

# THE COMMUNICATOR

*Foothills Unitarian Church's Mostly-Bimonthly Newsletter*



Foothills Unitarian

## Why This Issue of *The Communicator* Isn't Just for You

by Rev. Gretchen Haley, Senior Minister

When we thought about this issue of The Communicator, we imagined our primary audience not exactly as you. Because "you" who read this in the summer of 2020 already know all the ways we've been responding to the world as it changed a few months ago. You were there.

You were there when the theoretical threat of a highly contagious, novel virus became our sudden reality. There when we moved all of our church services entirely online, closed our building, and wondered just how much toilet paper and hand sanitizer we should get from the store in order to do this new thing called "shelter in place."

You were there as the previously-wild idea of offering all-online services became our reality. Through video

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### UPDATE FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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### SUMMER WORSHIP CALENDAR

## Minister's column, continued

testimonials, lip synching to favorite hymns, community-based baby blessings and flower communions — and so much more — you have been there. You've been there for Sunday check-ins over Zoom with our kids, and our youth group, and with parent support throughout the week.

And you were there as we formed 21 neighborhood-based community circles. First because we thought there'd be a need for groceries, errands, support for those who were sick. In the earliest days there was the sense that we would all be sick before too long, and we were told that those under 30 weren't impacted at all. Neither of these exactly turned out to be true. We just didn't know. We still don't really know.

You were there for each other through this uncertainty. Turning circles into a place for mutual support and sustained community, especially in the time of extended sheltering in place. Nearly 20 new leaders stepped forward to join the caring team, which means there's a designated and trained person in each circle for whatever might arise.

And you were there for the needs beyond our own congregation. There as both volunteers and shoppers at our mobile food bank, which

became a drive-through, and which provided food to record numbers of people, as many began to feel the economic impacts of the pandemic. And for our partners in the

Family Housing Network, as families moved into our vacated building, providing them the stability and safety they and volunteers needed through

the pandemic. And you've been there responding to the calls for racial justice, learning, marching, listening, adjusting.

Early on we made commitments to ourselves and to each other, that we would not let fear be our driver, but rather that we would continue to be led by generosity and gratitude. From these values, you have raised over \$150,000 in partnership with the interfaith immigration coalition (ISAAC) and given out over 500 grants to immigrants in need. And, you've given through sharing the plate over \$20,000 for our community partners, and over \$10,000 in support to members of our Foothills community in financial distress.

And, you've been there for each other in the uncertainty

as we've wondered what would come of all of our huge achievements and hard work that went into the building campaign. After all, just ten days after we voted to move forward with our 8 million dollar first phase for a new sanctuary, we moved out of our current sanctuary!

You've met this anxiety and uncertainty with faith and flexibility. We've received only a few changes to original pledges (thank you for letting us know!) and our operating budget and construction funding continues to be pretty much on track. With your

commitment, we are making plans to resume our final design by the fall.

You've been here through all this, and you're still here as we consider the possibility of being all-virtual through next May.

Given all the above, you might think that timeline's just fine. But that's only if you haven't been here. Because even though we're adapting, it's not the same. We miss each other. We miss singing together. Hugging. Making coffee (or at least drinking it!). Online church has been beautiful, powerful — and still, it's not enough.

Which brings me to our imagined primary audience

**220**

Individuals provided one or more elements for worship Jan.-May

**\$35,000**

Shared with our community partners Jan.-May

for this issue. We wrote most of the articles here with the imagination that they would be read by the Foothills community of the future. The community that can't even imagine what it must've been like to go suddenly all-virtual because they've been

gathering in person (in a 400-seat sanctuary with a fully integrated online experience for those who now prefer it!) for such a long time. In projecting out to that future community, we hope to remind all of us that this future *will* come. There *will* be a time when the people of Foothills will hear stories of 2020 the way we have heard stories of World War II, or the 1918 Flu...I promise. So...

