



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
COMMUNITY CHURCH  
*of Santa Monica*



## REPORT ON PROGRAMS

**Fiscal Year**

**July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021**

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# ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, June 27, 2021

## NEWLY ELECTED BOARDS:

### 2021-2022 Board of Directors



Beth Brownlie  
President



Eileen McCormack  
Vice President



Larry Weiner  
Secretary



Vilma Ortiz  
Treasurer



Jacki Weber  
Past President  
No vote required



Norma Richie  
Member-at-Large  
No vote required



Linda Van Ligen  
Member-at-Large



Mike Monte  
Member-at-Large  
No vote required



Abby Arnold  
Member-at-Large



Karl Lisovsky



Sheila Cummins  
No vote required



Dan Patterson



Natalie Kahn  
No vote required



Barbara Kernoohan  
No vote required

### 2021-2022 Nominating Committee



# REPORT ON PROGRAMS

# 2020-21

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## LEADERSHIP

### 2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President ..... Beth Brownlie  
Vice President..... Eileen McCormack  
Secretary..... Larry Weiner  
Treasurer..... Vilma Ortiz  
Past President ..... Jacki Weber  
Member at Large ..... Abby Arnold  
Member at Large ..... Norm Richey  
Member at Large ..... Linda van Ligten  
Member at Large ..... Mike Monte

### 2021-2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEES

President ..... Beth Brownlie  
Vice President..... Eileen McCormack  
Secretary..... Larry Weiner  
Treasurer..... Vilma Ortiz  
Past President ..... Jacki Weber  
Member at Large ..... Abby Arnold  
Member at Large ..... Norm Richey  
Member at Large ..... Linda van Ligten  
Member at Large ..... Mike Monte

### STAFF

Developmental Minister.....Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae  
Minister Emerita..... Rev. Judith E. Meyer  
Exploration.....Cleo Anderson  
Religious Exploration Staff..... Teri Lucas  
Director of Music..... Saunder Choi  
Accompanist..... Ryan Humphrey  
Choir Section Leaders..... Jyvonne Haskin,  
Chloe Vaught, Michael Miersma, Ben Lin  
Church Administrator.....Nurit Gordon  
Administrative and Financial  
Assistant .....Cyndee Hayes  
Communications Coordinator ....Sibylla Nash  
Sextons .....Kevin Roller and  
Thomas Ahern

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

#### 2020-2021

Pat Gomez  
Barbara Kernochan  
Karl Lisovsky  
Chela Metzger  
Sheila Cummins  
Natalie Kahn

#### 2021-2022

Barbara Kernochan  
Karl Lisovsky  
Sheila Cummins  
Natalie Kahn  
Dan Patterson

## MEMBERSHIP

*To become a member of the Church a person shall:*

- Sign a statement of intent to participate as a member in the community life of the Church.
- Reside within the Pacific Southwest District (PSWD) of the Unitarian Universalist Association.
- Be at least 16 years of age or have successfully completed the Church's Coming of Age Program.
- Make a financial contribution of record, or a pledge to do so, to the Church.

Anyone who has been a member of the Church for 40 days is eligible to vote at church business meetings. Written resignation, failure to make a financial contribution, or moving away from the PSWD area, causes membership to be discontinued.

A "Friend" plays an active role in our community, supports the Church financially, but has chosen not to assume official church membership.

## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION (UUA)

This church is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, a voluntary association of autonomous, self-governing local churches and fellowships, and of the Pacific Southwest District and the Pacific Western Region of that association. Information and contact with UUA offices and resources can be obtained at [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org).



# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SANTA MONICA

## *Annual Report on Programs 2020-2021*

### **DEVELOPMENTAL MINISTER REV. JEREMIAH LAL SHAHBAZ KALENDÆ**

In a year of so much uncertainty, fear, and loss, our congregation came together and faced the challenges of the pandemic as Beloved Community. We kept the flame of liberal religion burning bright as we created community together in new ways and strengthened our bonds of affection and love. Thank you for being on this journey with us and for the time, talents, and financial support you've provided to strengthen our community. Speaking with our staff, congregational leaders, and others in our community, I know many of you, like me, are exhausted and in need of some time to recharge and restore yourselves. I hope the summer months of July and August will bring some respite as we emerge carefully and mindfully from the pandemic. I encouraged all of us, as I did when I first arrived, to prioritize sustainability, regenerativity, and spaciousness in our lives. This will continue to be especially true as we return to our sanctuary later in the summer and continue envisioning and creating a world that is life-giving for all. I will summarize some of the major activities of the past year, chart the course for our new church year which will begin in September, and read the names of those members and friends we lost in the past year.

In the spirit of gratitude, I want to celebrate our extraordinary congregational leaders and staff members who demonstrated their profound commitment to each of us, and to this beloved community, through their faithful service this past year. Our President Beth Brownlie, our Past President Jacki Weber, and our Vice President Eileen McCormack modeled dedication, shared ministry, and exceptional leadership skill to all of us. Our entire board — Abby Arnold, Mike Monte, Vilma Ortiz, Norm Richey, Linda van Ligten, and Larry Weiner — helped to navigate us safely through some very stormy waters and they deserve our utmost admiration and respect. Likewise, our staff—Cleo Anderson, Saunder Choi, Nurit Gordon, Jyvonne Haskin, Ryan Humphry, Ben Lin, Teri Lucas, Michael Miersma, Sibylla Nash, Chloe Vaught, and Cyndee Hayes helped to hold our community together and shepherded us through this difficult time. If I were to list every person who's been working alongside our board and staff to fulfill the mission of this congregation, we would be here all afternoon but know that we thank and celebrate all the members of our beloved community—you've made a real difference in our lives and helped to fuel the flame of our expansive faith. Later in our meeting, our presidents will spotlight a few of our members who went to extraordinary measures to keep our community shining brightly.

