

Reflections on 2020 Bradley Loliger, Chair, Church Council

2020 was the second full year that I had the honor of serving as Chair of Church Council here at Christ Church. I can remember the beginning of the year, when our focus was General Conference 2020 and the future of the denomination, and can trace how we moved to lockdown, to recorded iPad worship services, to our re-opening, to our present reality of making reservations for worship, and an all-virtual Christmas Eve service. If I may indulge in a cliché, it has been a year unlike any other.

I am so very proud of the leadership of all the CUMC teams, and how they have adjusted and adapted to ensure that our Church can continue to make connections and offer opportunities for faith, love and service.

I am cautiously optimistic about what 2021 will bring for our congregation, as we have weathered a difficult year and will be able to come out on the other side. It is my hope to continue to work collaboratively with all the team members so that we can move forward and focus on a new strategic plan for the post-pandemic world. Further, I hope to restart the process of Christ Church becoming a Reconciling Congregation and intend to engage a group in the coming months. Please let me know if you would like to participate! I can always be reached at bradloliger@gmail.com

In Christ,

Bradley Loliger



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEAM

January, 2020 - December, 2020

Lisa Lawson, Facilitator

The report for children's ministry at Christ Church has involved all of the members of the team: Mary Ball, Kay Barber, Sharon Ferrelli, Marie Miller, Laura Smith and Valari Zanghi. We all contributed to the creation and implementation of christian faith activities for the children of our church.

Between January and March, we prepared weekly lesson activities based on biblical scripture and engaging participatory activities. Due to the minimal amount of children attending, we rotated our team members as instructors. Previously, the Faithxpress model involved church members as instructors. We also organized our resource room which contains supplies for VBS and lesson activities.

In March, our community was affected by a state-wide shutdown due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic. Our plans for offering Vacation Bible School in July were cancelled as well as the rest of Faithxpress activities. In the meantime, our team has tried to meet physically and virtually to prepare some ministry activities for our children and families.

In October we prepared family Faithxpress kits which contained a series of biblical stories with connected activities. In November, we created an Advent calendar craft for families to create together. It is our hope as the pandemic continues through the beginning of 2021 that we are reaching our children and families with activities for spiritual growth. Communication will be a priority going forward, so our team will be discussing how to create ways to assist in the needs of our youngest church members.

Hospitality Team Annual Report 2020

The Hospitality Team began 2020 with plans to continue the efforts to make the main floor of Christ Church a more welcoming place. Closets in the Family Room were purged and organized. We began sharing ideas and looking for furnishings to complete the main floor restrooms. A large bulletin board was ordered for the Cafe. Artwork from our inventory was selected for Crafts Hall. By March 15th, our efforts came to an abrupt halt. We stopped looking for furniture, the bulletin board could not be delivered, and the artwork was not placed. The café was not open on March 15th, the last day we would worship in person for 3 months, and no in person worship meant no need for greeters.

By mid-May, a task force was in place to create policies for safe in person worship. The Hospitality Team met via Zoom to share ideas for providing a warm welcome while following the policies in place to protect the health and well-being of our community of faith. Masks (some handmade by Diane Klenk, some disposable) and hand sanitizing stations were placed in the main entrance and the sanctuary. Once seating had been designated, new cording and ribbon were used to make the sanctuary welcoming and safe. Team members and others have greeted and made sure that masks are worn and hands are sanitized as people enter the building.

Our team looks forward to continuing to welcome worshipers with our current policies to protect everyone's health, and to resuming a more robust hospitality ministry when it is safe to do so.

We wish to thank Michele Sciolino who is stepping down from the team and has faithfully shared her gifts of hospitality to make Christ Church a more welcoming place in recent years.

In Christ's Service,

Peggy Bermudez, Hospitality Team Facilitator

Team Members: Mary Ball, Barb Critoph, Paula Kreib, Pam Lopez

Annual Report of Memorials Team 2020

Live streaming of church services was paid for with designated and undesignated funds. No other purchases were made.

At this time the total for all accounts is \$18,299.81

More updates and remodeling next year will benefit from the generosity of our church family.

Blessings,
Karen Hoffmann

Spiritual Formation Team Annual Report 2020

The Spiritual Formation Team began 2020 with in person opportunities for spiritual growth three times a week: Adult Opportunities for Learning on Sundays following worship, Exploring Sunday's Scriptures on Tuesdays at noon, and Thirstaid on Thursdays at 1:00.

By mid-March, we could no longer meet in person. Rev. Oskvig and other leaders began exploring online platforms. A new weekly rhythm was established for spiritual growth opportunities so people could participate from the safety of their homes. Weekly spiritual growth opportunities now include:

- ❖ Mondays – Gratitude Journal on Facebook with Rev. Oskvig
- ❖ Tuesdays – Exploring Sunday Scriptures on YouTube with Rev. Oskvig
- ❖ Wednesdays – Feasting on the Word on our website with Rev. Oskvig
- ❖ Thursdays - Thirstaid at 1:00 p.m. on Zoom – leaders have included Diane Klenk and Rev. Oskvig

Thirstaid studies for this year included A Year of Biblical Womanhood, Taste and See, The Gospel According to Leviticus, and the Advent study, Almost Christmas.

Dr. David Pliss also recorded a three part series for AOL, "Happiness and Mental Health", which is archived on our YouTube channel.

We experimented with Monday night Zoom studies this year in October and December: Finding Peace in an Anxious World and an Advent study, Dinner by Candlelight. Both of these studies are from the United Methodist Women reading list and were led by Peggy Bermudez.