*Dear Future Foothills,*

*When you wonder how the church of 2020 responded to the whole world changing in a few days, know that, despite all the uncertainty, the anxiety, and the grief, this community has been a living example of what church can be at its best.*

*Know that the church cared for each other tenderly, consistently, creatively. Across all the generations and life circumstances.*

*And know that the church cared for the wider community*

**678**  
Easter Online  
Attendance

*boldly, collaboratively,  
generously.*

*Our efforts have not been perfect. There's been a steep learning curve, and some days we struggled. And yet, through it all, we have remained faithful to our mission, and our vision, and our covenant. The promises we've been making and remaking for over 100 years:*

*Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its law. This is our great covenant, to dwell (if virtually) together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another.*

*It sounds simple, but we know it isn't always easy. And yet it remains our promise, and our practice. For our community here in 2020, and our community long into the future.*

*With love,  
Rev. Gretchen*

P.S. You would think worship attendance would decrease during an all-online environment, but instead we've seen increased engagement. Check out the charts on page 14 for details.

**3,200**  
Podcasts  
downloaded

## What's Next in Worship

### July-August

*Unitarian Universalist messages of hope for today*

**July 12** - "God Unbound" Rev. Hannah Roberts Villnave, UU Church of Cheyenne

**July 19** - "Belovedness as an Antidote to Fear," Rev. Sara LaWall, Boise UU Fellowship

**July 26** - Rev. Kristen's final worship with us

**Aug 2** - "What We Can Save," Rev. Lee Allison Paczulla, Wellsprings Congregation

**Aug 9** - "Faith for All Seasons: UU Thoughts on Why Bad Things Happen," Rev. Kelly Dignan, Community Minister

**Aug 16** - Question Box - Rev. Sean & Rev. Gretchen

### August-September New Start

**Aug 23** - A New You

**Aug 30** - A New Us: Water Communion

**Sept 6** - A New World - (Labor Day)

**Sept 13** - Tedious Praise

Note: on **Sept 12** we are co-hosting Christopher Watkins Lamb's all-virtual ordination. Look for details in the weekly *Pulse* email.

# Update from the Board of Trustees

by Sara Steen, President

I recently came across a stack of envelopes containing letters written by then-sixth-graders at Foothills to their future selves; I mailed them off in case they happened to contain any nuggets of wisdom, or more likely a little bit of humor, during this challenging time. This exercise is similar—sending words to the future about what we are noticing now. As I have sat with it over the last few days, I have been surprised at how helpful this framing has been. It takes me back to our mission, values, and vision, all things that I have been intimately involved with, but that I don't generally think much about. In these strange days, I find comfort in reviewing our values, noticing the ways they are holding and guiding us through these weeks.

I see **joyful resilience** as we make silly videos to share during Sunday services, exchange books and puzzles and recipes through our community circles, and continue to show up for one another and do our work

despite the challenges of technology and uncertainty and pain.

I see **deepening belonging** in the willingness of people to participate in community circles with people who we may have never met in person before. In a very short amount of time, a time that has been laced with trauma that could easily lead us to withdraw into ourselves, I have observed a remarkable desire to move

I see us acting as a collective to protect the health of those who are most vulnerable to this virus. We did this quickly and decisively within our congregation, closing our building early to ensure that those folks, who come to church No Matter What (many of whom have done so for decades), wouldn't be put in a position of making a decision between coming into a potentially dangerous environment and not showing up. This framing will be central to the decisions we make about gathering in the months to come.

And I see **transcendent wonder** in the messages from our ministers every week, the reminders from Gretchen and Sean and Kristen to notice and appreciate the ways that life is shifting. I have heard so much wisdom in recent weeks (lots of podcast time) from folks who are intimately familiar with uncertainty and pain—people who are disabled or chronically ill, who are marginalized because of their sexuality, who have lived through generations of poverty. I hear them talking about the transformative possibilities of this time, and I find myself transcended, taken out of the world as it is, into a world that we can only begin to imagine. And it is wondrous, indeed.



deeper into connection and vulnerability.

**Collective courage** is something that we have become very skillful at over the years. It has been a driving force in our social justice efforts, efforts that we have continued and expanded in the past weeks. But I also see a new iteration of this value.