Our ministry this past year included most of the things we ordinarily do as a congregation, in addition to the work of developmental ministry, and all that was required to respond to the pandemic. Worship remained the heart of our congregational life as it considered the great questions of life, wisdom from the world's religions, and words and deeds of prophetic people across time. In addition to transitioning to an online format that regularly engaged 500+ viewers each week, we also brought an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural lens to our worship as we added a Spanish and English recitation of our church covenant, included a greater diversity of music and languages, and added a weekly acknowledgement that we

gather on the sacred and unceded land of the Tongva people. We also welcomed new Worship Associates, hosted a Worship Leaders Retreat, continued to utilize a theme-based approach to ministry, and created a Virtual Coffee Hour to compliment our online services. The leadership of our chair of worship, the Rev. Dr. Kikanza Nuri-Robins, our Director of Music Saunder Choi, and our Director of Religious Education Cleo Anderson was instrumental to everything we accomplished on Sunday mornings for the past year. I could not dream of better colleagues to serve with in congregational ministry and I will remain forever grateful to have been ministering with them through this pandemic.

Our pastoral ministry greatly expanded this year as we formed a Pastoral Executive Team to better coordinate the activities of our Pastoral Associates and Care Ring members. I began teaching monthly didactics on pastoral care and our leaders made phone calls and sent letters to everyone we could reach in the congregation — not once but multiple times — to let everyone know we were available if they were struggling or in need of spiritual companionship in such unusual times. We even began a pastoral flower ministry for members who died. Let us celebrate all of our pastoral caregivers and what they've given to us over this past year. It is truly remarkable.

Our Chalice Circle small group ministry program relaunched this year with a new format we designed that engaged nearly a third of our congregation in regular meetings over a nine-month period. Everyone who participated helped to stitch together the threads of community that held us together and kept us strong.

We established an Intersectional Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Commission which with the leadership of Susan Hendricks Richman, Nalani Santiago, Edna Bonachich, James Witker, Linda Van Ligten, Mike Monte, and Cleo Anderson—launched our popular Beloved Conversations Anti-Racism Program from our very own UU theological school—Meadville Lombard—and began to discern how we can deepen the work of equity and justice throughout the life of our congregation.

Our Bylaws Refresh Task Force was also organized this church year and is studying and preparing recommendations for our board and congregation for updating our bylaws to reflect current best practices for smooth congregational functioning and health.

We finished our multi-year project of creating a UUSM Congregational Video to promote our community online and our social media team began meeting to strategize some new ways of doing ministry in the new church year.

Our COVID-19 Steering Committee continued to bring together senior staff leaders and our board leadership to discern how best to respond to the ever changing dynamics of the pandemic.

We marched to Stop Asian Hate and continued to advocate that Black Lives Matter in the streets, in our digital sanctuary, and through other venues of the church.

We engaged with the most pressing issues of the day including by helping to UU the Vote and responding to the wildfires last autumn, the momentous conviction of the police officer who murdered George Floyd, and the January 6th Insurrection at the Capitol. It's been a very long church year!

We stabilized the finances of the church as we faced unprecedented losses in income from our community rentals and Dining for Dollars Fundraiser by creating a special stimulus fund, hosting church auctions, finding new ways to Dine for Dollars online, and applying for and receiving grants from the government and the Spirit Foundation.

One of the new ways I worked to serve our larger community as a minister this past church year was by being appointed to the renowned Ethics Committee of UCLA Hospital as a community representative.

The ways that we ministered to each other and to our larger community are beyond what I can name in this report. Our Religious Education Tune Up, welcoming new partnerships with our UUA liaisons, our Rising Green Earth Day Concert, the Arizona Door building project, the Worship Transition Team, Adult Religious Education programs, Faith in Action activities, and so many other programs and ministries are elaborated upon in the full report. I do hope you'll take the time to read the entire annual report which will provide more detail about the multitude of projects and activities that aren't named right now.

I do want to provide you with a preview of some of the new opportunities that await us in the new church year. Our first major task as a congregation will be to successfully transition back to our building at the end of the summer. Plans are already underway to prepare for this and we may have to relearn some of the protocols and routines (along with some new ones) that we may have forgotten over the 17 months we were away from our building. So I want to give a shout out to all of our ushers and greeters and coffee hour team who will help to welcome us back on **Sunday, September 5th**. We are going to slowly allow some rentals to return before then but we hope to be somewhere near regular operations for all renters and our church groups by that first weekend in September.

Over the summer, our Worship Transition Task Force, is going to be working to upgrade our technological infrastructure in the sanctuary so that we can begin live streaming our services. This is going to include hiring a new AV Production Manager who can help us reach the 500+ viewers that joined us each week for the past year. We're also making significant investments in social media marketing and upgrading our website to seize the opportunities online that the pandemic months made apparent to us.

Rebuilding our regular income stream is going to be another priority in the new year as renters return to our building and we engage in some special fundraising for a matching grant we received to support our technological upgrades, the hiring of AV Production Manager, and our social media marketing.

Religious Education will need a greater investment on the part of the congregation to really serve our young people so we will also be focusing on rebuilding our RE Committee and offering Anti-Racist, Anti-Oppressive, and Multicultural programs along with Our Whole Lives comprehensive sexuality education program.

Our developmental work will continue and expand next year to include discerning the mission and vision of the congregation, hopefully adopting new bylaws, continuing to strengthen our pastoral systems, engaging in the work of intersectional anti-racism/anti-oppression, and growing into a culture of even deeper caring, financial stability, greater abundance, and stronger connections with the larger UU movement. Next church year is going to be an exciting time to rebuild and grow as a congregation.

Lastly, our community experienced so many losses of beloved members and friends this past year, including our dear Minister Emeritus, the Rev. Ernie Pipes. I would like us to take a few moments to hold them and their families and friends in our hearts as we remember that mighty cloud of witnesses that surrounds and embraces this community. These beloved members and friends joined the ancestors in the last year:

- Leonard Adler
- Harvey Bjornlie
- William Wilson Blake
- George Brenner
- Maria Elena Gonzalez
- Leonard Harris
- Christine Haskell
- Warren Matthews

- Anne MacQueen
- The Rev. Ernest D. Pipes, Jr.
- Marguerite Spears

Because they are remembered: they live.

