



Minister's Report

October 1, 2020

Monthly Worship Theme: Resilience

Opening Words: ** The Peace of Wild Things (Wendell Berry)

Overall: The first month of the “church year” has been busy, with committees starting up again, as well as worship services being livestreamed from the sanctuary. The loss of Ruth Bader Ginsberg, the injustice of the Breonna Taylor injustice ruling, anxiety about the upcoming election and the fears of the ongoing pandemic, have shown up as communal anxiety in many aspects of our congregational life.

	Ministerial Observations	Ministerial Wonderings	Ministerial Flags	Ministerial Celebrations
Governance and Leadership	The Reopening Planning Group (RPG) has lost one member and gained another. It continues to be a strong group, which is monitoring changes in Covid-19 guidance to inform ur recommendations.	There had been some talk of convening a gathering (perhaps led by shared leadership) post-election. Maybe drop-in hours?	Have we had conversations with possible organizers to confirm their willingness to organize a fall/winter fundraiser (online auction)?	The board had a fun and highly motivating retreat in September - many thanks to Janet, Micaela, Emily and Bob for their excellent planning!
Staff	Oppong has been keeping all areas of the building clean and well-stocked for staff and renters. This seems to be working well.	Staff have been mainly working remotely, with Alisa and Lisa working in their offices occasionally. Lisa and Jud have also been livestreaming from the sanctuary in Sundays. We all observe the RPG recommended safe practices, including attestation beforehand.	Lisa has been working closely with Laci on tracking and reporting administrative functions. DRE report will now be submitted to the board monthly.	Staff had a good planning retreat on 9/8 and are planning a fun event together later this fall, to keep up morale.

Worship, Ritual and Ceremony	Congregation members have really appreciated worship being livestreamed from the sanctuary. This will continue as long as it is safe to do so.	<p>We are already thinking ahead to what the pageant and Christmas Eve will look like in a virtual format.</p> <p>Also, considering ways for parishioners to come into the sanctuary to light candles and meditate/pray at specific times both for Christmas Eve and in other times of need.</p>	<p>Our worship team is working well together to do create even more imaginative and engaging online worship.</p> <p>Keith is working on setting up to livestream even more effectively from the sanctuary; we'll be looking for some volunteer tech help.</p>	The first worship services of the year were very well-received, highlighting the talents of staff and congregation members.
Congregational Life and Spiritual Development	Small groups: 10-12 people have expressed interest in joining a new group. Groups will be formed in the next couple of weeks.	<p>We are noting visitors to online worship and working on ways to greet and further engage them.</p> <p>A small team is working on a proposed FPB website redesign and we are wondering about redesigning our logo. Looking for a graphic designer in our congregation.</p>	Men's and meditation groups have restarted. A group based on "Me and White Supremacy" will start in October, along with a monthly poetry workshop series, led by Regie O'Hare Gibson.	A small, family-only, naming/dedication ceremony for Joey Alm Fitzmaurice was held in the sanctuary on 9/26, with others attending by Zoom.
Community Engagement and Social Justice	IJC is connecting with its community partners, like Centro Presente, and planning more volunteer opportunities for congregants to engage in, such as food delivery for Chelsea Collaborative.	B&G is wrapping up current projects and considering when/how to take next steps on driveway regrading. Also, hoping to add new members.	<p>RJAC is planning more events for the community, including talks, films and discussion formats.</p> <p>#UUtheVote has been ramping up its regular get-out-the-vote activities, in anticipation of Nov. 3rd.</p>	Thursday phone-banking is very active right now, with as many as 12 people engaged weekly in justice calling.
Finance and Administration	Staff is keeping a tight rein on expenditures this year.	When do we decide on 2021-22 Canvass chair/s?	Rentals: The Lin Center is renting monthly now and will continue as long as they are able. We have had a few "one-off" rentals as well.	The Finance Committee had a lively discussion about proposed goals and questions related to our mission and budget.

**** The Peace of Wild Things (Wendell Berry)**

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For the time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.