

COVENANT OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE

In the Lord's name we gather together here in Santa Fe
to worship and grow in the Christian tradition,
to minister in love to all persons,
to strive for justice and peace,
to respond to God's word.

We celebrate the heritage of Santa Fe and give
ourselves to its challenges and opportunities.

We endeavor to live in harmony with all creation
as stewards of the earth.

We share in the life and mission of the United
Church of Christ and of Christians everywhere.

To these purposes we unite and covenant with God
and one another, watchful for the guidance
of the Holy Spirit.

THE FORTIETH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE

JULY 1, 2019 – AUGUST 30, 2020

THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE
2020 ANNUAL REPORTS
Presented August 30, 2020
Via Zoom

*“We gather as Christians to experience and share the power of God’s transforming love
in our lives, our life together, and the world.”*

Mission Statement of the United Church of Santa Fe

Love God. Love Neighbor. Love Creation.

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Moderator's Report

Bob Ansheles

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39)

This short verse seems to capture the past year for the United Church of Santa Fe as unforeseen challenges arose and needed to be overcome during the past few months. No obstacle yet has been able to separate us from our God and our faith. True, our formats are different. We are not able to gather together in person to worship, to sing, to enjoy Adult Forums, youth activities or cake, yet that has not diminished our commitment to Love God, Love Neighbor, Love Creation.

Each month we read items in our newsletter about upcoming Zoom Adult Forums, Communion Sunday deliveries, Drive By Blessings for school youth and adults, baptisms, feeding the homeless and other church activities. We have stayed United, even though we are apart, through these activities and more.

As you read the Senior Minister, Staff, and Ministry Team reports in this Annual Report you will understand this did not happen by accident. Years of hard work and best practices by church leadership and the congregation created a solid foundation for this vibrant faith community. You, the members and friends of this congregation, are generous in your annual pledges, in volunteering time and talents to educational, youth, and music programs and in our care for people in our church, our community, and the world, especially the less fortunate.

We did not anticipate any of these struggles at last year's Annual Meeting. Through the grace of God, our love for one another, and the dedication of so many United people, we are still connected to the love of God and with each other. That is truly the joy of this year.

We can be proud of our accomplishments, but there is still more work to do, for ourselves and for United's future generations. Whether you decide to dedicate a couple hours a month or a few hours a year, find your passion and use it to grow our church community.

I am grateful for my term as the United Church Moderator and appreciate the support, love, suggestions, patience, and humor you sent my way.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Ansheles, Moderator

Senior Minister

Rev. Talitha Arnold

We started building a church this year. We didn't have to apply for a city permit, dig a big hole in the ground or recruit volunteer painters. But on Monday, March 16, 2020, the day after our last in-person Sunday morning at United, we began to build the United (even apart) Church of Santa Fe—online.

Unlike our other expansions, this online building project wasn't years in the making. It began overnight. But like rebar-and-stucco projects of the past, we've done this room by room—rooms for worship, music, and choirs, for children's and youth ministries and pastoral care, for adult faith formation and outreach ministries.

Like every building project, this one has been full of surprises and setbacks. Going completely online demanded a steep learning curve (it still does). Things haven't always worked out as planned. The Maundy Thursday service wasn't ready until Good Friday. The videographer for Holy Week ended the Easter Service with "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" And then there was the August Saturday night that film editor Katie Bickley and her mother drove to the Portales Volunteer Fire Department to get enough bandwidth to upload the worship recording for the next morning.

Speaking personally, I never planned to serve a virtual congregation, and I am far more comfortable on the other side of the camera (or laptop, cell phone or whatever we were using). Moreover, United is a "high touch" church, not a high tech one. We experience God's presence by coming together to worship, sing, pray, learn, serve, grieve, comfort, and laugh. The pandemic's "shelter-in-place" ended all that, just when we needed one another the most. Most importantly, the only models most of us had for virtual worship were TV evangelists and their one-man (or woman) shows. The technology learning curve was easy compared to the question of how to create sacred and authentic worship online.

Shutting down our in-person life and ministry right before Holy Week added to the challenge. How could we do Palm Sunday without a children's procession? Or Maundy Thursday without gathering in the darkened Sanctuary as the Youth Initiates shared the Passion story and extinguished the Tenebrae candles? Easter without a Sanctuary filled with people, flowers, and "Hallelujah Choruses?"

Yet in an odd way, the Holy Week timing was a gift. It forced us, individually and as a congregation, to step back and think about the essence of the central story of our faith. What better story for a time when our world was upended by a fearsome virus than Palm Sunday's account of how quickly the crowd turned from "Hosannas" to "Crucify?" On Maundy Thursday, Jesus kneeling to wash the dirty feet of his disciples mirrored the pictures of health care workers risking their lives to care for the sick and grocery store stockers kneeling to fill empty shelves. And Easter? The first one wasn't filled with flowers, people, and hallelujahs. Just a handful of women going to a tomb, expecting to find death but being surprised by life—then running away in fear and confusion. When the news has been bad for so long, it's hard to trust the good news of resurrection and new life. Sound familiar? Yes, Holy Week in the first weeks of a pandemic was a hard blessing, but a blessing nonetheless.

The lessons of Holy Week also helped clarify the essence of worship overall at United, whether it takes place in the Sanctuary or in a virtual room. As a congregation, we value the opportunity to engage the lively Word of God and to be together (even apart) in prayer. For United, worship is a community endeavor, involving people of all ages. We value sacred music that spans the centuries, involves the whole congregation, and connects us with the God of infinite imagination whose song echoes through all cultures and traditions, and art that renews our souls and offers new understandings of ancient stories. We need worship to empower us to love this world as God loves it, to work for justice and compassion. Sometimes we need it just to get us through the next week.