—Rev. Jeremiah Lal Shahbaz Kalendae

## PRESIDENT BETH BROWNLIE

What a year! I hope this message finds you and your loved ones healthy and well AND Vaccinated. At last year's annual meeting, we were in the midst of a pandemic. It was a scary time. Now things look brighter, and we are emerging from our homes, seeing friends and family after a long year. It is wonderful thing! We are looking forward to seeing each other in our beloved Sanctuary in September.

This year we have done some cool things in the virtual world. We continue to have an enriching Sunday experience with worship and a lively coffee hour. We learned how to do an online Dining for Dollars fundraiser. Wow! The Zoom pizza parties, nature scavenger hunt, beer tasting, and wine tasting events were great fun. We learned how to connect over Zoom, phone calls, and many, many emails.

Our semi-new membership program, now more than two years old, Faith Forward (Thanks...Norm Richey!), brought together the many aspects of the congregation to ground the community in Unitarian Universalist values and UUSM life. We were able to create this experience online, too. Amazing work! I believe it is making us more interesting to folks looking for some much-needed community.

We had a successful stewardship and budget-building process during a pandemic. We accepted some much-needed help from our government with the PPP loans and our local benefactor group, the Spirit Foundation. With our campus closed, we lost our rental income... And we still managed our finances in the best way possible.

We have grown our hearts and deepened our compassion by becoming engaged in our anti-racist/anti-oppression work. We have 30 community members working through the Beloved Conversations program by the Fahs Collaborative. Our new Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppression Commission has met a few times, thinking about ways to expand our collaborative work on this important topic. I am excited about what they will have to offer us in the coming months. We are also working on refreshing our bylaws, making sure they align with our work as a community fully invested in anti-racist/anti-oppression work.

We continue to work on our 8 Elements of Effective Congregational Ministry, as introduced by Rev. Jeremiah. Our committee meetings have a more spiritual connection, and we are developing more empathy with these important elements.

We have done so much in the past 5 years as a community. We have made great strides forward. We are more connected and have more empathy towards each other in these very trying times. We have come together in so many ways. I want to thank all the exceptional people in this community who have walked in leadership this year.

Our board of directors - Vice President Eileen McCormack, Secretary Larry Weiner, Treasurer Vilma Ortiz, and Past President Jacki Weber. Thank you to our Members at Large, Mike Monte, Norm Richey, Abby Arnold, Roberta Frye, and Linda van Ligten, who stepped into Roberta's spot. Thank you all for being on this Board in this most unusual year. Thank you for Zooming for a whole year! As a board, we are trying to practice more spaciousness and trying to cultivate more regenerativity. What does this look like? Slowing down and not trying to do too much, trying to keep our Board Meetings short, and reducing meetings when we can.

Our worship associates - who continued this year in the virtual land, creating transformative worship along with Reverend Jeremiah and Director of Music, Saunder Choi, creating much joy in all our hearts.

Our Communications team that transformed its tech game not only to produce a great online newsletter and continues to bring our live streaming services to Facebook, Youtube, and our website, complete with virtual coffee hour. Thank you for helping us stay connected!

The leaders in small group ministries like the Pastoral Care Associates, the AAHS group, the Hunger Task Force, Adult RE, and other small groups which make our community experience so rich and vibrant. Our RE staff are reaching out to families in these trying times making connections and working on pastoral care to our families.

Thank you to the many administrative committees that do the important work to help the congregation run smoothly - communications, finance, investment, nominating, and personnel committees.

Thank you to an outstanding staff: Rev. Jeremiah, DRE Cleo Anderson, Music Director, Saunder Choi (who sings, conducts, arranges, and produces our videos!)— also, the spectacular Nurit Gordon, Cyndee Hayes, Teri Lucas, and Sibylla Nash.

Deep gratitude and thanks to all of you, my people, for your gifts, talents, and commitment to our Community. We all bring so much and make it all so rich and rewarding...even in a global pandemic. Blessings to you all!

—Beth Brownlie

## TREASURER VILMA ORTIZ

This is the annual finance/treasurer report for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

**Savings:** We have more than \$1 million in funds. These are allocated into various funds including: Emergency Fund (almost \$100,000) and the Catastrophe Fund (\$179,000). Several years ago, we established an Endowment Fund which currently has more than \$300,000.

**Investments:** We maintain accounts in the following institutions. One, we have a checking and savings at Bank of America that we use for regular financial transactions such as depositing income and paying expenses. Currently we have \$175,000 in our BoA accounts; this is greater than usual because we will pay for the Arizona Entry Project in the next few months. Two, we have historically held CDs at Merrill; in the last year, we have been closing these accounts as CDs mature; currently we have one CD with \$20,000 and when it matures, that account will be closed; and we will no longer use Merrill. Three, we now have CDs at Self-Help Federal Credit Union which invests in socially responsible ways. Approximately half of savings (\$460,000) are held at SHFCU. The funds at SHFCU are held in CDs in amounts of \$50,000 with staggered maturity dates so that a CD matures every 3 months. Four, we have accounts with UU Common Endowment Fund which is a diversified fund designed for long-term investments managed by the UUA. We currently have \$320,000 at UUCEF; eventually we plan to hold half of our funds in UUCEF.

**2020-2021 Overall Financial Status:** Our income for fiscal year 2020-2021 will be about \$435,000 while our expenses will be about \$525,000. This would leave a deficit of approximately \$90,000. We received a federal-government grant/loan in the amount \$70,000 thus reducing the deficit to appropriately \$20,000.