# How We Supported Foothills Families During a Pandemic

by Eleanor VanDeusen, Dir. of Family Ministry

Sheltering at home has been incredibly hard and stressful for families. Your Foothills Family Ministry Team has worked in new ways to create online resources to support every family, child and youth during this challenging time.

Here are the things your Foothills Family Ministry team did during the Pandemic:

**We made weekly Family Worship Videos** – for families to watch at their convenience.

Each video included music, stories and a spiritual practice and was appropriate for families with children ages 3 and up.

**We offered a live Sunday morning time for Kids on Zoom** – This gathering was like our Sunday morning small groups for kids but online. Every Sunday from 10:15-10:45 am we lit a chalice, checked in with each other to share joys and sorrows. We shared stories, a time for meditation or prayer, and fun activities together! Our Children's Music Coordinator, Kara Shobe, often joined us to lead some music!

**We offered an "After-**

**35**

Kids each week at online gatherings

**45**

Online gatherings from Family Ministry

## "noon Break" for Preteens co-led by High School Youth

This gathering was for connection and fun because we know kids this age love being with friends! We checked in,

shared challenges and celebrations, played games and enjoyed hanging out together!

## We offered Youth Group Online Gatherings

Every Sunday 11:15 am to 12:30 pm.

We gathered with 10-15 youth every Sunday to check in, share challenges and joys and support each with a balanced mix of fun activities and conversations for spiritual growth. We also offered monthly "in person/socially distanced" Youth Group activities where we played outdoor games and did social justice projects like making signs to support essential workers and putting our church signs back up on Drake that support neighbors with marginalized identities.

## We created the Family Home Chalice Project

We designed this resource to help families carve out ritual space in their homes and weekly schedules. It included:



LINK AVAILABLE AT  
[HTTPS://FOOTHILLSUU.ORG/FOR-THE-WHOLE-FAMILY/](https://foothillsuu.org/for-the-whole-family/)

A *Family Home Chalice Guide* to guide parents in creating sacred time at home.

A *Family Home Chalice Kit* which includes materials for you to make your own home

chalice, words for lighting your chalice, UU coloring & activity sheets and a few treats! We even deliver this kit to families' doorsteps!

**14**

Family Worship Circle videos produced

*Parent Workshops* to guide parents in bringing Unitarian Universalism home and workshops

and a book discussion group for **Parents as Racial Justice Educators**.

We continue to work to help every Foothills Family grow in body mind and spirit, during the Pandemic and beyond!

## Family Ministry Team

*Eleanor VanDeusen*

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Family Ministry Coordinator lauren@foothillsuu.org

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*Kara Schobe*

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# Showing Up In Fort Collins and Northern Colorado: Foothills, COVID-19 and Community Resourcing

by Rev. Kristen Psaki, Assistant Minister for Beloved Community

Dear Foothills in the Future,

It was quite early on, actually, when we made the decision to give over our building to the Family Housing Network (FHN). It was week two or so of the “stay at home” order — well before weeks 11 and 12 and what felt like 1,000 — long before we even considered that this would go on as long as it did.

The irony of the “stay at home” order, of course, being that not everyone has a home to stay at home at, which leaves unhoused families in Fort Collins left with limited options to choose safety — both for themselves and our larger community.

Thankfully, through programs like FHN’s Faith Family Hospitality, some families have the option to enroll and live in faith houses across the city for a week at a time. It was Rev. Gretchen who first had the idea to give over our building — we were mourning the loss of not being able to be in it ourselves — to gather in our sanctuary, to greet each other in the crowded foyer, to hug and shake hands — finding a purposeful use for the building felt meaningful. It also felt like a really smart and important decision to make quickly given public health guidance — and so we did — and they’ve been overwhelmed by our generosity.

Truthfully, it just felt like the right and obvious thing to do.

Within a few days much of our RE building, kitchen and social hall lightly transformed to welcome the FHN staff and four families experiencing homelessness — who have lived there ever since. Actually, at least two families have since transitioned into permanent housing, a testament to the work of FHN and perhaps supported by a little extra safety and stability of living in one place. We’ve committed to offering our building for as long as our church life remains all online.