Understanding what worship means for United helps deal with the technical glitches of going online. It's also helped us face the grief that comes with not being able to gather to sing, hug, see one another's eyes, hold one another in prayer, rejoice in our children together, or simply breathe together. Staying focused on what's truly important in worship has enabled us "amid the cares that claim us," in the words of hymnwriter Jeffery Rowthorn, "to hold in mind eternity."

Discerning what God calls us to in ministry has been the plumb line for other programs, too, even as the form of particular ministries has changed. Loving our neighbor, in the wider community and world, is a central value for United, so our first special appeal two weeks into the pandemic was for the Santa Fe Community Foundation's Covid19 Emergency Fund and One Great Hour of Sharing. When "shelter-in-place" meant we couldn't provide home-cooked meals for Santa Fe's shelters, we found a way to feed hungry people and support struggling local businesses. We've also strengthened long-term relationships with the Navajo Nation's Good Shepherd Church, St. Vincent's Hospital, and Communities in Schools.

Without gathering in person, we've had to develop other ways to keep in touch and care for the congregation. Each month 20 volunteers deliver "Communion Bags" to the rest of us. We initiated a "Web of Care" program that still has some holes in it :-), but insures that most of the congregation receives a regular "Care Caller" check-in." The Early and Sanctuary Choirs, Women's Study Group, and Bible studies connect via Zoom regularly, along with other education offerings. We have new ways to wish Godspeed for people who are moving or offer a "Drop-By Back-to-School Blessing" for students and educators.

Sharing God's love with our children and youth is at the heart of United's ministry. It is also a major challenge in corona-time. Kids are "zoomed out" after a school week. We also don't have full staffing for children, youth, and family ministries. Yet online worship can include children and youth in new ways, as we explore how to empower them with the deep faith, hope, and love they need now and in the future.

Like our children, we also need deep faith, hope, and love now and as we face the future. The pandemic continues to exact a horrific toll of death and suffering, especially among the most vulnerable. It has exposed our country's fault lines of poverty, housing, and health care. Moreover, we have also seen the pervasiveness of other diseases that infect our nation, especially the virus of fear and the virus of systemic racism. As Christians, we are called to respond. We covenant as a church "to minister in love for all persons" and to "love God, neighbor, and creation." But what does that mean in this time?

First and foremost, it means to "pray very much," in the words of Archbishop Óscar Romero, "to be very connected to God." More than ever before, we need God's guidance "to know how we are to enter this moment in history," as Rev. Delois Brown-Daniels affirms. "God's vision and strength to engage the changes we need to work for in this world." Only deep prayer will enable us to overcome fear and hatred with faith and love.

Second, it means staying connected with one another. We are in this for the long haul, whether the "this" is the pandemic, the economic depression, the scourge of systemic racism, or a culture of fear. We need one another's prayers and each other's strength to do together (even apart) what God needs us to do.

Finally, it means staying connected to hope. Not optimism, not positivity, but deep-rooted, hanging-on-for-dear life hope. Hope that keeps believing in new possibilities, even when all the evidence points to the contrary. The hope that has sustained the United Church of Santa Fe for the last four decades. Hope that you all embodied in the first half of our 40th year starting last summer. A quick sample (with more details in the reports that follow) of that embodiment: Drop-in Choirs and Compassionate Christmas Gifts, guest preachers and opera apprentices, the Climate March and Coro Lux's "Considering Matthew Shepherd," planting trees and creating outdoor sacred spaces, Fiesta feasts and Pet Blessings, immigration speakers and advocacy for Dreamers, a Stewardship Dinner for all ages and the most successful campaign ever, the Rite of Separation and Advent's Lessons and Carols, Bethlehem Doves on Christmas Eve and making room for *El Niño Jesús* on Epiphany, Mardi Gras and Ash Wednesday, Interfaith Shelter Week and Care for Creation Weekend.

All that and more in just the eight months of being United (together) from June 2019 to early March 2020. In the six months since then, as this compiled annual report documents, you have continued to live into that hope and possibility as the United (even apart) Church of Santa Fe.