**2020-2021 Income:** Pledge income is lower than we had

anticipated while other donations from church members are as expected. Fundraising was low because we were unable to do our traditional fundraisers. Rental income is low because our church building has been closed. Fortunately, we received a grant/loan in the amount of \$70,000 from the federal government as part of the Paycheck Protection Program. The PPP was initially provided as a loan and, if we use it primarily for payroll, it will be forgiven.

**2020-2021 Expenses:** We continue to have many of the same expenses. Staff involved in worship—minister, DRE, music—continue to work producing our high-quality online Sunday service. Our office staff continues to run our church. We have fewer expenses due to not meeting in person for Sunday worship.

**2021-2022 Overall Budget:** We expect our income for fiscal year 2021-2022 will be about \$531,000 while our expenses are expected to be about \$596K. This would leave a deficit of \$65,000. This deficit will be covered from the Deficit Reserve (currently has about \$38,000) and the Emergency Reserve (currently has about \$97,000).

**2021-2022 Income:** We anticipate developing a robust fundraising effort that includes both in-person and online strategies. We expect that rental income will increase once we open in September. We have received several grants totaling \$34,000 from the Spirit Level Foundation (provided to UU Churches). We will take advantage of other government or foundation sources that become available.

**2021-2022 Expenses:** We do not expect significant changes to our expenses. We will have some reduced expenses in that (1) the office assistant's hours were reduced (from 40 to 30 a week) and (2) we will not be meeting until September. We will have some additional expenses since we plan to continue to provide online services after we return to in-person services.

## CONCLUSIONS

Although we continue to weather a global pandemic and economic crisis, we remain a strong community. We—the board, finance committee, minister, and I—will continue to work diligently to monitor the financial status of the church and to address issues that arise. We appreciate your gifts to our beloved community.

—Vilma Ortiz

## DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION CLEO ANDERSON

This year the program has experienced a lot of change and shifting, and growth. Some of our highlights have been:

- Checking in with every single RE family that has registered with us.
- A Non-Denominational Winter Mailing. Every kid/youth received a mailing containing stickers, a personalized card, candy, and apple cider mix.
- Family Dance Night. We had Guest Instructor Natalie Resindez offering a dance lesson for the whole family.
- Sunday Morning Art. We had Guest Instructor Katie Sayers offering elementary school-level arts and craft classes.
- Middle School Logic Games. We hosted several Wednesday afternoon rounds of cooperative logic puzzle solving.
- Middle School Movie Night. A Netflix party was held for

middle school kids, and they received a GrubHub gift card to order snacks.

The RE program has shifted from a less formal programming-based ministry to a pastoral one. A lot of my work as DRE has shifted to talking to families about living in confined spaces. Providing information on alternatives to in-person activities like conferences and camps. Or often just spending Sunday listening to parents and young adults talk about whatever crosses their mind. And I have a well-received “So You’re Having a Religious Crisis” playlist for young adults.

Overall the program has done lovely this year. We did the most important things: communicate and show care.

—Cleo Anderson

## DIRECTOR OF MUSIC SAUNDER CHOI

### MUSIC PROGRAM GOALS

1. Safe return to singing together
  - a. Might check vaccination cards
  - b. Masked singing
  - c. Choir rehearsals (1) Forbes hall (2) Sanctuary (priority in Forbes hall)
  - d. Trauma management
2. Hire bass and tenor section leaders
3. Two music services plus Christmas Eve
  - a. In Memoria/Requiem (incorporate all Hallows tide, Dia de Los Muertos)
  - b. Earth Day? (maybe something else)
4. Bringing back D4S concert
5. Increase choir membership
6. Plan community children’s choir program from 2022-2023

—Saunder Choi

## CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR NURIT GORDON

This year was a year of adjustments requiring creativity and flexibility to keep church life going entirely virtual.

Our work at the office required us to be here physically, so we created a schedule where we work from the office most of the time and from home, keeping a safe distance and ensuring all finance and facility maintenance aspects of the church are kept together.

We were lucky to receive two Paycheck Protection Loans (one, which was already forgiven) that helped us keep staff in place as long as possible and church operations intact.

### FINANCE

Our monthly reports showed a trend for a year where our income was lower than usual as we lost two large income sources – rentals and Dining for Dollars fundraising. Our expenses were also low as all in-person-related activities did not take place. Thanks to the Paycheck Protection loan, lower income, and lower expenses – we managed to keep our heads above water.

We held a Holiday Fundraising through Bidding OWL – which yielded about \$2000. The Wine tasting Fundraising brought in about \$400, and the Stimulus Fund Fundraising income was approx. \$18,000, which will be posted in the 21-22 Fiscal Year

income. Dining for Dollars Fundraising is a work-in-progress

The Paycheck Protection loans helped us keep staff on our payroll for almost a year. Afterward, we had to make some changes for positions that we did not need since the buildings were closed.

### FACILITY

I kept our usual routine with tree trimming, backflow certificates, landscape maintenance, etc.

I am also working, together with the Facilities Development and Maintenance Committee (FDMC) and other members on quite a few projects:

- Front Sanctuary Door: Doors were replaced. We need to finish the installation of hardware and handles.
- New Office hours sign for the front to replace the laminated paper sign – work in progress.
- Arizona Lobby improvement and new doors: This is the largest project and the most urgent one to be completed before reopening, currently awaiting plans from the engineers and architect.
- Church Corner Sign on Arizona and 18th: On the back burner until we finish the Arizona Lobby. Will be obtaining bids.
- Irrigation: We have an undetected leak in our irrigation system, which we are troubleshooting. For now, Cyndee and I are turning irrigation on and off manually.
- Pulpit Planter: Thanks to a couple of our members – the planter area was cleaned, and new plants were purchased. This project is still a work-in-progress.

### MEMBERSHIP

We started the year with 278 members, and as of today, when I am generating this report – we have 263 members. Unfortunately, we lost nine members who passed away, including Rev. Ernie Pipes, who was a beloved Minister of the Church for many years.

### COMMUNICATIONS

The Communication Team met regularly. We post information on FB, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter and via our website. We are trying to reach as many people as possible in our community.