It was the very same Sunday at the end of March when Family Housing Network moved in that we converted the east side parking lot into Food Bank of Larimer County’s first drive-thru mobile pantry. Sweeping job loss had just started and we knew that families from within and beyond our congregation would be relying on our open pantry. Through the creative lay leadership of Courtney Butnor and Mary Klecan, a beaming crew of Foothills volunteers and a strong partnership with the County Food Bank — we retooled the mobile pantry setup to safely serve clients and take care of ourselves.

We prepared for more clients each consecutive pantry day and the numbers did rise. We began to serve over 120 families — more than over Thanksgiving — a testament to the need and also the essential role our pantry has become as a community resource. In partnership with Latinx organizations, agencies and leaders in the city, we started to translate our Mobile Food Bank informational posters into Spanish to extend our reach and to promote accurate information on food access during this time. Blossoming partnerships also allowed us to distribute 200 hand-sewn masks to clients during our Mother’s Day pantry, an unexpected yet essential addition that will continue.

And there’s more.

**250**  
Unique families  
served at our Food  
Bank in April

There’s this phrase that’s been going around recently: “We’re all in the same storm, but not in the same boat.” It’s a helpful image to highlight the ways COVID-19 is exposing long-standing systemic bias and inequity. For many, the impact of this virus has meant complete loss of income without connection to assets or the lifeline of government relief. Fort Collins and Northern Colorado have

*Continued on next page*

a growing immigrant community and a growing undocumented community.

As part of our faithful commitment to immigration justice, and in partnership with those systemically locked out of job security and accessible health care, we helped to convene a conversation of immigrant-led and immigrant-serving organizations, agencies and leaders across the city. This was also at the end of March — and we've been meeting ever since.

We heard from immigrant leaders and undocumented leaders. Undocumented workers hold up our food systems and yet:

- Do not qualify for unemployment benefits.
- No stimulus checks were coming for undocumented tax payers.
- Immigrants in essential positions were not given protective equipment by employers.

Once again, the community stepped in where equitable government structures for relief in a crisis were absent. Mask-making and distribution networks quickly sprouted, ISAAC's Emergency Immigration Fund launched a COVID-19 Rapid Response Special Initiative providing mini-grants for rental assis-

tance and other needs specifically to those undocumented in our community, conversations with city and county officials were cultivated around a moratorium on evictions, internet and food access responses are in motion and so much more. To date,

Emergency Immigration Fund's COVID-19 Special Initiative has dispersed close to 500 grants — distributing almost \$150,000 in much needed funds. To donate, give online or mail a check (with EIF on the memo line).

And of course, as we pivoted to shift the ways we show up as a resource and leader in the community in response to Coronavirus — the impact of a second virus — Systemic Racism — gained a spotlight. In this moment of awakening, many of us who are white are waking up to the ways “racism is not an event, but a system” and to the ways racial bias and generational anti-blackness and anti-brownness impact real lives not just in Minneapolis or New York — but in Fort Collins.

Acting locally and listening to the voices and leadership of those directly impacted are core values that inform how and when and why we show up in moments like this. We waited for the call to action from an emerging community coalition of People of Color — the newly named “BIPOC

**\$150,000**

Given to our Neighbors in the Immigrant Community through Grants

Alliance of Larimer County” [BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color] — before inviting the congregation to show up in protest and solidarity. We honor the sacred wrestle of how to show up in the midst of a pandemic and affirm that there is a place for everyone, every body — whether in the streets or in your living room — in the collective work toward more freedom and safety and thriving for all people in our communities.

Grounded in strong relationships that have been built over years with many of the founding members of BIPOC Alliance and committed to leveraging our resources and access in the service of Justice and Love, Foothills plans to serve as the fiscal sponsor for this coalition, which is very exciting — and impactful.

And, in the midst of very tangible community resourcing in response to a crisis and this moment, we continue to dream, scheme and take steps forward toward building the world we know is possible: where all have access to health care, food, shelter, purpose and community connection, a world free of racism and discrimination, a world where our value is not tied to our labor — a world where all are free.

Hope this finds you well — or well enough — and continuing to dream of this world too.