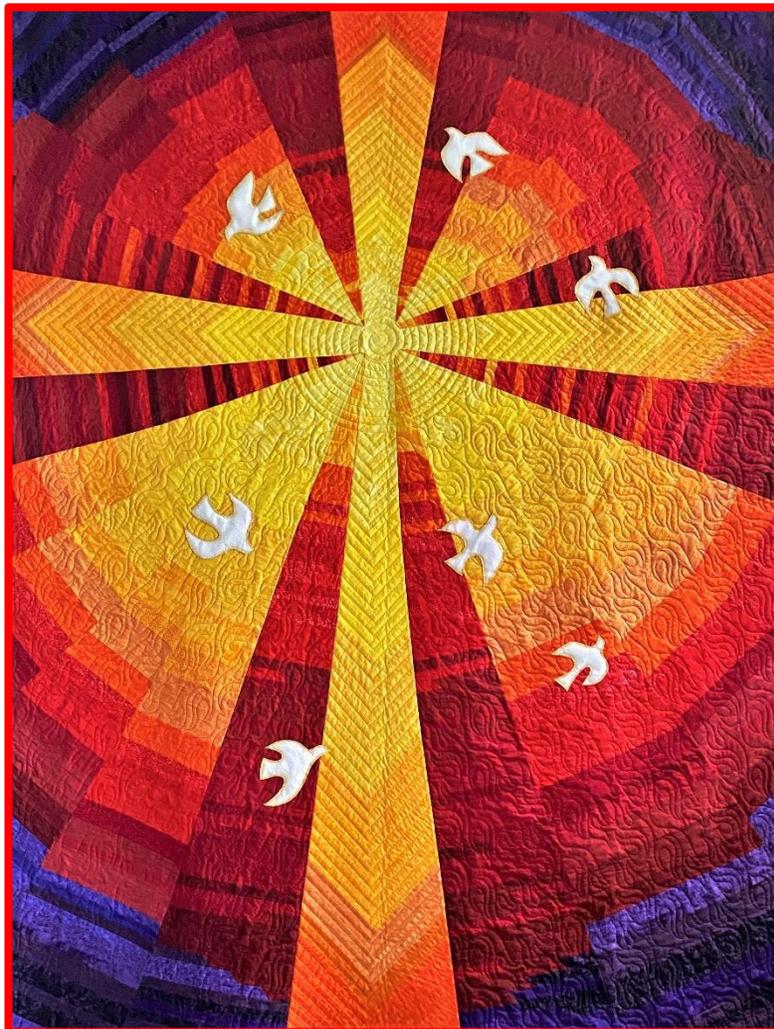
Without the leadership, dedication, and expertise of many people, being the United Church—much less building it—would not have been possible. I am deeply grateful for staff colleagues, present and past, who have led us in song, blessed us with beautiful music, cared for our children and youth, and kept us (and especially me) organized. I am equally grateful for the church's strong lay leadership. United's Church Council has navigated this year through some rough waters, and we're still afloat! Thanks to the Council

and other volunteers, the Church's financial resources have been well-shepherded and the physical building well-maintained. We—and our neighbors—are blessed with soul-restoring church grounds. Our children and youth have known God's love. When we could meet in person, our hearts were fed with the choirs' music. When the pandemic upended plans for our 40th anniversary, we were still blessed with a powerful and beautiful new Pentecost banner. The sick have been cared for, the hungry fed, the grieving consoled, the lonely visited, and the joyful celebrated. All that was possible because of the commitment and care of those who have led and served, as volunteers and staff, when we were together and when we have been apart.

Special and deep thanks go to Bob Ansheles, who has been the Moderator of the Congregation and Council for the past three years (and Moderator-Elect before that). Throughout that time, he has led and listened, presided over meetings and painted the youth room, encouraged and inspired. Most of all, he's been open to the leading of God's Spirit, for himself and for our congregation. Whether together or apart, the United Church of Santa Fe has been blessed deeply by his leadership, laughter, and deep love—for God, neighbor, and creation. Please take time to offer your thanks.

And I close with my thanks—to all of you for building the United Church of Santa Fe, in love and hope, this year and every year. Thanks be to God.

Blessings, Talitha



The new Pentecost Banner was created and quilted in celebration of United's 40th Birthday by members of the Sacred Space Team (Karin Anderson, Dana Hollifield, Donna Clark, Debby Maloney, Nyla Rasmussen, Linda Knapp).

Worship

Rev. Talitha Arnold

Special Services (Summer 2019 – August 2020):

- *Rite of Separation* for Youth Initiates and their parents (Sept. 22)
- St. Francis Sunday and Blessing of the Animals (Oct. 6)
- “Thanks-singing!” Thanksgiving Sunday (Nov. 24)
- *How Far to Bethlehem?* Advent Lessons and Carols (Dec. 18)
- Christmas Eve (3 services—Dec. 24)
- *El Niño Jesús Needs Your Help!* Epiphany Pageant (Jan. 5)
- *Pointing Beyond Ourselves* Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday, with Festival/Coro Lux Choir
- *Sing “Alleluia” and Keep on Walking:* Mardi Gras Sunday (Feb. 23, Andy Kingston Trio)
- Lent: Ash Wednesday, Wednesday Communions through March 15
- Pre-recorded Worship starting March 22, including:
 - Holy Week (Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday Tenebrae, Good Friday, Easter)
 - Earth Day Sunday and Graduation Sunday
 - 40th Anniversary of the United Church of Santa Fe (Pentecost Sunday – May 31)

Guest Worship Leaders and Preachers:

Worship Leaders: Larry Rasmussen, Rev. Ben Larzelere

Preachers: Yale Divinity School Dean Harry Attridge; Rev. Wes Granberg-Michaelson; Environmentalist Rev. Jim Antal; Composer John Helgen; Rev. Dr. Delois Brown Daniels.

Reflectors: United Youth and their pets (Earth Day); United Graduates (Ailey Cassidy-Jones, Luci Cassidy-Jones, Rylie Philpot, Nathan Kingston, Erika Kelemen, Hela Kelemen, Makayla Darby, Cole Manske, Ada-Zoe Zgela (Graduation Sunday)); David Feldt, Brad Ellingboe, Kim Straus and Jack Lain (Father’s Day), Bob Ansheles, Linda Knapp, Emily Syal (Reformation Sunday); Marcom Herren, Emily Syal (Epiphany 3)

Abundant thanks to all who make worship beautiful and meaningful, in-person or online:

