

Minister's Annual Report
Unitarian Church of Hinsdale Annual Report 2022-2023
Rev Dr Beth Johnson

It has been a pleasure serving you since March 1st. Thank you for your warm welcome and, especially for your understanding as I navigated Covid and its extended effects in April and May. Not the best timing, for sure, but your grace and goodwill have been appreciated.

In my time with you I have spent time becoming oriented to the practices and policies of UCH. With deep appreciation to Pam Fodor, our Director of Programs, for her invaluable support and wisdom. In this time, I have been in conversation with the rest of our wonderful staff, Julia Beckman, Choir Director, and Jamie Pastman, Music Coordinator, familiarizing myself with job duties and staff structure. Grateful for our bookkeeper, Saenvih Dilon, who has been working hard to bring our practices and policies up to date. And thanks to Alex Dvorak for such expert and faithful service on tech!

Along with the Personnel Committee, we have developed a job description for an office coordinator and will be working on filling that important position soon.

This time of learning and integrating has included participating with hard-working leaders: budget and finance meetings, board meetings, circle coordinator meeting, and meeting with individuals and groups as time allowed. In particular, I am working with the Green Sanctuary Team and the Welcoming Congregation Team to bring programming in the coming year, and I look forward to connecting more with our other justice efforts.

Worship has been a primary focus. UCH has a competent and creative worship team. It has been a joy working with chair, David Lloyd, and the other members as we craft worship and consider our vision for worship going forward. We held a brainstorming meeting to develop a theme for the summer – Celebrating Diversity. Our discussion unfolded in a generative way, such that the theme emerged faster than I have ever seen before. Yes. Celebrating Diversity. As happened last year, worship will take place outdoors weather permitting. I will be in the pulpit a good part of the summer with some vacation and study leave in between. I'm looking forward to innovative and collaborative services that allow us to explore in multiple modalities.

I hope to see UCH announce our values through applying for a permit to hang an inclusive banner and seeing a new flagpole where we can lift our message higher.

I hear a deep longing to see our congregation flourish and grow so that anyone who needs and wants to join us as we live our values and mission may do so. I know that the membership circle and others are working hard to ensure that we are welcoming and integrating all. We will continue to do that work because the world needs our values lived out loud and boldly.

Beginning in September we will be using a program called Soul Matters. The program offers abundant and exciting resources for worship, religious education, and small group ministry. I'm looking forward to introducing this useful and compelling program to our ministries.

Congratulations on completing a successful year. You are amazing!

Looking forward to 2023-2024!

rev beth