our ongoing pursuit of living into UUCCI's ambitious Ends. Our communication strategy gained a clearer focus and better supported all levels of involvement; changes in our financial processes helped us better align our resources; and we added some new administrative tools to continue nurturing community. We look forward to building on these foundational changes in the coming years.



*Office Administrator, Kim Wadholm*

Right from the start this programming year, how we talked about programs and events was fundamentally different thanks to Lifespan's seminal project: The Program Guide. This document informed all of our communication – The Newsletter, Friday Reminder, Sunday Announcement page, new Announcement Slideshow, and refined Bulletin Board – and it allowed them to function with greater value. The

Newsletter was better organized into the categories from The Program Guide and became more dynamic by incorporating hyperlinks and a functional Table of Contents. The Friday Reminder and Sunday Announcements became more concise, and we added The Announcement Slideshow as another reminder for folks. At the end of the 2019-2020 year, with the massive changes the

pandemic brought us, we continued to refine our communication strategies. The Friday Reminder got a makeover, and the new template allowed us to begin offering supplemental resources more appropriately and give members and friends the tools they need for involvement through quick-reference links. Overall, this year we were able to “right-size” information and make our communication more useful so that members and friends can better engage in the ministry of UUCCI.



Also this year, in deep collaboration with the Board, UUCCI's administration took a more-involved place within the financial system. On the heels of the congregation's decision to move its fiscal year to a calendar year, Fall 2019 was also a time to imagine how to better steward our financial resources. The Minister, Treasurer, and Office Administrator worked together with our new financial accounting servicer, Blue & Co, to update our chart of accounts, payable processes, financial data entry,

*CPAs / ADVISORS*





and other financial reporting. At the close of the year, Administration worked with The Minister and Lifespan Director to obtain a grant for greater technical needs due to the pandemic. We look forward to completing the Financial Handbook in the 2020-2021 programming year.



Administration also broadened in capacity this year by giving more intimate support for other UUCCI work and ministry: managing space sharing, custodial needs, and safety with The Building and Grounds Team and Board; cooperating on website administration and Sunday services elements with the Tech Team; and finding ways to give more distinction to the ministry of The Pastoral Care Team. In preparation for a very different programming year in 2020-2021, administrative support again adapted by helping Ministry Teams organize virtual events, Zoom meetings, and navigate online ministry tools. At the end of the 2019-2020 year, we prepared for a big administrative change by beginning the transition to Breeze Church Management System. We expect this new tool will be another important building block in the foundation of future UUCCI Administration.

# GOVERNANCE

Our Board of Trustees have been hard at work in ensuring excellence in governance at UUCCI. There have been major strides made in the four primary areas of work for which the Board is responsible: Financial Oversight, Policy Making, Board Development, and Ends Evaluation. Below are short summaries of the work that went into the 2019-2020 year.

## **Finance Committee**

The role of financial oversight is a major commitment of our Board of Trustees. Working in tandem with Rev. Nic, Kim Wadholm, and our new accounting company, Blue and Co., we have moved further toward a clear delineation between roles and responsibilities in our overall financial process. This process has made it possible to streamline our financial operational process, while ensuring appropriate checks and balances are in place.

## **Policy Committee**

Almost a decade ago, the Board of Trustees began a time of discernment and planning to begin utilizing a policy-based form of governance. One aspect of this mode of governance is that it aims to clearly define the accountable and covenantal relationship between the Board and the Minister, and their respective roles in fulfilling the work of the congregation. This past year, the Board worked to review and approve its Governing Policies that is the blueprint for its work of governance and its oversight on the ministry of UUCCI.

## **Board Development Committee**

The health of a board is due in large part to its self-development, self-reflection, and sustainable perpetuation through the recruiting of new board members. This year, we made progress toward that goal in part through the proposed expansion of the board to nine members and the staggering of three year terms to ensure continuity, leadership development, and sustainability.

## **Ends Committee**

UUCCI set ambitious Ends at the February 2019 Annual Meeting. These five year Ends require close attention and periodic and annual evaluation over time to ensure our effective progress towards each of them. The Ends Committee of the Board creates, refines, implements, and analyzes evaluative measures on behalf of the congregation to fulfill this aim. Beginning in Spring 2021, the Board will be creating a congregation wide survey instrument and opportunities for open conversation in focus groups with various stakeholders. The results of these evaluative means will be reflected in the 2021 Annual Report presented in November 2021.