As the end of the fiscal year approaches, I have been working on the 2021-22 budget, obtaining reports for the Annual Reports on programs, preparing the materials for the Annual Meeting Mailer and elections to be taken in Election Buddy, recording all the new pledges that come in and reporting to Stewardship. I am also working on a reopening plan as we will need to keep specific guidelines and reactivate all the services we stopped (like parking, etc.) and purchasing supplies, so we are ready when we reopen. We also hope to gradually accommodate our rental groups, using the guidelines from LA County Public Health office, CDC and UUA as we reopen.

—Nurit Gordon

## ADULT RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

UUSM’s Adult RE committee affirms our Seven Principles by providing a broad selection of programs, activities, and learning opportunities that deepen our spiritual lives, expand our perspectives, increase our knowledge, connect deeply with others, and put our faith into action. Chair Bev Shoenberger



departed from the committee in May 2020. With her departure as chair, the committee has switched to a revolving chair with each member serving a month. The members for 2020-2021 are: James Witker, Sarah Robson, Mark Berlin (who resigned), Beth Rendeiro, and Haygo Salibian. Sunni Pavlovic remains as a helpful non-committee member. Our Assistant DRE, Teri Lucas has provided invaluable staff support.

2020 started with several rich offerings: “The Diamond Approach” in January; “Prayer Bead Workshop” in February, with Bettye Barclay and Rev. Jeremiah; and Leon Henderson-MacLennan presented “Lessons of Loss” in March-April.

Covid-19 affected all programming, starting in April 2020. The Passover Seder was canceled. Several ongoing groups were also canceled (“Body-Mind Tune-up” with Bruno Lacombe, the “Collage Group” with Stan Bemis, and the “International Folk Dancing Group” sponsored by Ellen Levy), some were transferred to Zoom (“AAHS Freethinkers Forum” facilitated by James Witker, “Science Non-fiction Book Discussion” facilitated by Rebecca Crawford, and “The Men’s Group” facilitated by Richard Mathias), and some took different approaches (the meditation groups, and Kim Kalmanson’s “Ukulele Strum- and Sing-Along”).

We successfully adapted, and new offerings were made specifically for Zoom. Dorothy Steinicke’s “Nature Journaling” group is designed to help secluded participants feel more closely in touch with nature. Norm Richey presented his “New Year’s Resolution Workshop” beginning in January. Jacki Weber holds “Spiritual Grounding and Productivity, A Two-Week Challenge” every other two weeks, as a morning check-in. Many attended the five-session “Leadership” series by Kikanza Nuri-Robins. With remote access, participants who have access to technology are able to come together more easily.

Sarah Robson supplies her own paid Zoom Account as the official Adult RE account. With the freedom to offer more Zoom classes with evening hosting, the committee actively solicited offerings from members. As a result, Jonathan Buudha Quant led the six-session “Tarot Meditation and Workshop.” Greg Wood also presented “Still Life Drawing.”

With so many at home, the Open Meditation group, hosted by Bev Shoenberger and Carol Ring, once held on certain Monday nights, expanded to include “Meditation Wellsprings,” held at noontime on two days of the week.

The “Personal and Spiritual Exploration for Adults” news blog, posted by Sarah Robson, has continued to be a source of information for the offerings, and the way people can sign up is now only through the DRE Assistant, Teri Lucas. We no longer post people’s personal information online.

We must note the passing of Bill Blake. He was always keen to discuss impressive questions about consciousness, and his passion was expressed in his bimonthly meditation offering, “An Enjoyable Dive into Who and What We Are.” He will be missed.

Looking forward, we endeavor to continue offering quality programming, perhaps as in-person and Zoom hybrids. We will be encouraging optional donations to the Adult RE fund during groups, as well as feature online survey forms. We are searching for ways to encourage greater participation in the congregation and expand our presence in our wider community. We will also be adjusting to the loss of Teri Lucas as staff support and the committee becoming autonomous.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- Co-chairs: Pat Gomez and Barbara Kernochan
- Committee members: Karl Lisovsky, Sheila Cummins, Natalie Kahn

The Nominating Committee members each serve, ideally, a three-year term, with two members rotating off the committee and two new members elected to the committee annually. We meet monthly.

The Nominating Committee is responsible for identifying potential leadership from among the voting members of the congregation and putting together a slate of candidates to fill open positions on the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee. Nominees are voted on at the annual meeting. For Board positions vacated during the year, the Nominating Committee recommends interim candidates for the Board to ratify. For its own vacated positions, the Nominating Committee fills the vacancy and notifies the Board of the interim appointment. These interim positions are held until the next annual meeting when nominees are elected by vote of the membership.

The Nominating Committee also recommends qualified church members to serve on the Personnel, Investment, and Finance Committees. These positions are vacated throughout the year, and we present these to the Board for approval.

In any year that a Ministerial Search Committee is to be formed, the Nominating Committee is responsible for putting together a slate of candidates for election by the Church membership to the Search Committee.

Under guidance from our minister and the Board this past year, the Nominating Committee has been intent not only on finding qualified candidates for the above positions but also on building strong teams that can work cohesively to achieve their goals under challenging circumstances. Further, the Nominating Committee has been coordinating with the Membership Committee to become acquainted with newer members and learn how these members may wish to get involved and serve their church community as we build toward potential fresh leadership.

The Nominating Committee worked diligently under adverse conditions to fulfill its covenant and responsibilities this past church year. It will be our great pleasure to connect in person with newer members and reconnect with our entire church community as we re-open our doors in the year ahead.