- Music Staff: Music Director and Pianist Jacquelyn Helin, Director of Choirs and Soloist Bradley Ellingboe, Kids’ Choir Directors Katie Bickley and Bruce Turnquist, Choral Scholars (Jonathan Davidson, Yasmeen Lookman, Nicole Lopez, Gerald Bennett)
- United musicians of all kinds and ages: All the Choirs, Jessica Smucker, the Andy Kingston Jazz Trio, David Darby, Chime Choir (Donna Clark, Pam Hyde, Yasmeen Lookman, David Darby), Youth Musicians: Erika Kelemen, Bonnie Bannerman, Madelyn Kingston, Sasha Smucker, Ethan Manske, Jack Smucker, and multiple Nathan Kingstons
- Guest Musicians: John Helgen; John Marchiando; Carmen Flórez-Mansi; Mike, Katie, Sam and Dawson Buttram; Karen Parsons; Angela Gabriel; Ken Medema
- The Sacred Space Team: (Nyla Rasmussen, Donna Clark, Debbie Maloney, Jennifer Kilbourn, Karin Anderson)
- Greeters and organizers: Connie Maldegen and Pam Hyde (through mid-March)
- Readers and Liturgists: of all ages (and in all places)
- Sexton: David LaPlantz who set the Sanctuary every Sunday (until his Feb. retirement.)
- Office Administrator: Lin Raymond who organizes and prepares the bulletins
- Worship recorders and editors: Elijah Marquez, Katie Bickley, David Darby
- Monthly Communion Deliverers

Music Director and Pianist

Jacquelyn Helin

It's obviously been an unusual year at United, as for the last five months, we have worshipped virtually and apart with no choirs singing and no summer Santa Fe Opera apprentices. Still, we have experienced powerful worship services with beautiful music.

Both the Early Choir and the Sanctuary Choir sang through Sunday, March 8. Choral highlights of the year included the Festival Choir's fall performance of the Fauré *Requiem* as well as *Lessons and Carols* on Dec. 22. The Children's Choir sang regularly in the 11:00 am service. We look forward to regathering to sing!

United partnered with Coro Lux with *Light in the Darkness: The Music of Martin and Mahalia*. We also welcomed John Helgen, the Andy Kingston Trio, and guest pianists Karen Parsons and Angela Gabriel.

Besides our Choral Scholars, numerous adult and youth musicians from the congregation contributed their musical gifts to worship. Donna Clark is again leading a group on our beautiful new chimes.

Last summer was our 6th year presenting Santa Fe Opera apprentices at the 10:00 service. Through this collaboration, we reach many out-of-town visitors and estimate that our summer attendance has increased 20% since 2013.

As Music Director at United, I've been privileged to play a great deal of the music of J.S. Bach. I have always thought of Bach as the consummate church composer, and over the years the congregation has heard a great deal of Bach's masterpiece, *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, as Preludes and Postludes. This year, as I embark on playing the entire WTC Book I in multiple concerts, I want to thank the congregation of United Church for always listening to Bach so attentively. You have been a real part in bringing these pieces to life!

Respectfully submitted,
Jacquelyn Helin

Director of Choirs

Bradley Ellingboe

The second half of 2019 was eventful and "normal." We had three Drop-in Choirs last summer. Regular rehearsals resumed as usual in September. In November, the Festival Choir presented the Fauré *Requiem* with guest soloists and instrumentalists. Our Lessons and Carols and Christmas services were well sung and well-received.

In January, the church collaborated with my Albuquerque chorus *Coro Lux* to present our second annual choral festival commemorating the life and work of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The audience stretched out into the Welcome Center! January also saw the visit of my old friend, composer and pianist John Helgen, who led us in worship. In February we hosted the distinguished choral conductor and Grammy award winner, Charles Bruffy. Ash Wednesday was observed and we turned the corner into Lent. Then, in March, COVID-19 upended all our lives...

Since then we have grappled with ways to stay safe yet stay in community. Thank goodness for modern devices like email, Zoom, YouTube, and texting!

I am so very grateful for my colleagues Talitha and Jacquelyn, who have enabled me to continue my tasks as choral director even without a choir. Thank goodness we had set up the apparatus of having 4 Choral Scholars! Nicole (soprano), Yasmeen (alto), Jonathan (tenor) and Gerald (bass) have been able to contribute to our online worship through the magic of GarageBand and YouTube, even though the 4 of them live in three different cities.

The choirs have stayed connected through regular meetings via Zoom. And we have welcomed special guests from across the country, including Alice Parker and Ken Medema. These distinguished musicians have given us a much-needed "shot in the arm" and given us hope for that day when we can return to singing together.

Respectfully submitted,
Bradley Ellingboe

Children and Youth Ministry Team

Chair: Steve Hamilton

Team: Bruce Turnquist, Gail Ansheles, Amanda Darby, Jack Lain, Geri Glover

A “Family and Friends” potluck kicked off the year last August, and Sunday ministries started Sept. 15 with commissioning of volunteer and staff leaders. Throughout the year, children and youth explored the same scripture stories the adults engaged in worship. The fall focus was the Acts of the Apostles as they journeyed with Paul the Apostle. Jesus’ miracles and parables were the focus for Epiphany and Lent.

The Youth Initiation, “Journey to Adulthood”, began with twelve 8th/9th graders and an equal number of mentors (staffed by Emily Syal and Talitha Arnold). An overnight retreat at Ghost Ranch was followed by the Rite of Separation in Sunday worship. They also had an Advent Retreat following Las Posadas and planned a weeklong service and learning trip to the U.S./Mexico Border in March (cancelled due to the pandemic). They then met weekly in the spring via Zoom with Emily and Talitha (and sometimes with mentors) and participated in River Clean-ups, cooking for the shelters and other service projects.

