

January 2022 Executive Report
Rev. Amy Petrie Shaw

Our Mission: Grow ethically and spiritually, serve justly, and love radically.

Our Ends Statements 2016 – 2021

We:

Grow spiritually, emotionally, socially, and ethically.

Explore and experience what it means to be human.

Cultivate compassion toward ourselves and others.

Foster personal connections to life, nature and/or the divine.

Seek, embrace, and share experiences of wonder.

Develop our Unitarian Universalist identities.

Ask for and receive loving presence from one another, especially in times of joy, sorrow and transition.

Respectfully connect across differences for understanding.

Intentionally invite and engage others to grow in community with us.

Generously share our time, talent and treasure.

Maintain a facility and grounds appropriate for our needs and aligned with our values.

Build authentic partnerships, responding to needs our partners articulate.

Show up with passion and enthusiasm to grow our values in the world.

Share our talent and resources to support groups with whom we share values.

Provide leadership and space for civil discourse.

Welcome and accept transformation that comes through authentic relationships within and beyond our church.

Ministry (Rev. Amy Petrie Shaw)

January was a hectic month for the church. Due to a surge in the Omicron variant of COVID, we returned to digital services through February 6th.

During the January 30th service, UCDSM was the target of a zoom bombing. This was able to happen because, during an update, a Zoom setting was reset to allow people other than the host and co-host to share screens. Approximately 20-24 people targeted the church, sharing both child pornography and other grotesque imagery on the screen.

This was reported to the Des Moines police, and to Zoom and the FBI. Because one of the bombers used his own name when he logged on, Rev. Amy was able to trace him to his hometown and also notify local authorities.

Zoom, the FBI, and the police all have lists of who was present that day. The FBI may be reaching out to people for victim impact statements.

Lifespan Learning (Devon McClurken)

For the month of January there was a surge of COVID, so it was decided by the RE Council and facilitators to delay starting 5-6 OWL and to move At Home in Our Church to online.

Sing and Play the UU Way continued to be offered online.

7-8 OWL continued in person but moved to a larger space to allow for more social distancing and 8-9 COA moved to Zoom during the mentor meetings.

YRUU met online playing Jackbox Party pack games.

Volunteers for supervision of youth during the latter part of the service are being sought and are needed once more as youth attend the service.

CUUPS, Heart Sangha, Humanism and Sage have been meeting online. Soul Matters has continued. Rev Amy has two classes on the Widening the Circle report that have continued to meet online. Effective January 25th, these two classes combined into one class, meeting weekly.

The Adult RE Council has met several times to talk about Sage forums and other classes for Adults to Seniors.

A survey is being developed to ask for people's needs and passions.

We are looking into OWL for Seniors as well as OWL for Adults but waiting for UUA facilitator training.

Pandemic support, Soul to Soul book groups, and TED talk forums are programs that are being developed.

Tai Chi was brought in two days a week and will continue with volunteers from the group.

Membership and Community

Membership Committee (Shelly Kaldenberg)

There are multiple other potential members now involved in the membership process and we are getting more each week

Members of the Membership Committee cleaned up the holiday decorations in January and removed damaged and aging decorations.

A new member signed the book.

Caring Ministry (Jude Cigrand)

Support was provided for the Lauers in January as daughter Sarah, who is also a member, entered into a difficult recovery period following two surgeries on her neck. Sarah is scheduled for another surgery in February.

Card Ministry (Jill Moser)

10 cards were mailed to members and friends

Pastoral Care (Ann Mowery)

Pastoral Care had 16 contacts in January. Rev. Amy had 15 contacts (most due to the Zoom bombing). Due to the Jan. 30th Zoom bombing, Doug Aupperle and Susan Arland also offered solo and group support sessions for adults and children.

Childcare (Hannah Notch)

We are currently at 2-3 childcare staff. Beginning in February, once the current COVID surge passes, we will be recruiting at local colleges with Early Childhood Education programs.

Stewardship (Liz Bredesen)

The Stewardship team is holding the January and February pledge groups as a combined event on Sunday, February 13th.

We continue to recruit co-hosts and plan the March - June groups.

Initial reports show that the kitchen campaign did not depress pledges from the August - November groups. We will continue to monitor the impact for the remaining groups.

We have recruited musicians and artists for the 2nd annual FUMAF to be held on February 26th. The event will be in-person with an online option for hearing the music and bidding on the artwork.

The team has been working with Membership and staff to review member's status. We have reached out to folks who have not been in contact with the church or whose pledge is not current.

We are working with Barb Martin and Doug Aupperle on coordinating the musicians. FUMAF 2022 is scheduled for the last Saturday in February (2/26). It will be a live event with an online opportunity for purchasing artwork.