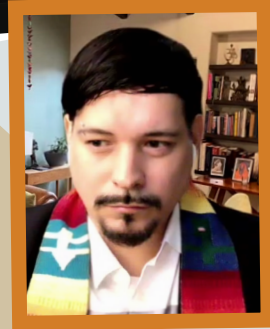
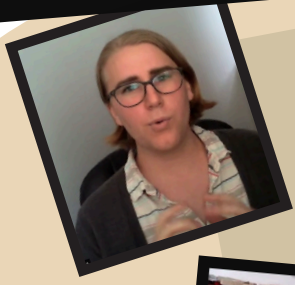
—Barbara Kernochan

## PASTORAL CARE ASSOCIATES

The Pastoral Care Associates (PCA) committee is part of the Pastoral Care program at designed to assist the minister in providing pastoral care ministry to members of UUSM. The members of this committee are people with some degree of previous skill/training in the helping professions and/or a significant level of boundary differentiation and self-awareness.

Members of this committee are selected by application.

PCA is a leadership development program that teaches people to build and employ new awareness skills in the task of “witnessing” people into a new reality. Most often, PCA uses one-on-one connections with people who are experiencing an identity transition due to major life changes such as the death of a loved one or loss of a job, among other things. Therefore, confidentiality





is an important component of what we do.

PCA does not offer professional services, and their contact with a person is usually between two and four times. PCA works with the minister to learn and apply new skills at monthly meetings.

- Chair: Bettye Barclay
- Committee members: Karen Hsu Patterson, Phil Bonacich, Denise Helton, Cheryl Barnett

One of our goals this past year was to establish contact with all congregation members. PCA and the Care Ring committee worked together on this project. Phone calls were made, with follow-up emails if needed. Later in the year, we mailed cards to congregants.

Pastoral Care Associates also participated in the summer task force that was part of the UUSM response to the pandemic to reach out to the elderly and at-risk in our congregation during lock-down.

Next year we will continue the all-member contact. The aim for this is two-fold. By reaching out to all members, there is the intention that members will have had some contact with the pastoral care program. This personal contact may make it easier for people to reach out to pastoral care in time of need.

The overall goal is to be sure that members know about the various ways pastoral care is available in the UUSM community, know how to request assistance when needed, and help build a truly caring “we” community.

—Bettye Barclay

## CHALICE CIRCLES – OUR NEW SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES!

The Chalice Circle Committee is responsible for planning and developing the small group ministry program. This includes developing a plan and recruiting facilitators, scheduling groups at various times so that participants have a choice of day and evening times. The committee also does registration for congregants wishing to participate.

The committee researches helpful material, resources, and information about small group ministry and shares that with facilitators.

We work closely with the minister in our planning since this is a ministry program.

The committee consists of members who have an ongoing commitment to small group ministry, and each member also served as co-facilitator of one of the Chalice Circles this year.

- Chair: Bettye Barclay
- Registrars: Sue Stoyanoff and Wendi Gladstone
- Committee members: Denise Helton, Margot Page

Chalice Circles, our new small group ministry program, are small lay-led groups of 8 to 10 people who meet together monthly to deepen and expand the church’s ministry. By meeting over time, being willing to share deeply from the heart and the soul, and listening with an open heart, we deepen our awareness of our own lives and hold with care the lives of others. The focus of the groups is on meaning and significance rather than on details, information, and outcome.

Groups offered this year were: Spirit In Practice, Transitions and Passages, CommUUnity Connections, Poetry As A Spiritual Practice, Council Meeting, Toward a Beloved Community Embracing Anti-Racism: Telling Our Stories, and A 7-Principled



Perspective. Groups met monthly from October through June.

The groups met on Zoom, and each group had co-facilitators. This was an important way of weaving a stronger sense of community in this time of physical separation.

This was a very successful program. Having groups with a different focus seemed to work very well. In addition, meeting regularly in small groups seemed to strengthen bonds among people, especially during physical distancing.

We are just starting our planning for next year. We are in the process of developing evaluation forms for both facilitators and participants and will use their responses as useful information when we finalize our plans for next year.

—Bettye Barclay

## UUSM FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

### PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE:

FDMC supports the vision and mission of UUSM. FDMC's objective is to create and maintain a healthy, safe, attractive, and accommodating campus for staff, members, and visitors. FDMC's role is to provide budget planning, direction, oversight, and coordination of all operations, maintenance, repair, and capital projects impacting the buildings, grounds, and furnishings.

For further detail, refer to the committee charter and RACI chart.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ROLES

- Co-Chairs: Brad Hutchinson, John Zinner
- Board Liaison: Beth Brownlie
- Staff Liaison: UUSM Administrator Nurit Gordon
- Members: John Hart, Karl Lisovsky, Chela Metzger, Sherman Neusom, Steve White
- Other UUSM members assist with specific projects.

### CURRENT FISCAL YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Replacement of Sanctuary front doors and mailbox installed; ongoing work includes installation of metal detailing and replacement side windows; funded by member Bonnie Brae
- Continued work on Sanctuary and campus lighting project third phase

### NEXT FISCAL YEAR OBJECTIVES

- Complete Forbes Hall Arizona entrance subsidence/structural repair and addition of garden door. Complete by September 2021
- Complete sanctuary front door and side windows replacement. Complete by September 2021
- Complete selection and installation of new plants in the Sanctuary by September 2021.
- Complete sanctuary and campus lighting third phase.
- Design and install new Arizona & 18th corner sign.
- Draft first draft of campus operations and maintenance procedures manual.
- Finalize a list of all durable equipment and facilities, including their projected life span, the best time to replace, and the expected replacement cost
- Practice 8 Elements of Effective Congregational Ministries.

## FAITH IN ACTION: PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Part of the FIA Commission, the Peace & Social Justice Committee (PSJ) helps educate our members and friends and put our UU principles into action in our local community and beyond. Our ongoing work is to organize activities and programs for the congregation and support external campaigns in the areas of labor and economic issues, anti-racism, police reform, and mass incarceration; immigration and immigrant detention; and resisting war.

We sometimes work with community partners such as CLUE (Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice), Black Lives Matter: Los Angeles, OFA (Organizing for Action), ACLU, the Sunrise Movement, and others. We also collaborate with the UUSM Green Committee on issues relating to environmental justice and the climate crisis.