Eight Young Adventurers (6th/7th) met weekly (led by Rebecca Crutchfield and Eddie Napoli), as well as for Game Nights and Movie nights (the inspiring “The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind” and the New Mexico classic “Bless Me Ultima”). After on-site programs ceased, Rebecca created “prayer boxes” to send to our middle school kids.

The High Schoolers (10th-12th) met occasionally during the fall and more regularly on Zoom, led by Emily Syal and volunteer Pam Hyde.

Katie Bickley and Master Teacher Bruce Turnquist led the elementary children’s ministry, joining with the Young Adventurers for opening worship. Katie and Bruce also led the Children’s Choir that sang regularly during Advent and planned to do so again in Lent, until the pandemic derailed those plans.

Nurture Center Teacher Carrie McCabe provided Sunday morning ministry with our Pre-K’s, and Rebecca Griego cared for our infants and toddlers (with Sally Greenall subbing).

After the church ceased on-site Sunday worship and education, Talitha sent (almost) weekly email letters to parents and grandparents with the Sunday scripture, ways to engage children with the story, and songs. Brad Ellingboe also recorded a number of “Grandfather” children’s hymns to go with the weekly offerings. Our recorded Sunday worship regularly included pictures of United kids and grandkids and their interpretations of the Bible stories.

Special events for all ages included a September “Creation Care” Family Fun Night, an October Halloween Party, the All-Church Dinner in November, and in December Supper with St. Nick, Christmas Caroling at El Castillo and Las Posadas with Santa Maria de la Paz, the Annual Epiphany Pageant, and the Mardi Gras service with youth leaders and musicians. We also added a youth train trip (“Vamos Todos a Belen”—actually to Bernalillo). During United’s week at the Interfaith Shelter, youth ages fourteen and up helped with dinners (and José Lain-Straus recruited additional youth from his school!).

With volunteer Gail Ansheles’ help we again organized the Prayer Child Project, matching over 50 kids with adults who covenanted to pray daily for their “Prayer Child.” That connection became even more important once we could no longer meet in person. In August 2020, we offered an “Drop-In Back-to-School Blessing” for all children, youth, and educators.

As we begin a new school year, we continue to explore ways to share God’s love, the light of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit with our children, youth, and parents to deepen the courage and hope they need for their journeys of life and faith in this challenging time.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Hamilton

Stewardship and Finance Ministry Team

Chair: Pamela Hyde

Team: Pamela Hyde (Chair), Sam Elkind (Treasurer), Bob Ansheles (Council Moderator), Dave Bueschel (Endowment Trustees Chair), Judy Gresham, Trudy Swint, Rev. Talitha Arnold (ex-officio). (Ernest Godlove is Financial Secretary managing the weekly counters. Bob, Sam, and Talitha also serve as Endowment Trustees, Caroline Burnett and Ed Barker.)

The 2020 Stewardship Campaign goal for the Church's operating budget was an ambitious \$550,000. We met this challenge with 206 pledges totaling \$552,531! Twenty-nine new pledges and 72 increased pledges offset 48 pledges decreased or not renewed (usually due to people moving). Thanks be to God!

Due to United donors' generosity by the end of July 2020, we provided \$47,600 for various outreach ministries. Even with reduced pledge and non-pledge income for 2020, we offered recorded services each Sunday and continued United's priorities for community engagement, children and youth, environmental ministries, music and Bible forums, and pastoral care, as well as fair and competitive staff compensation levels. Because we anticipate reduced pledge and non-pledge income through 2021 as well, a 30-day Special Appeal – Faith in the Future – was launched August 10 with a goal of \$75,000. As of August 24, United has received \$31,080 in offerings and an additional \$15,500 in pledges to meet this goal.

In early March, Council members and others contributed \$15,309 to help pay off the mortgage. In early April, the Team and Council agreed to use other church funds to pay off the mortgage in full (\$79,004.61), saving over \$22,000 in interest and principal payments in 2020 and \$34,000 each of the next 2½ years.

The Team works to assure adequate funding is available for anticipated expenditures for critical projects and reserves (Operating, Building/Capital, and Sabbatical), invested in safe accounts with the UCC Cornerstone Fund. Likewise, the Endowment is invested in a moderate mixed investment strategy and is doing well, given the variability of the stock market this year. As of August 13, the Endowment was worth about \$1.573 million, up from \$1.528 at the end of 2019, and provides about \$40,000 per year for the operating budget.

The financial health, moral initiatives, and generous support of this congregation ensures our shared ministries continue to grow and make a difference in this community and in the world. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Hyde

Treasurer's Report (2019)

Operating Income. United's operating income from all sources in 2019 totaled \$645,223.

Operating Expenses. The church's total operating expenses were \$594,977, enabling the Council to commit remaining 2019 funds to help eliminate the mortgage on the church building.

Debt Service. For its mortgage, United paid \$25,050 in principal and \$8,950 in interest during 2019. As noted in the Stewardship and Finance report, the mortgage was eliminated in early May 2020.

2019 Major non-budgeted expenses (from designated funds):

- Instrument Maintenance (piano voicing and tuning): \$5,000
- Landscape Maintenance: \$11,300
- Landscape Development: \$110,400 (outdoor worship space, children/youth space, stonework)
- Minister Honoraria: \$9,500
 - (used for pastoral care/outreach and Native and Hispanic art for church)

Memorial gifts were received in memory of Pat Dean, Fred Ribe, Dorothy Schoech, Al Robison, Jenny Mitchell, and Jean Duncan. The Memorial Fund also received a bequest from the estate of Dorothy Schoech.

Monthly and annual financial reports are available through the church office.

