

Shared Ministries Team, Annual Report 2020-21

As the Shared Ministries Team entered the work year in September 2020, it was clear that it would be a year of online Zoom meetings. Events that we had hoped to present for the congregation earlier in 2020 would have to wait, and the Shared Ministries Team would organize meetings around questions about processes that then evolved into questions and conversations about current and possible new policies.

These “generative conversations” throughout the year resulted in the development and honing of policies and procedures that were noticeably absent or in need of modification or clarification, often in response to questions brought to the team by congregants. We were fortunate to have UUAA intern Rev. Amber Beland with us to help us discern much of what we have been discussing, as we discovered new concerns and researched topics in sub-committees.

Among the items that have been visited are the Memorials reservation process and the policy around signage and how UUAA is represented visually at home and in the larger community. The Shared Ministries Team shared in researching and benchmarking these policies and worked with staff to craft language that clarifies and brings a common understanding to answer operational questions at UUAA.

In addition to specific operational policies and procedures, the SMT embarked on a series of conversations, exploring areas of communication within our community. These discussions generated plans for a series of guides to help congregants navigate processes and operations with an eye on preserving healthy relationships. Topics that are currently being developed include how to best bring awareness to the community about a concern or an idea one wishes to share, how to help those who may feel they are in the minority or hold minority opinions as issues are brought to the congregation, and processes or recommended practices for holding what might be considered difficult conversations with others with whom we are in community.

As needs arise, the Shared Ministries Team will continue to tackle concerns as we work toward a community that is able to move together in support and in covenant with one another.

Respectfully submitted,

Margie Teall, Chair
Laura Bollentino
Jim Breck
Allen Duncan
Mike Halerz
Reese Havlatka