Love,  
Rev. Kristen

## Transition News from Rev. Kristen

Dear Foothills,

When we came into relationship, none of us knew exactly how long I would companion you as a minister. I followed my call to your doorstep, and now my call tugs me to the next step of my journey.

After much discernment — by which I mean intentional reflection, prayer and conversation — I have decided that now is the time for me to go. I wish I could tell you exactly what my future looks like, but I just don't know yet. I do know that I am called to press my heart and hands into the earth, to live a land-based life with my growing

family, and to tend to an emerging ministry outside of congregational life. I do know that my bones are claimed by the work of justice and healing. I do know that the next shape of my ministry will grow clearer as I sit in still, quiet spaces near moving water.

I am not leaving because of any conflict; you have treated me well. You have grown to love me, and I have grown to love you. We have served boldly, lived well in covenant and deepened as a community committed to love and justice. You are a strong and healthy church with a clear mission and vision. You have

a talented and dedicated staff and two called ministers who are themselves courageous and faithful.

My last Sunday at Foothills will be July 26th and I will continue to work part-time through August to finish transitioning any remaining work. I am open to questions and conversations and look forward to sharing more. Know that we are forever connected, I have impacted your life and you have impacted mine, and together we are a part of a faith movement answering the call of Love, which couldn't be more important in this moment.

In faith and fierce love,  
Rev. Kristen

felt even more isolating for them than what we are experiencing now.

As we wonder how our world will be changed by the current pandemic, and we ask if it lead to positive changes in terms of public health and access to health care, we may be encouraged by what Barbara Fleming tells us resulted from the last century's epidemic: "The epidemic provided impetus nationwide for continued research to find vaccines ... to combat illnesses... and the eventual result was Larimer County Hospital [was] soon to replace the private hospitals and the poor farm facility." We too can move forward from this historic moment, taking what we learn from it to improve the world for future generations.

## Pandemic: Now and Then

by Bonnie Inscho, History Project Chair

As we are reacting to the COVID-19 pandemic, we can look back to just over 100 years ago when our community faced a similar time. From local historian, Barbara Fleming, in her book *Fort Collins - A History*, we know some of what it was like back in 1918-1919.

When the influenza epidemic hit Boulder, CO, in October, 1918, Fort Collins Mayor Fred Stover acted swiftly by ordering schools, churches, theaters and other public places to be closed indefinitely. Temporary hospitals were set up on campus in tents and in the Engineering Building. Community citizens were advised to stay inside, and

avoid contact with others as much as possible. Reassurances were given – no doubt to avoid panic — that most would recover.

Locally the epidemic continued through the winter and into 1919, when it began to subside by March and quarantines were lifted. The death rate in Fort Collins was relatively low, but the economic impact was felt by all. The Unity Church Board voted to pay the janitor and music staff "through the period of influenza," as a way of caring for their own. One can imagine church members trying to reach out to one another, but without the benefit of the technology we have today. It must have

## Financial Update

by Jeffrey Mizell, Administrator

Dear Future Foothills,

We have finally closed out on our six-month extension budget to shift our fiscal year to the calendar year, beginning January 1!

The end of 2019 was strong. We ended the budget year with strong giving — a trend we expect to continue into the future as the end of our Fiscal Year now coincides with the end-of-year giving season. In all areas of our giving: Pledge, Unrestricted Gifts, Share the Plate, and Capital Campaign, we were (as always) amazed at the generosity of our community.

Beginning the new year, January 1st brought with it significant donations related to the capital campaign. **Wow! What an accomplishment for our church to raise so much money to support our vision of the Future Foothills** (we're jealous you're already enjoying the new space, Future us!). Since the beginning of the year, major capital campaign contributions have been made, and we now have more than \$2 million in our capital campaign account as we continue work on this important project.

Our pledge campaign, running concurrently with the capital campaign, was also a success. We were able to speak directly with members and friends about the importance of continuing to give to support the church mission during this time. We're similarly excited to see pledging and giving continue into the new year, with more members and friends changing their gifts to recurring monthly contributions — something that helps us greatly in terms of planning our income for the year.

