

**Accomplishments in the current congregational year, so far:**

- Continuing as a Teaching Congregation
- Balancing our budget and increasing our giving
- Thriving HeartWorks Team building connections and helping us give, both within and beyond our own congregational community
- JusticeWorks re-launch and results, engaging more people in doing good at a time when it's needed in all new ways
- Beginning the re-launch of our Small Groups Team
- Being a sanctuary of support, and a community that is diverse and open in ways that many other spaces are not
- Preparing to ordain another minister (Nick) into our tradition
- Thriving Belonging Team helping newcomers and current members build connections and relationships, welcoming people so much more fully to our community as they check us out and discern whether to join us
- More people are involved in our worship services (continue to invite participation in creative and smaller ways, beyond just regular preachers, worship leaders, and musicians)
- More kids involved YouthSpirit this year over last year
- Continuing to innovate and build creative options to connect with older youth and teens (OWLlet, TSS, etc.)
- Seeing new members and regular guests joining and returning, connecting
- Huge increases in social media engagement with trying out new strategies

## How are we doing on our current year goals?

### Spill Our Tea

- Changes in social media strategy are seeing results
- Also seeing more online engagement from members – for this goal, there is really something each person can do, and we are seeing uptake in that (including probably in ways that aren't online, and are less easy to observe)
- Our newer members and visitors are diverse in a bunch of different ways – age, background, gender and sexuality, ability, family structures, etc.
- Message of “we are here for those who need us” feels strongly sent
- Sending our past interns out into the wider world also helps us “spill our tea,” especially to other places within UUism

### Build Our Bonds

- Belonging Team is doing great work on this – very strong, revamped new member class helps people connect, encourages joining Teams
- JusticeWorks Team helping us build bonds that reach beyond our walls to the community at large
- YouthSpirit efforts, engaging all ages in activities that build bonds together
- Welcoming Congregation – curious about status of that, wanting to see it through
- Success with hosting events like Fall Fest and Potlucks
- Caring Team working mostly behind the scenes, but helping lots of folks feel connected when they go through difficult times or life transitions

### Fund Our Future

- This year we made necessary choices and changes to balance our budget
- We've also seen an increase in contributions and an increase in the cash we have on hand – more stability
- We're continuing our third year with a robust Stewardship Ministry and an annual pledge drive that is building intentional giving as a habit
- We've normalized talking about our congregation's finances without undue anxiety or only speaking up in “crisis mode”

## **What's changed, within and beyond the congregation, since last year?**

### Within

- A healthy increase in participation, in membership (with a new mix of people), and in cash on hand
- While the world has been chaotic, we have stayed strong and firm – a place for comfort, in the midst of everything else
- Activity in JusticeWorks is new and booming
- After needing to cut budget for coffee, snack has taken off (bravo Belonging Team!) and provides more variety and opportunity for participation
- Belonging Team is also providing a more inclusive and proactive way to engage repeat visitors and new members
- It's a very healthy sign that we have new faces in leadership – including newer members who are getting involved as they join
- We have momentum for growth – already seeing it, shift towards stronger involvement from newer members
- Staffing changes, in band and in Staff Team with Beth's departure
- Ability to design/wear t-shirts and other items from Bonfire store – tangible way to build our cohesiveness and share our message

### Beyond

- Huge increase in local interest in community activism and engagement; people are looking for ways to plug in
- People are hurting and scared in new ways – some more urgently than before, some for the first time
- Seems to be so much unkindness in the wider world – which means many are longing/looking for compassion from others
- Some feeling like “we've reached the bottom” while others feel like we're still in the thick/middle of what is happening
- Potential that we are at an inflection point, for our wider society – which way will we turn, from here? Are we going to turn things around and make different choices? Or are we going to accelerate the push toward the negative?

## Where are we feeling called to grow in the year to come?

- Continue building up social media engagement to share ourselves with the wider community, let people know who we are and that we're here, and we want to welcome you
- Engage the people watching at home and/or checking us out on YouTube
- Want to stand out amidst other local congregations as we share our story online and in the community
- Emphasizing *community* – it is what people long for, no matter where they fall spiritually
- Continuing to grow in terms of our accessibility to people with disabilities
- Accessibility for visitors – more info, map/video of how to get to Bell Hall
- Beginning to educate/encourage the congregation to consider planned giving, other forms of supporting our long-term sustainability
- Continuing to grow our voice around social justice, visibility at local events
- Storytelling about who we are, who is part of our community – not only on social media, but through other communications, everything we do
- Communication streamlining, with yearly calendar, monthly planning, clarity with better communication to members about what's going on
- Honoring our capacity – recognizing what and how much we can realistically take on, in what period of time, is healthy for us all – this is true in terms of what we take on as a full congregation, what our Teams or Ministries each take on, what our staff takes on, what individual volunteers take on, etc.
- Continue to think about growing younger – both in terms of growing as a place for families with children, but also engaging our teens and youth, and younger adult members (seeing more visitors in this age group than ever before)