The current PSJ Chair is Deirdre Dietel. PSJ has an active group of regular attendees and supporters (including Roberta Frye, Hugo Contreras, Sarah Mae Harper, Jila Tayefehnowrooz, James Witker, Cathie Gentile, Linda Van Ligten) but committee membership is not formal; meetings are open to all, everyone who shows up has a voice, and work is generally done by consensus.

We have an email listserv (Google Group) dedicated to PSJ that we use for communication and collaboration, and it is open for all interested in joining: [uusm-peace@googlegroups.com](mailto:uusm-peace@googlegroups.com).

In Spring 2020, we moved our monthly committee meetings to Zoom and have continued to meet every month. Many of the committee's activities have long consisted of joining actions out in the community and bringing guest speakers and educational programs to UUSM, which have all been curtailed by the pandemic. We have done our best to stay involved and keep our members informed/connected under the circumstances.

### AREAS OF FOCUS HAVE INCLUDED:

**UU the Vote:** Organized postcard campaign and later, along with UUSM board, worked on phone banking with Reclaim Our Vote (supporting voting rights nationwide) and the failed CA Prop. 15 Schools & Communities First (equitable funding for communities via fair corporate taxation).

**Healthy LA Coalition:** FIA Commission is signatory to this network of community groups advocating and interfacing with elected leaders for housing support, healthcare, vaccine equity, and more during the pandemic and accompanying economic crisis.

**CLUE (Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice):** Keeping up our participation and support of workers' rights and dignity campaigns in the area.

**Victims of Police Violence:** Advocacy and support for families (Alex Flores et al.), Say Their Names LA, seeking justice and policy changes through vigils, car caravans, etc., led by Sarah Mae & Hugo.

**"How to Be an Antiracist":** Multi-week study group on Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's seminal book on systemic racism, facilitated by James W. (in collaboration with UUSM Adult Programs), drew approx. 25 participants total, including guests from San Diego and Florida.

**Urban Oil Drilling:** Local environmental justice campaigns to shut down polluting operations which disproportionately impact

communities of color via STAND-LA (Standing Together Against Neighborhood Drilling).

In the year ahead, we hope to be able to return to meeting in person, re-joining physical campaigns and organizing all-UUSM participation in events such as the Women's March and LA Pride, amplifying our congregation's support for social justice work, and reaching more people with our efforts toward education and activism.

—James Witker

## UUSM NEWS MAGAZINE COMMITTEE

### PURPOSE OF COMMITTEE

The UUSM News Magazine (formerly Newsletter) Committee is a working group of member volunteers responsible for editing, curating, and maintaining an online collection of submitted articles (a multi-author blog) about church news, ministries, programs, and activities.

The goal of the News Magazine is to foster a shared sense of community, identity, and purpose at UUSM by connecting members to programs and events, letting visitors to the church know about events and ministries to which they can contribute their talents, as well as introducing UUSM to the larger community. Our guiding principles are the Unitarian Universalist Seven Principles and the UUSM Church Covenant.

The News Magazine strives to complement, not duplicate, the content located on other online communication channels, such as the weekly emailed announcements of meetings and events generated by the church office. The development of the online News Magazine is a work-in-progress, and content integration will evolve as other online channels mature.

The monthly UUSM News Digest is an email that contains the link to a few of the latest articles from the UUSM Community News Magazine.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS' NAMES AND ROLES

- Managing Editors: Barbara Andres, Pam Teplitz
- Editors: Barbara Andres, Rebecca Crawford, Sheila Cummins, Elizabeth Fuller, Joyce Holmen, Lois Hutchinson, Audrey Lyness, Pam Teplitz
- Photography: Carol Ring, Roy Patience
- Staff Liaison: Sibylla Nash
- News Website Administrators: Elizabeth Fuller, Pam Teplitz
- Monthly News Digest Production: Barbara Andres, Lois Hutchinson, Pam Teplitz

### FOCUS IN 2020-2021

In the past year, the News Magazine Team's focus was to continue to be a regular and reliable source of news about events and ministries, especially as members and friends of the church found themselves isolated and unable to participate in church events in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Newsletter team members posted all the weekly event updates. In addition, the live stream Sunday services were posted on the blog, Facebook, the UUSM website (UUSM.org), and YouTube. Services are no longer posted on the site, but links are provided.

The Newsletter Committee decided to change the name of the blog due to continued confusion among congregants between

the Weekly Announcements (to which many referred as "the church's newsletter," and the blog named "UUSM Community Newsletter," which emails a monthly News Digest of key articles for that month. After some discussion, we renamed the blog UUSM Community News Magazine. We encourage you to subscribe to the UUSM News Magazine so you will receive notification of new articles whenever they are posted, and to visit our website regularly.

### FOCUS IN 2021-2022

In the coming year, the News Magazine Committee will continue producing content on the blog that informs and inspires engagement and action, particularly as church members and friends emerge from quarantine and begin to participate in in-person events, ministries, services, governance, and committees.

The monthly Digest will continue to be published in the first week of each month (before the first Sunday of the month).

The Committee will review whether the name change in early 2021 has helped clarify and differentiate the News Magazine from other church publications such as the Weekly Announcements. Then, if needed, we will take further action to increase reader awareness of and subscription to the site.

## AGNOSTICS, ATHEISTS, HUMANISTS & SECULARISTS (AAHS)

AAHS (Agnostics, Atheists, Humanists & Secularists) is a social group that is now considered part of the broader program of Adult Programs (RE). It's also an affiliated group of the UU Humanist Association. We host monthly "Freethinker Forums" for community and discussion of ideas from politics, science, culture, religion, etc., from a humanistic perspective, with a particular emphasis on the ethical values and goals of Humanism. We also center the legacy of Humanist thought, writing, and practice that has been influential within Unitarian Universalism for the past hundred years.

James Witker is the current facilitator/organizer. We have a mailing list of UUSM members and friends that includes 274 individuals. We also maintain a meetup.com group of 760 occasional attendees and others who want to be informed about our events.