In mid-March, COVID-19 thrust the church into an unprecedented time of remote service, community programs, and fellowship. Since this time, **we've been truly amazed at the continued generosity of this congregation**. The congregation has given to support our continued services and programming, our justice work, and our ministerial discretionary fund to support members and staff in need of financial assistance. Yes, this congregation is truly inspiring.

We're confident that with the continued generosity that we have seen displayed time and again, we will be able to execute our mission of unleashing courageous love and to come together as a community to support each other and our wider community.

Sincerely,  
Jeffrey Mizell

## Community Circles

by Teri Ashley, Circle Leader

Dear Future Foothills,

For many of us, the pandemic seemed to sneak in the back door. The first Colorado COVID death occurred on March 13th, followed by rapid closures of schools, libraries, gyms, theaters, and restaurants.

Less than a week later, Foothills volunteers began Community Circle training, though we didn't really know what circles were or what our needs would be. We did know that, unlike past crises, rather than gathering together for comfort, we would have to remain physically apart to stay safe.

The first couple of weeks were a flurry of phone calls and data collection to form neighborhood circles that balanced people's mobility, vulnerabilities, needs, and availability. We were surprised by how often we heard a resounding "YES" when folks were asked if they were willing to help their neighbors.

The initial mission of circles was to assure that everyone had access to essentials: food, medicine, medical help. We anticipated that those who were less vulnerable would support those who were more at risk, and for the first few weeks this was needed, but systems quickly adapted and this need became less critical.

*Continued on next page*

1,200  
Foothills members & friends in  
Community Circles

*Circles, continued*

Emotional and spiritual support took higher priority as physical distancing stretched from weeks to months. We've been experimenting with virtual gatherings, outdoor walks, and checking in by phone. We've been delighted to discover Foothills members living nearby. We're forming new neighborhood friendships, building new connections.

In spite of persistent anxiety and uncertainty, we've stabilized in this new environment. So now we're asking this: *How do we live our values of joyful resilience, collective courage, deepening belonging, and transcendent wonder in our circles? How do we unleash courageous love in our neighborhoods? As we wait for COVID to resolve, how do we live purposefully as Unitarians?*

Visions of you, Future Foothills, are inspiring our actions during this pandemic. We're imagining that you're a powerful collective of cohesive neighborhoods that care for each other and the wider community with daily practices of love that grew from our simple circles.

Let it be so!  
2020 Foothills

## A Message From Our New Assistant Minister, Rev. Elaine Tenbrink

I am honored and delighted to be invited into ministry together with you. I can't wait to get to know you, your gifts, your dreams, and discover what we might create together.

I bring over a decade of professional ministry experience. From 2013-2019, I served as Minister of Membership and Adult Ministries at First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, focusing on spiritual deepening and radical hospitality. I have also served as a hospice chaplain for Allina Health in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a hospital chaplain in Charleston, South Carolina.

Even with social distancing, I'm committed to finding ways to connect with you and continuing to connect church community members to one another. I'm passionate about creating spaces that invite us to turn toward each other — and towards our

own deepest knowing — to cultivate compassion, care for one another, and discern the movements of the spirit. In these times, these spaces are particularly vital.

A bit about my background and personal life: I grew up in the suburbs of Kansas City in an interreligious household. My mother was raised Methodist on a farm in Kansas. My Jewish father was born in Israel and moved to the United States in 1955, when he was thirteen years old. When I was a teenager, our family discovered that the wide embrace of Unitarian Universalism was a natural fit. I've been in love with congregational life ever since.

I am blessed to share my life with my husband, Jason, and our two children, Sarah (8) and Micah (2). In my



free time, I enjoy gardening, the magic of trying a new recipe, any excuse to dance, amateur podcasting, and the board game Settlers of Catan. A wonderful bonus of our move to Fort Collins

is the opportunity to be closer to my parents-in-law, Steve and Nancy Tenbrink, who are new members of this congregation.

I am inspired as I see you working for a world that reflects the deep truth that every person is worthy of love without exception and we are all in this together. I see you calling for racial justice and collective liberation, lifting each other up during an unprecedented pandemic, and connecting with one another in the midst of masks and Zoom rooms. Thank you for inviting me into your community. I trust that we will build something beautiful together.

