

## **Cedarhurst Unitarian Universalists Annual Report for 2022-2023**

The 2022-2023 church year has concluded. Our last Annual Report was issued in 2019 at which time we reported on the investment in an audio/visual system. Wow, were we telepathic? Because we made that investment ahead of the pandemic CUU was ready to respond with online services within days of the lockdown. When it was time to go to multi-platform (after many stops and starts due to the pandemic) we invested more money to make it work even better. We thank everyone for their patience as the inevitable hiccups slowed down each technology transition. All of this pivoting with technology allowed the Board to be as inclusive as possible while considering everyone's health and safety needs. The decisions were not easy but we worked hard to remain in covenant with all of you.

This year has been another pivot to in-person activities in its full array. Sunday Services have seen a steady increase of in-person attendance and other in-person events resumed such as crafts, lunches, dinners, our beloved coffee hours, the fabulous auction, and fellowship dinner among many auction events. It has been a year of healing and coming back together. We were like a bunch of giddy school kids at the auction and fellowship dinner!

An 18-month absence from the building showed its scars this year. Much time and money was spent on needed repairs to the building. The boiler is in good working condition, the roof repair from storm damage is complete and roof replacement will commence soon. The next Board President will need to further investigate the demolition and rebuild of the back patio because it is structurally unsound.

I look forward to passing along a building, congregation and programs that are ready to move on to the next chapter. Covid-19 took a lot of time and care to work through. CUU, as a community, cared for one another and remained flexible to provide what programs we could within the constraints of the early days and then opened up during the past year. As is better described below, significant outreach work has been done in the past year to sustain and grow our congregation. Now, we need to figure out what programs need to be the focus to invigorate and respond to this outreach effort. We look forward to everyone's participation in making CUU a place where our larger community feels welcome and spiritually nourished.

### **Worship Services Committee**

Following modified in-person services last spring and summer, the Fall of 2022 saw a return to full in-person services while still offering a zoom option. It's nice to have singing in the building again! In-person attendance started out slow but has steadily increased with about 25 people in attendance at a few recent services. Zoom attendance has varied from a couple people to around eight or nine.

Thanks to our endowment fund, additional audio/visual equipment was purchased to enhance both the zoom and in-person experience. The new equipment included a new camera, controllers, and the ability to once again utilize our microphones and wall speakers. Additionally, it allowed us to remove the laptop from the podium and the numerous cables and wires one had to cross over to reach the podium!

For the summer of 2022, we once again partnered with Channing Memorial Church UU with each congregation leading half the services, culminating in an end of summer gathering at Piney Run Park. From September 2022 through May 2023, Rev. Amy led our services twice a month, supplemented by guest speakers and a couple informative lay led services. June 2023 will bring us two services led by Rev. Amy, the second being the flower communion service, followed by the start of our summer services. This summer we have decided not to partner with another congregation and instead return to our previous format of lay led informal services in our building.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to make our Sunday services possible this year. This includes the members of our wonderful choir, lay leaders and zoom coordinators, providers of coffee hour, greeters and ushers, and committee members.

Maria Warburton  
Worship Committee Chair

### **Congregational Life Committee**

The committee members are Barb Bradley, Pamela Malkin, Sharon Kennedy, June Clarke and Beth Schilpp – chair. The committee is currently meeting at 12 noon on the fourth Sunday of the month on zoom. Anyone in the congregation is welcome to join us.

COVID impact: When COVID caused CUU to close the building, the committee immediately tried to find ways to keep us connected. Our in-person groups went to zoom and most of them continue to meet that way. This will be discussed in more detail later.

At the beginning of lockdown, Pamela arranged lists of members and friends into call/contact lists that committee members and other volunteers called on a monthly basis. It has evolved into a quarterly activity. This was instrumental in staving off feelings of isolation and letting Rev. Amy know when pastoral care was needed. The beauty and love of our congregation shone brightly during such a challenging time. During the winter holidays, care packages were put together by volunteers for those in the congregation with health issues or otherwise were more housebound.

Felix Vigeveno celebrated his 100th birthday on 1/6/2021 and we organized a caravan with signs to drive by his home honking our horns and waving our signs. We could not let this monumental birthday pass, Covid or not, without showing Felix our love.