As with so many other congregational groups during the pandemic, we transitioned to meeting online. In 2020-21 our Zoom meetings typically drew 6-12 attendees, somewhat less than our in-person meetings (12-25). We didn't meet every month because of competing demands on time and attention.

### TOPICS INCLUDED:

**May 2020:** What is the Meaning of the Pandemic?

From a humanistic perspective, many meanings had been proposed — how it will impact our future social habits, what disproportionate suffering continues to reveal about societal inequities and commoditized healthcare, what lessons it might teach about planetary interconnectedness and the ecological crisis.

**August 2020:** The Ten Commitments

Discussion of the American Humanist Association Center for

Education's new set of proposed principles for ethical living.

**September 2020:** The Humanistic Legacy of RBG

The late Supreme Court justice's influence on religious freedom and women's/LGBTQ/reproductive rights.

**October 2020:** Update from the UUHA and Journal Issue, the UUHA's latest edition on the theme of UU and Humanist "elevator speeches" with many inspiring quotations and submissions from UUSM members.

**November 2020:** Gratitude in a Difficult Year

Focusing discussion on what we can be thankful for in a year with suffering, isolation, disruptions, and threats to democracy.

**January 2021:** A Religious Insurrection

Probing the theological, ideological, and white supremacist motivations that intersected in the attack on the U.S. Capitol.

**February 2021:** Darwin Day: Declaration of Interdependence

Viewed and discussed a video presentation recorded for the UUHA by Rev. Dr. David Breeden of First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis on the meaning of Charles Darwin's discovery to culture, philosophy, and religion (particularly the influence in liberal religion).

**April 2021:** Earth Sunday Screening of "Journey of the Universe"

AAHS attendees were invited to join a national UU Humanist Association viewing/discussion of the documentary based on the life's work — in science, spirituality, and meaning — of scientist/philosophers Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme.

## GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR

Hopefully, we'll be able to return to "normal" in the months ahead. However, the online format will likely play a role in the future as it enables us to connect with a broader community.

I hope that we will continue to connect with the growing number of people in our society who do not hold traditional religious beliefs but who can be served by and contribute to our UU Community and its values.

—James Witker

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Membership Committee is one of the most important committees in our UU Church Community. A committed and participatory membership is the lifeblood of any congregation.

### MISSION

- Welcome and reach out to new visitors,
- Help and facilitate visitors becoming members,
- Integrate new members into the life of the congregation,
- Cherish, nurture, and support existing members, and
- Actively seek potential new members.

An important goal of the Membership Committee is to ensure that all members have the best possible experience as they explore and participate in UU Congregational life. Therefore, the Committee works closely with the Minister, the Board of Directors, the office staff, and other committees to fulfill its mission.

### ACTIVITIES

This has been a difficult church year given the Covid-19 pandemic, resulting in the closure of our Church buildings and campus. We hope to reopen this coming September.

• A critical arm of the Membership Committee is the Greeter Team and Visitor/New Member Welcoming Table, under the excellent coordination of Barbara Gibbs. In normal times, the responsibilities of the Greeter Team are to welcome visitors and answer any questions or inquiries. In addition, they provide directions as needed and invite visitors to fill out and wear visitor name tags. Visitors are also invited to sign up to receive Thursday announcements electronically and the online monthly newsletter. We are hoping and planning to greet people again in our beautiful building and courtyard in September.

• Despite the closure, the Membership Committee has been quite active. Two members of the Committee have offered Visitor Meet-Up sessions every Sunday after Service on Zoom. This was an opportunity to meet new visitors who wanted to learn more about UUSM and its many programs and learn about Unitarian Universalism. It is exciting to mention that few of them have taken the path from visitor to UUSM member.

• The Committee promoted "Bring a Friend to Church" for the Christmas Eve 2020 Service. Although it was a beautiful service, it is unclear how many "friends" attended, given that it was a taped service on our Facebook page. We are hoping to do another such event after we reopen. At that time, we will be able to extend a warm welcome in person.

• In January of this year, we recommenced the Faith Forward: Inquirers Series, nine consecutive hourly sessions after the Sunday service on Zoom. We want to thank the UUSM members who facilitated these sessions: Beth Brownlie, Brian Oakes, Alison Kendall, Sarah Robson, Cleo Anderson, Beth Rendeiro, Jacki Weber, and James Witker, who presented twice. Also, a special thanks to Rev. Jeremiah for his Q & A Session (#6). It had the most attendees for the second year in a row.

• On February 28th, we held a New Member Ceremony during the Sunday Service on Facebook. Four new members participated with their own intro videos. The ceremony included a charge to the new members and a charge to the congregation to the new members. It was a very heartwarming event. We are planning a second New Member Ceremony during the Sunday, May 23rd Service and hoping for up to seven new members to participate.

• Carol Ring, Barbara Gibbs, and Sarah Robson focused on revising and upgrading the UUSM Membership Application Packet, which is now available as a hard copy from the office or can be downloaded from the UUSM Website.

• For the past year, Norm has been attending a weekly Zoom meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Membership Professionals, representing various UU congregations from around the country. It is an opportunity to collaborate and share all aspects of Membership, along with the challenges and the creative ideas to meet these challenges. It's a wonderful resource for membership information and ideas and a chance to meet other UUs who have a passion for Membership.

The Committee looks forward to the new church year, focusing on welcoming new visitors, introducing interested visitors to the path of Membership, and connecting with present members. Once we reopen, we are planning to honor those who have been UUSM members for over 20 years.

Members of the Committee this year: Cynthia Cottom and Norm Richey, Co-Chairs. Barbara Gibbs, Carol Ring, Sarah Robson, Larry Weiner, Gretchen Goetz, Adrienne Sumpter, and Shanna Shaked.

—Norm Richey

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
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UUSM News Magazine:

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# REPORT ON PROGRAMS

# 2020-21