Respectfully submitted,
Sam Elkind

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Chair: Marcom Herren

Ministry Team Members: April Herren, Avril Ekstrand, Talitha Arnold (ex officio). The team met quarterly to plan, organize, and implement the activities to carry out our mission.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Adult Faith Formation Ministry Team is to educate and mentor the membership of UCSF in developing spiritual depth, direction, and personal growth that supports and enhances our social justice efforts and actions.

During the portion of 2019-2020 in which we met as a congregation at the church (through mid-March 2020), efforts were made to accomplish this mission through

- Adult Forums: *Climate Change* (Mental Health, Wildlife Conservation, Carbon Offset, Spiritual Practices, Water Issues, etc.); *Youth Initiation, Israel/Palestine; Supreme Court and Human Rights; Immigration Report from the Border; Faith Development; Indigenous Women and Mother Earth*
- Special guests included Dean Harry Attridge, Yale Divinity School; Dr. Bill Brown, Prof. of Hebrew Bible and Environment, Columbia Theological Seminary; Rev. James Antal, Climate Change author; Rev. Andrew Black, National Wildlife Federation; Environmentalist Cynthia Scharf; Immigration Law Professor César Cuauhtémoc García Hernandez
- *In All Our Living: Personal Value and Health-Care Decisions* 5-week series (Caroline Burnett, RN, Sc. D.)
- Half-day retreats (*The Power of Gratitude; The Desert Shall Bloom; Planting Seeds of Resurrection* (Sr. Minister)
- *Men of Faith and Doubt* Bible Study (Sr. Minister)
- Wednesday Women's Study Group (Ann Barker)

After the onset of COVID-19, online offerings became the new normal and presented challenges as well as opportunities. These offerings include:

- *Hope and Resilience* Bible Study; Yale Divinity School Gospel of Luke Study (Sr. Minister)
- *Braiding Sweet Grass* Study (Larry Rasmussen)
- *Foundations of the Enneagram Course* (April and Marcom Herren)
- *Race Matters* Zoom Presentations (Rev. Dr. Delois Brown-Daniels and Dr. David Daniels; William Helin-Glick; Dr. Elijah Heyward; Dr. Melanie Harris)
- *An Evening with Composer Ken Medema*

Future considerations when appropriate include:

- Dinner for Eight (Discussion Small Groups)
- Book Studies
- Further workshops and retreats

In consideration of the challenges that presented themselves over the timeframe of this report, it is the opinion of this Adult Faith Formation Team that UCSF is offering excellent, high quality options that are safe and considerate of the membership and public. Our goal is to continue to carry out our mission in a manner that serves UCSF and its membership as well as in honoring God.

Respectfully submitted,
Marcom Herren

Personnel Team

Chair: Jim Ekstrand

The fourteen months since the last Annual Meeting brought many staff transitions. In the spring of 2019 we developed a full-time, two-year Pastoral Residency for Youth and Environmental Ministries, and in July welcomed Emily Syal for that position. We also welcomed Katie Bickley as part-time Children's Ministry Teacher, Choir Director, and Administrative Assistant, and Eddie Napoli-Quisling to co-lead Young Adventurers with Rebecca Crutchfield. We continued our search process with Ministry Architects for a full-time Children's and Families Ministry Director.

We knew Katie was headed for seminary after a year, and Eddie for "Teach for America," but they offered us abundant gifts and commitment. Katie also became our "film editor" for worship recordings when we ceased on-site programming, a role she has continued after moving to Connecticut to start Yale Divinity School.

Emily Syal resigned midsummer 2020 after her first year of her two-year Pastoral Resident position. Jim, team member Charlotte Lindsey, and Moderator Bob Ansheles conducted an exit interview. She had final Zoom meetings with our youth groups, and was thanked and wished God's blessings in worship.

Another transition came when long-time Sexton David LaPlantz retired (a second time :-)) after years of devoted service, caring for both United's building and community. Also, after the year-plus search work with Ministry Architects (for children's and family ministry), that relationship ended. Moreover, the onset of the pandemic meant our staffing needs changed, though our commitment to children's, youth and family ministries has remained constant.

So too has been our commitment to the ongoing staff. Despite a decrease in the church's revenue and, in most staff positions, a decrease in responsibilities or time commitment, United continued to pay full salaries even after on-site worship and programs ceased. As we start the fall, the Personnel Team will review the church's staffing needs. As we look back over this past year, we are grateful for the staff's expertise, commitment, and flexibility in this challenging time.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Ekstrand

Parish Life Ministry Team

"Not-the-Chair": Nancy Merchat

Between July 2019 and March 2020, Parish Life organized a host of special events, including: special events, memorial receptions, church cookouts, potluck brunches, the annual Stewardship Dinner, and worked with other ministry teams to come together to share food and fellowship. We also appreciate all the people who helped with the following events, from summer 2019 to March 2020:

Memorial Receptions for Al Robison, Fred Ribe, Sara Filemyr
Potlucks (Kids Water Fight, Fiesta Sunday Brunch, New Year's Brunch)
Halloween Party
Stewardship Host Breakfast and All-Church Stewardship Dinner
St. Nick's Supper, Christmas Caroling, Las Posadas with Santa Maria de la Paz

Plans were also in the works to hold the November 2020 Stewardship Dinner at the Drury Hotel, but the restaurant closed and that event will go on-line.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Merchat