We had several outside picnics/gatherings at CUU where each person brought their own food, drinks and chairs and all were spaced apart per Covid protocol. At one of these picnics we enjoyed music by Gerry Galuardi.

We encouraged the congregation to send cards, e-cards or phone calls to others in the congregation as Random Acts of Kindness.

Zoom was our friend during Covid. It kept us together to share in ministry, laughter, love and sorrows. Remember these events via Zoom (and some continue on Zoom):

Movie night

New Year's Eve gathering

Game nights

Monday musings

Caregiver Support Group

Ladies Who Lunch

Drinks & Desserts

Book Club

Once a month on the third Friday, CUU prepares a homecooked meal for the night-by-night shelter guests in Westminster. Each 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we provide a cookout at Shepherd's Staff in place of the usual soup kitchen lunch. Finally, we provide lunch for Loaves and Fishes at the Westminster Church of the Brethren once or twice a year. This ministry continued through Covid.

## Minister's 2023 Annual Report

Annual reports are a time to celebrate, and we have much to celebrate.

We presently have 4 new members this year, with 2 more who are considering.

This is in addition to the 2 that we gained during the COVID years.

We have overcome challenges with our building, including the furnace and roof. These things may seem prosaic, but they are a sign that we take seriously the stewardship of our building and our congregations. We have installed new AV equipment which allows for full multi-platform and multi-media worship.

As the COVID numbers decline, our worship numbers are slowly going up. It is often hard to get back into the habit of taking care of ourselves and this goes for spirituality as well. Spiritually, congregational worship is a key part of our ministry and our numbers there are increasing slowly but surely as our community grows.

Our outreach efforts have a dual purpose, exposing the community to Unitarian Universalism and sharing our wonderful faith community. The outreach has done both as it has brought new visitors to our doors.

With new visitors, we have had the opportunity to see our building and ministry from the point of view of someone who is seeing the building and our ministry for the first time. This has enabled us to see where we need to up our game by cleaning up the building (much thanks to Maria Warburton and others) and having ministries to share with children. We are in the process of working on both and looking towards the future.

As we look towards the future there are many social justice issues in Carroll County that our members have been involved in. From efforts in schools to the Poor People's Campaign our members have been involved and CUU is looking to become involved again in Social Justice issues. We are known for our social justice efforts, and these efforts have been lessened during COVID, but our community is once again on the cusp of making a difference in the world.

Interfaith efforts, which had been paused by the interfaith community are restarting and CUU is part of these efforts. There have been two interfaith events that we have been part of, and we are becoming involved in efforts that are being established in this semi-post COVID era.

Our congregational life committee has been what has kept us connected during COVID and they continue to build this connection. From on-line events which connect those who are near and far from us to growing in-person opportunities Congregational Life has kept our internal ministries going.

We have also had opportunities for spiritual growth. One example is the Build Your Own Theology (BYOT) group which has deepened our member's spiritual growth and has brought people from the community to our doors.

There are still challenges for small congregations. But we need to remember that CUU, through our commitment and leadership, have weathered the storm of COVID much better than many other small congregations.

**Cedarhurst Unitarian Universalist  
Annual Budget  
July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024**

**INCOME**

Pledges from members and friends	\$52,600.00
Plate Donations	\$2,500.00
Adult Educational Offerings	\$0.00
Hall Rental	\$500.00
Fundraising	\$9,850.00
Scrip Profit	\$1,000.00
22-23 Carryover	
Endowment Contribution	\$37,569.03

**TOTAL INCOME**

**\$104,019.03**

**EXPENSES**

Board Discretionary	\$200.00
Central East/UUA Dues	\$5,081.00
Communications	\$1,285.00
Finance	\$884.00
Insurance	\$3,463.00
Leadership Development	\$200.00
Congregational Life	\$300.00
Office Supplies	\$584.00
Buildings & Grounds	\$16,290.00
Payroll Expenses (W-2s)	
Administrative Assist/Outreach	\$11,704.00
Payroll tax expense	\$889.00
Minister-Total Payroll	\$52,534.03
Religious Exploration (all ages)	\$350.00
Religious Services (Worship)	\$10,255.00

**TOTAL EXPENSES**

**\$104,019.03**

NOTE: Social Justice income & expenses  
are outside of the operating budget.