

## **2021 ANNUAL MEETING REPORT**

### **SUNDAY SERVICES**

**Sunday Services Mission:** Produce meaningful weekly Sunday Services that flow smoothly, embody our UU values, and engage the entire congregation

#### **Sunday Services Team**

Rev. Jim McConnell, Lisa Fuller (chair), Joanne Krettek, Gretchen Ohmann (Music Director liaison), Tracie Crenshaw, Joan Guilfoyle (Host), Julie Williams, Katharine Lion (Director of Religious Education & Faith Development), Glen Smith (Tech), Nico Rojas (Tech), Martin Hutchinson (Tech)

#### **2020-2021 Goals (from Sunday Service report for the 2020 Annual Meeting)**

- Implement best practices for Zoom services
- Assist regular speakers with virtual presentation skills
- Promote good Zoom etiquette during gathering, service, social time and circle talk
- Strive for smooth virtual presentations
- Implement moderator/stage manager
- Limit disruptive/jarring sounds and visuals
- Implement Order of Service format changes to adapt to virtual medium
- Attract and develop skilled lay speakers and lay leaders (Shared Pulpit, etc)
- Engage children in virtual and in person services
- Determine best way to continue streaming services once in-person services are resumed

#### **2020-2021 Report**

What a year of amazing Sunday Services.

- BUUF pivoted quickly to virtual services in March, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- By July, 2020, the Sunday Services team had gotten the hang of Zoom production. In December, Martin Hutchinson took over Zoom tech in a paid position generously funded by an anonymous BUUFer. Our church year July 2020-June 2021 had no in person services.
- Participation in BUUF's virtual services was usually 30-40 participant log-ins.
- BUUF's Music Co-Directors Nan Lundeen, Gretchen Ohmann, and Candace Onweller met weekly to review upcoming service themes and topics. They provided music &

video recommendations and contributions complementing services perfectly. The Co-Directors went outside of the traditional gray hymnal and included many contemporary songs and videos from artists and other UU congregations. Their contributions significantly elevated Sunday Service music selections. The Music Co-Director 2021-2022 salary will be two-thirds funded by a Chalice Lighter step down grant, received in 2019. The congregation will solely responsible for the salary beginning July, 2022.

- The Social Justice team initiated social justice messages as part of the Sunday Services. These were randomly assigned at first, then coordinated to match the theme and topic when they were delivered.
- Keeping children engaged in virtual services was a challenge. They were invited to participate in Chalice lighting, Joys & Concerns, Story for All Ages (beautifully selected by DRE Katharine), submit special projects such as music performances and skits, and report on RE projects.
- To encourage lifelong UUism, former BUUF RE students were invited to share remembrances and life updates with the congregation.
- Each BUUF Sunday Service features personal contributions from many participants. It is a deep joy to hear the life stories and spiritual messages from our members and friends.
- The Sunday Service team currently meets virtually on the first Sunday of the month for discussion and planning. All BUUF members are welcome to participate.

### **2021-2022 Sunday Service Goals**

- Return to in person services Summer, 2021
- Offer virtual service option to complement in person services
- Assist with creating a Tech position description to best facilitate hybrid services
- Continue monthly themes
- Continue Music Director position and contributions to Sunday Service music ministry planning
- Coordinate with Green Sanctuary, Welcoming Congregation and Social Justice teams to ensure Sunday Services represent BUUF's dedication to sustainability, LGBTQ+ people, racial and environmental justice.

## **The Year in Services**

### **June, 2020—Love**

- Focused on stories of Love for Pride month

### **July, 2020—Play > Black Lives Matter**

- Following the murder of George Floyd and subsequent national protests, July's theme of Play was set aside for services devoted to exploring racism, anti-racism and racial justice.
- Rev. Jim invited Rudy Gourdine, Regina Preston Williams, and Darryl Heller to speak on Black Lives Matter.
- BUUF children created a chalice lighting video for a Michigan-wide UU Sunday Service.
- Racial Justice & LGBTQ+ Days of Observance were added to the Sunday Services schedule.

### **August, 2020—Conscience, Morality and Ethics**

- With the nation increasingly polarized politically, BUUF services focused on Moral Divide, Ethical Eating, Atheist Morality and Conscience, the New York Times 1619 Project on slavery, and How to Avoid Being Bitter and Angry.

### **September, 2020—Green Sanctuary**

- The Soul of Work, Water Ceremony, Autumnal Equinox and a Green Sanctuary service

### **October, 2020—5<sup>th</sup> UU Principle**

- **A month long focus on** the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

### **November, 2020—How looking back can help us look forward**

- We looked at allowing hope and love to overcome division, and focused on religion in the US, Transgender Awareness, and Indigenous Peoples.

### **December, 2020—Transcendentalism**

- Services were devoted to exploring Equality, Individualism, Self-Reliance, Integrity and Optimism: the inherent goodness of people

### **January, 2021—Mercy, Compassion and Grace**

- After living with a global pandemic for 9 months Rev. Jim and special guests Rev. Barbara Meyers, Rev. Alex Holt, Rosemary Cox spoke on the spirituality of mental health, addiction and aging/ageism. Tracie Crenshaw shared a message on neuroplasticity.

### **February, 2021—Beloved Community**

- We heard messages on devotion, commitment, disability and BUUF membership.

### **March, 2021—Rebirth & Renewal**

- International Women's Day, Spring Comes and the Grass Grows all by itself, Spring Equinox
- Special guest Charmae Sanders spoke on education and the Start to Finish program at Lake Michigan College for students from the foster care system and Benton Harbor Area Schools.

#### **April, 2021—Stories on the Path**

- UU Easter, emerging from Entombment & Resurrection in our own lives, and congregational generosity
- Former BUUF RE students were invited to share remembrances and life updates with the congregation.

#### **May, 2021—Peace for All**

- Local activist and politician Trenton Bowens spoke about the need to keep pushing on regarding Black Lives Matter
- Green Sanctuary service, Harvey Milk Day, and a message of Minimizing War, Maximizing Peace

#### **June, 2021—Cultural Diversity**

- Message on promoting unity between St. Joseph and Benton Harbor with planned Martin Luther King Jr statue installations, Juneteenth recognition activities
- Solstice celebration and a Gay Pride service

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Fuller

Sunday Services Chair, 2020-2021