Congregational Care Team

Chair: John Shaffer

Your Congregational Care Team consists of Debbie Maloney, Janyth and Ferol Fell, Nevanne Merrill, Dave Wilkison, Rev. Dusty Pruitt, June Yoder, Rev. Victoria Ubben, and John Shaffer (chair). (Talitha Arnold is ex officio.) Prior to March 2020, we met nine to ten times a year to support Pastoral Care to our faith family at United Church and the broader community. After March 2020, we continued to meet via Zoom. We write notes of care, concern, and support, and of joy, encouragement, and congratulations. We make hospital and occasional home visits. Our Food Group prepares and delivers meals for those with situational needs. And each month one member serves "On Call", to step in when our pastor is away or unavailable. With the onset of "shelter in place" and the cessation of Sunday worship on-site, we also became part of the "Web of Care" whereby almost 30 United members volunteered to contact other members and friends on a regular basis, since we don't see one another on Sunday mornings. We are truly blessed to attend to the cares and joys of our family at United Church.

Respectfully submitted,
John Shaffer

Fellowship and Growth Groups

Women's Study Group

Ann Barker

The Women's Study Group met monthly on the first and third Wednesdays (September through March in person; April through June via zoom). Fifteen to thirty women participate regularly, with group members leading the discussion. This year we read *Educated* by Tara Westover, *The Second Mountain* by David Brooks, *Why Religion* by Elaine Pagels, *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean, *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben, and *Unsheltered* by Barbara Kingsolver. Led by Pat Roach, we also did a "Cook Day" for supper for the guests of the Interfaith Shelter. For a copy of the 2020-2021 reading list, please contact Ann Barker (670-3383).

United Artists

Shirley Clark

We met in person from September through early March. On an "all present" day, we had 13+ artists enthusiastically involved with their latest paintings, (watercolor, acrylics, oriental), pastels, collages, poems, sketches and drawings, weavings, greeting cards and other multi-media and digital, provocative, humorous and inspirational creations, cards, and multimedia and multidimensional projects. On another day we could have 2 folks, more quietly sharing while they create. After March, we continued to share our creations via the internet. All are welcome to join us! For info, please contact Shirley Clark (660-3161) or Dave Wilkison (400-0504).

Outreach Team

Chair: Karen Dailey

Team Members: Diane Bethune, Jim Ekstrand, Jan and Kitty Jansen, Monika McKennie (through Jan. 2020), Pat Roach, Jo Rhodes, Kim Straus

Outreach Special Appeals and Fundraisers (Summer 2019 – March 2020) *Summer Food Drive* to support Adelante; *Compassionate Christmas Gifts* (supporting NM Immigration Law Center, Santa Fe Shelters for the Homeless, Church World Service, Solace Crisis Center, Youth Service Trip, & Iraqi Refugee Women's Empowerment); *Calendar and Card collection for Prisoners*; *Fall Sock Drive* for Interfaith Shelter; *Equal Exchange Coffee sales*; *JanFest Concert with Coro Lux*, benefitting NM Immigration Law Center and NM Federation for the Blind.

COVID-19 Relief: *Santa Fe Community Foundation's COVID-19 Emergency Fund and One Great Hour of Sharing*; weekly lunches/dinners for *Interfaith Shelter* and monthly suppers for *St. Elizabeth* and *Casa Familia* during the pandemic, from Felipe's Tacos and Mucho Gourmet to support local businesses; financial support and masks for the Navajo/Diné people, hard hit by COVID-19, through donations to Good Shepherd Church (Ft. Defiance, Arizona).

Hands-on Projects: *Interfaith Shelter* Week (coordinated by Avril Ekstrand, Jennifer Kilbourn and Marc Black); monthly dinners, until April 2020, at *St. Elizabeth Shelter* (organized by Joanne Rhodes); monthly dinners, until April 2020, at *Casa Familia* (Monika McKennie organized through January 2020, now organized by Pam Homer); Santa Fe River Clean-ups; Advocacy Day at New Mexico Legislature; Volunteers and "Give Bach" concerts with Jack, Sasha, and Jessica Smucker to support Communities in Schools.

The **children of United** actively contributed to outreach efforts through the St. Nick's Supper, where they assembled hygiene kits for St. Elizabeth guests and collected Christmas gifts for Casa Familia, Christmas caroling at El Castillo (an intergenerational event), and decorating dozens of cookies for the firefighters at the Arroyo Chamiso station.

The **Immigration Task Force** (co-led by Bonney Hughes and Faith Yoman) continued to connect United with the advocacy work and witness of the SF Interfaith Immigration Network to support immigrants and help re-form immigration policy.

United's **Environmental Ministry** focused primarily on Climate Change this fall, with a series of Adult Forums offered by members and friends from a number of perspectives (NM State water policy, Kim Bannerman and Pam Homer; the mental health toll of climate change, Dr. Joe Neidhardt; Mother Earth and Indigenous Women, Dr. Mary Roessel; Impact on Wildlife, Rev. Andrew Black; Desert Faith, Talitha Arnold and Larry Rasmussen). In addition, United adopted a *Carbon Offset program* with proceeds for Tree New Mexico and Interfaith Power and Light. The fall Festival Choir's *Fauré Requiem* Concert raised funds for the Rio Grande Corridor Work of the National Wildlife Federation. Finally, thanks to Larry Rasmussen's good work on our application, United was Runner-Up in the national Interfaith Power & Light's Cool Congregation award for "Sacred Grounds."

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Dailey

Property & Maintenance

Chair: David Feldt

Here is the good news, I believe we're under budget!!