As we look ahead to 2021, we will continue to offer online spiritual growth opportunities and hope to resume in person meetings when it is safe. To be more inclusive, we will do our best to offer in person opportunities in a hybrid format, making them available to those joining from home.

It is our joy to welcome Beth Reilly as a new team member in 2021!

Yours in Christ,

Team Members: Rev. Oskvig, Dr. David Pliss, Paula Kreib, and Peggy Bermudez

SPRT Annual Report

2020

The members of SPRT wish to provide our Church Council with a report of SPRT's efforts during calendar year 2020. The team's efforts include the following:

- A job description was specifically created for each staff member after receiving input from each staff member
- The staff/ liaison role was defined to promote greater interaction between staff and SPRT during the course of the year
- The Minister of Christian Education & Community Life position which became vacant in mid 2019 was evaluated and a decision was made to eliminate the position and ask others to accept some of the responsibilities
- SPRT met with the District Superintendent as part of the annual church conference
- SPRT recommended the Pastor's compensation package for 2021 to Church Council
- A self- evaluation tool was created and utilized to obtain feedback from each staff member regarding their personal performance during the year
- An evaluation tool was created and utilized to allow the staff person's liaison and the Pastor to evaluate each staff member and report their findings to the SPRT
- The church profile was updated
- SPRT collaborated with the Board of Trustees to redefine the Church's custodian needs as a result of the long term illness of the incumbent
- The Personnel Policy Handbook was updated to incorporate new language in the Sexual Harassment section and the Family Medical Leave section.
- Pastor appreciation month was celebrated in October, 2020
- Contributions were solicited from the congregation to permit the Church to acknowledge the efforts of each staff member during this difficult and unusual year. Each staff member is being provided a Christmas bonus in late December
- The Safe Sanctuary requirements of the Conference were met through background checks and on line education for each staff member

Stewardship Team Annual Report 2020

The Stewardship Team began 2020 with plans for a year-round stewardship program which would include the use of Faith and Facts inserts for the bulletin one Sunday of each month. These cards, created by the General Board of Church and Society, provide concise information on a number of social issues and steps that individuals and congregations can take to address them as we live out our membership vows. The plan worked well in January and February, but by mid-March we were no longer using printed bulletins. We will explore some different ways to share the information and inspiration these cards provide.

The team began meeting in mid-August to plan the stewardship campaign for 2021. We chose the theme, "Celebrating Christ Church Connections" in recognition of the efforts by Rev. Oskvig, our staff, and the laity who worked to maintain and strengthen our connections despite the challenges of the pandemic. The campaign included a video series, "Connecting Gifts and Graces with Faith, Love, and Service" with church members, Julie Andrews, Scott Smith, and Patty Keller. We asked for pledges to be maintained at 2020 levels to support our 2021 ministry plan. Our goal was \$191,000 in pledges and it is our joy to share the news that, as of December 13, pledges totaled \$193, 838. We are thankful for the generosity of our congregation!

Our team looks forward to a year of more vital and intentional stewardship as our Christ Church community lives into our membership vows more fully. We wish to express our thanks to Lynda Painton, who is stepping down from the team and whose thoughtful reflections have inspired our annual campaign letter.

In Christ,

Peggy Bermudez

Stewardship Team Facilitator

Team Members: Sandy Cumming, Rev. Daven Oskvig



United Methodist Women Annual Report 2020

United Methodist Women of Christ Church had a full calendar planned for 2020. Our first breakfast gathering was scheduled for Saturday, March 14th, with a speaker from the SPCA. We gathered photos of pets from our church family, posters were created, plenty of people were signed up and the cooks were ready to go. Two days before the event, the speaker cancelled because of COVID-19, and we had to cancel the event for everyone's health and safety.

Throughout the year, UMW Updates have been sent via e-mail and include *Response* magazine, District UMW newsletters, suggestions for spiritual growth and social action, and local unit news.

Our unit was able to host the Niagara Frontier District UMW Annual Meeting on September 19th. It was very different from previous years with all of our health and safety policies in place and was scaled down from 5 hours to 2 hours. Although we did not host coffee hour, serve lunch, or have an in person keynote speaker, we did have a successful event - combining worship, business and an inspirational message. For the first time, the meeting was live-streamed, thanks to our new technology at Christ Church! I am thankful for the tech team and those who greeted our guests that day.

Two books from the UMW reading list were offered as Monday night Zoom studies in October and December: "Finding Peace in an Anxious World" and an Advent study, "Dinner by Candlelight".

In November, UMW sent over 40 Thanksgiving cards instead of visiting those at home and in facilities who are unable to worship in person. In December, we held a Virtual Christmas Coffee on Zoom, took some time to catch up with each other, explored the importance of mentors with the story of Mary and Elizabeth, and held our annual pledge service.

The Leadership Team has been meeting via Zoom. Although we had no fundraisers this year, generous pledges from our members made it possible to meet our Pledge to Mission and give the full amount to all the ministries we planned to support this year.

UMW at Christ Church is looking forward to another year of "Faith, Hope, and Love in Action" as we find new ways to do our work and hope to resume in person opportunities when it is safe to do so.

Respectfully Submitted,
Peggy Bermudez, President

2020 VISITATION TEAM REPORT

Our team was able to keep in touch with shut-ins by phone, and personal visits until mid-March, when Covid hit. Since then, we have been restricted to cards and phone calls. We did join with the UMW in Nov. to send over 40 Thanksgiving cards to shut-ins and other members with health issues. We so look forward to getting back to business as usual.

-Julie Wrisley