Emily is working on updating the online store.

Facility/Grounds (Doug Aupperle)

No report received.

Communication Group (Barb Royal, Deidre Fudge, Liz Bredesen, Louise Alcorn)

The Communication Team has begun development of a comprehensive policy that addresses the purposes and uses of our internal and external communication tools.

Social Justice/Outreach

Asylum Seekers (Morgan Dredge)

No activity reported

SJMLT (Katie Allen- Social Justice Ministry Leadership Team)

SJMLT began creating a covenant in January and creating ways to support social justice efforts by providing a potluck and retreat in the future

SJMLT will be working collaboratively with Leadership Committee to help the various groups of our church develop charters, covenants, and vision/mission statements which it within our larger church mission and vision

FEDS (Bruce Martin)

FEDS continues preparing & serving dinner at the Shelter of Central Iowa monthly.

Since the signup for December 6 was thin and required some scrambling, in late November, 2021, Bruce Martin sent out the Signup-Genius invitation for our Jan.-June 2022 dates. Almost all volunteer slots are currently filled.

Faith in Action (Steve Gilson)

The FIA partners for the year are Knock and Drop and Just Voices and they began as partners in September. There were no volunteer opportunities or events for our partners in January

Green Sanctuary (Ron Heideman)

No January meeting due to having two meetings in December. The next meeting will be February 2nd.

Family Promise and FFFF/PPP (Elaine Imlau)

FFFFF-Team did not have any activity this month.

Family Promise

The FP Team helped to host the first week in January. 28 volunteers did 132 hours of work for our 22nd week hosting families.

Write Here, Write Now (Bill Brauch/Donna Wallace)

No activity in January

AMOS (Barb Klubal)

AMOS 25TH ANNIVERSARY FUNDRAISER

The final numbers are in. First Unitarian exceeded its goal of \$5,000.00, raising over \$5100.00.

AMOS LEADERS VIRTUAL RETREAT

On January 22, 40 AMOS leaders kicked off a new year of organizing at a virtual retreat. Included were powerful stories about transforming silence into action, deepening relational power across organizations and communities, and strategizing about strengthening AMOS institutions in 2022.

WORKFORCE HOUSING & MENTAL HEALTH - AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)

On January 31, Ankeny AMOs leaders shared information about the new Polk County children's crisis mental health resources and opportunities to get involved at the Ankeny School District's Community Conversation on Mental Health and Safety.

AMOS leaders continue to meet with Polk County officials, advocating for spending a portion of the \$55 million in ARPA dollars for affordable housing, economic well-being and children's mental health.

LET'S TALK/DES MOINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

No report this month.

OTHER AMOS NEWS

Thanks to the efforts of First Unitarian member Crystal Loving and many others in the community, the Des Moines Education Association has become a member of AMOS.

In January, the Story County Supervisors voted to award AMOS-created workforce intermediary Project Iowa \$100,000 from federal ARPA dollars to develop and train Story County residents for career-track, living wage jobs. Ames AMOS leaders met with supervisors this fall in support of this initiative and deepening Project Iowa's work in Story County.

Transgender Action Group (Gianfranco Berardi, Doug Aupperle)

TAG met multiple times in January.

Planning for Trans Lives Fest continues.

TAG followed up with prospective artists and performers in January. They are possibly using a REACH grant to pay for promotional materials (flyers, radio ads, etc.) as well as honoraria for performers.

TAG will follow up on the possibility that they may be able to ask for REACH funding back, given the circumstances of the pandemic. They had obtained a grant, but the event for 2020 was cancelled.

Leadership Group (Katie Allen)

The Leadership Group organized and held a “Leadership Liftoff workshop on Jan. 29th. The Zoom workshop event was attended by 22 congregational leaders, and discussed leadership, leader support, and available resources at First Unitarian Des Moines. Further workshops are planned.

Service Attendance:

January

1/2/2022 CRT and Thee, Rev. Amy	95 digital
1/9/22 We Can Do It Yes We Can, Rev. Amy	101 digital
1/16/22 Every Valley Shall be Exalted, Rev. Amy	93 digital
1/23/22 Below the Line, Rev. Amy	94 digital
1/30/22 Legos to Logos, Rev. Amy	124 including Zoom bombers

Podcast Status

The First U Think podcast has had 535 downloads in the last 90 days, up from 439 per 90 days, and 1,309 total downloads. There were 177 downloads in January, up from 153 downloads in December. Every month there are more downloads than the month before.

First U Think can be found anywhere you download podcasts, or here on our UCDSM Buzzsprout page <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1609618>