There is no bad news other than activity has been fairly light as you well know. Because of that not much has broken. We've fixed a few windows, replaced a faucet, and added a water hydrant to the Children's Garden. The last item took more coordination than anything.

We also installed a couple of electrical heaters in the new addition to give us a bit more security in terms of keeping water lines from freezing. The domestic lines are generally fine but fire sprinkler lines are in the ceilings that don't get much supplemental heat so this is why the extra fixtures were installed.

I'd like to keep moving forward on some repainting projects but because of Covid-19 we've tried to keep the building clean and free of human exposure. So even though now seems like a good time to do this work we're still hesitant to add more outside exposure.

All in all our facility is in very good condition and we don't have any serious projects coming up.

A special shout-out to Linda Churchill, Landscape Chair, and her team (Nyla Rasmussen, Donna Clark, Ernest Godlove) for the continued planning and implementation they've done since last June, including overseeing the development of the children's/youth area in back and extending the reflection trail all around the property (and getting doggie waste stations installed). United's wonderful grounds provide safe and soul-restoring spaces to walk, pray, and gather (at a distance).

Respectfully submitted,
David Feldt

Membership Report

(July 1, 2019 – August 30, 2020)

MEMBERSHIP AS OF: June 30, 2019: 286 total (270 in-town, 16 out-of-town)
August 30, 2020: 296 total (284 in-town, 12 out-of-town)

MEMBERSHIP PATTERNS:

1987: 132 (100 in-town, 32 out-of-town)
1998: 197 (162 in-town, 35 out-of-town)
2003: 279 (243 in-town, 36 out-of-town)
2008: 333 (303 in-town; 30 out-of-town)
2013: 254 (231 in-town, 23 out-of-town)
(we created a “friendly former member” category for persons who had moved away.)
2014: 265 (242 in-town, 23 out-of-town)
2015: 278 (257 in-town, 21 out-of-town)
2016: 273 (257 in-town, 16 out-of-town)
2017: 273 (252 in-town, 21 out-of-town)
2018: 271 (251 in-town, 20 out of town)
2019: 277 (269 in-town, 8 out of town)

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT WORSHIP:

1987: 75 adults, 20 children/youth
1990: 89 adults, 20 children
1997: 120 adults, 45 children
2001: 135 adults, 28 children (added Community Room and Nurture Ctr., 1998-2000)
2003: 155 adults, 42 children (complete Sanctuary expansion in 2002)
2005: 168 adults, 58 children/youth
2010: 151 adults
2013: 148 adults, 30 to 35 children/youth
2015: 170 adults, 30 to 35 children/youth
2016: 170 adults
2017: 175 adults
2018: 170 adults (dedicated Education Wing, September)
2019: 178 adults

EASTER WORSHIP ATTENDANCE:

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1987: 180 adults, 30 children | 2016: 380 adults, 60-70 children/youth |
| 1993: 310 adults, 70 children | 2017: 435 adults, 50-60 children/youth |
| 1998: 384 adults, 80 children | 2018: 416 adults, 40-50 children/youth |
| 2000: 290 adults, 80 children | 2019: 402 adults |
| 2005: 357 adults, 77 children | |
| 2010: 390 adults, 62 children | 2020: 457 (views on YouTube) |
| 2015: 416 adults, 60-70 children | |

CHRISTMAS EVE ATTENDANCE:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1990: 169 adults, 26 children | 2015: 395 adults, 60 children/youth |
| 1995: 198 adults, 48 children | 2016: 395 adults, 40+ children/youth |
| 2000: 265 adults, 50 children | 2017: 285 adults, 30-40 children/youth |
| 2005: 350 adults, 86 children | 2018: 330 adults |
| 2010: 295 adults, 50 children/youth | |
| 2012: 285 adults | 2019: 330 adults, 57 children/youth |
| 2013: 300 adults, 60 children/youth | |

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES (July 1, 2019 – August 30, 2020)

NEW MEMBERS (20)

REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH (13)

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Blaire Bennett | Linda Zillman |
| Claudia Monteiro | dg okpik |
| Beth Cionek | Carmen Shupe |
| Frank Cionek | Bob Shupe |
| Mary Cost | Jim Reeves |
| Yasmeen Lookman | Cristina Zerber |
| Puneet Syal | |

LETTER OF TRANSFER (7)

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Emily Syal | Don Zillman |
| Helen Wagner (Assoc. Mem) | Victoria Ubben |
| Scott Wagner | Joe Ubben |
| Donnette Wagner | |

REMOVED (10)

DEATHS (2)

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Sheila Paterson | Sara Filemyr |
|-----------------|--------------|

RESIGNATIONS (2)

Emily and Puneet Syal

MEMBERS RECATEGORIZED AS “FRIENDLY FORMER MEMBERS” (6)

(Inactive in-town members or out-of-town members who moved over a year ago but haven’t joined another church. They stay on United’s communication lists but aren’t part of the current congregation, and therefore are not part of the per capita dues paid to the Southwest Conference.)

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Rhonda Fleck (KY) | Deb McElroy and Kathy Pitre (CA) |
| Bill and Georgia Carson (MD) | |
| Jack Uhlenhopp (IL) | |

BAPTISMS (3 – *infant/child)

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Donovan Jake Natonabah | *Meredith Rose Ross |
| Aleisha Shawndeen Natonabah | |

MEMORIAL and/or INTERMENT SERVICES: (5) (*member)

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| *Fred L. Ribe | Al Robison |
| Diane M. Denedy-Frank | *Sara Filemyr |
| James Corbin | |

WEDDINGS (1)

Kristen Ellingboe and Christopher Margard