

2019/20 Minister's Annual Report: Principled Living - Rev Pamela Rumancik

What a challenging year this has been. As we close in on the end of the 2019-20 church year, we find ourselves trying to figure out how to live lives of meaning and purpose in a changed and changing landscape. Thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic, the church has had to change strategies and begin completely reimagining how to support our community, work for justice in the wider world, and maintain financial integrity while not being able to gather together in person.

The first half of the year went well with solid church attendance, a number of successful events and gatherings, and the beginning of a normal pledge drive.

I had announced plans to step back from serving the church in order to regroup and regain my spiritual, emotional and physical equilibrium in February. While very sad to say goodbye to members of the congregation, I felt it was important that I make space to process the many personal losses and challenges of the past four years.

However, two weeks after announcing that intention, the world turned upside down with the beginning of shelter-in-place orders for the country. When it became apparent that this crisis was not going to pass quickly, your board of trustees wondered if I might stay on to see the church through the challenges ahead and I agreed.

I will be serving part-time – 2/3 time – for the next year in order to offer continuity and trust in figuring out how to make sure the church remains solvent and energized in the face of the aftermath of the pandemic. We are working to evaluate all the functions of church and see how things may be streamlined or improved to make the most efficient use of UCH resources.

There have been many accomplishments and a few challenges this year. Transitioning to our new HVAC system has come with the usual hiccups of learning a whole new system. A Building Tech team came together to pay attention to the challenges and find ways to make sure we are running as efficiently as possible. This group includes: Suzanne Williams, Mike Pabian, Rokki Espie, Benjamin Van Horn, John Cooperrider, Gene Schafer, Diane Barnes, Thom Brackett & Zia Karim.

The beautification committee came up with a palette of colors and the board okayed funds to paint the inside of the church while no one was there. John Cooperrider and I spent 2 weeks in May painting the chancel, living room and front hall. It is amazing how much difference a coat of paint can make in making the space feel loved and cared for.

The biggest change this year is of course our transition to online worship. This is thanks to a group of dedicated volunteers who dug in and figured out what was needed and made it happen. Thanks to Suzanne Williams, Gene Schafer, Ashley Kennedy, Kathy Salzano, Jamie Pastman & worship associates who have worked hard to figure this stuff out. We hope to maintain online worship even after we return to the building so that folks farther afield can stay connected.

The budget is being adjusted so we can put more money into the tech aspects of church as this is a way to stay connected even with the challenges of the pandemic.

Finally, heartfelt thanks to those folks who help sustain and inspire. Thanks to Jamie Pastman and Julia Beckman for the amazing music each week – and to all of our many musical volunteers including the Teppema family, Tony Meadors, Tim Hays and Carolyn May who stepped in to help when needed.

Deep gratitude to Liz Reyes, Mike Pabian, Susan Mooney, Suzanne Williams, Gene Schafer, David Mrazek & Darren Howard on our Board of Trustees, along with Circle Coordinators, Jim McDonald, Mary Getty, Diane Barnes, KC Edgins, Linda Rio, and Tracey Olson. These folks do a yeoman's share of the work that keeps our church healthy and sustainable.

There is work yet to be done. As the world changes, UCH will have to engage the question of what church needs to do in a world changed by the Covid 19 pandemic. The board will continue this visioning work in the fall as we seek to imagine a church that holds values from the past while stepping into a new and ever-changing future.

I look forward to what we can imagine and create in the coming year.

Many blessings,

Rev Pam