Warmly,  
Elaine

## 2020 Annual Meeting

by Sara Steen, Board President

We had wonderful turnout for our annual meeting this year; thank you to everyone who showed up and participated. If you missed it, you can find the slideshow on our website.

The meeting included updates from the Board and the Ministry, and the election of a new Slate of Nominees for 2020-21. The Board's report on our Building for Courageous Love project began with a reminder that we asked the architect to pause final design work back in April to give the ministry time to assess our financial situation. The ministry team assigned to this work reports that ALL of the donors they had spoken with thus far remained confident in their pledges and plan to fulfill them. The Board will ask the ministry to explore potential next steps, and return to the congregation in early Fall with our recommendation. The Board also provided updates on our ongoing work around misconduct, our evaluation of our Senior Minister, and re-aligning the endowment structure to bring it in line with policy governance.

The Ministry report outlined the four strategies the church is using to move through this time: **Worship Where You Are; Community Circles for Connection, Resourcing and Growth; Resource our Community Partners; and Steward Foothills for the Long Haul.** Worship numbers have

been very strong since moving online in mid-March; our attendance is higher than it was during this period last year, and we have been able to share our services with UUs across the country. Our 21 community circles are providing care for over 500 participants, and ongoing visioning work will further our efforts to support connections across distance. We have been able to resource our community partners in powerful new ways, including sharing our building with the Family Housing Network to house four homeless families at a time; we have had 14 different families living at Foothills over the past three months! Finally, the ministry is focused on ensuring that the choices we make now are connected to the future and to our shared Bold Vision.

Rev. Gretchen also reported on upcoming staffing changes, including several shifts resulting from our move to an all-online environment for now. We will also be losing two of our full-time employees this summer, Rev. Kristen Psaki and business administrator Jeffrey Mizell, as they transition to new life stages. We are deeply grateful for their dedicated service to Foothills and wish them the very best as they venture forth.

Thank you all for continuing to show up in all the ways that you do.

## June Financial Management Updates

by Gretchen & Jeffrey

### 2019 Extension Year Net Income:

\$2,019.02

Q1 2020 Results:

**Income:** \$269,021;

**Expense:** \$245,685

**Net:** \$23,335

(Up from what was budgeted by \$71,980)

## Financial Fun Facts for July

- **194** Households set up on auto-withdrawal
- **132** Households use text-to-give
- In the first half of 2020, we've seen **199** first time donors

## Welcome

new board members,

**Andrea Delorey**

and

**Doug Powell!**

## Member Milestones

### Celebrating:

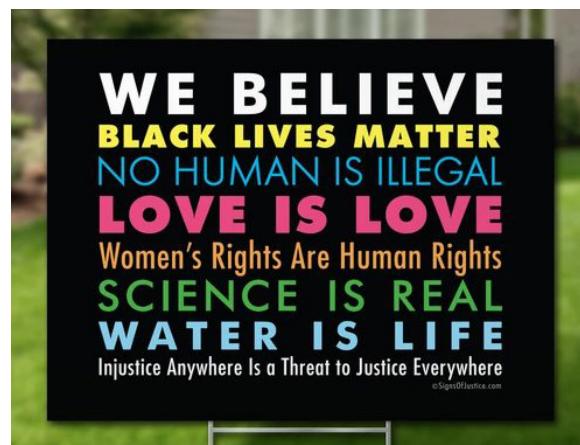
- Congratulations to Bryan Hulse (Circle 19/ Circle of Joy) on successfully passing his Journeyman's License Exam!
- Welcoming the arrival of Ansel Ellis Reinfelds-Miller, born 12:42 am, May 31, 2020, 20 inches long and 7 lbs and 9 oz., with his parents Nikola Reinfelds and Hagen Miller.
- Congratulations to our high school and college graduates! HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS: Yineth Sutton, Madigan Finz, Elijah Price, Evan Kim-Thamm, Tess Hureau, Dylan Manges, Emmett Tucker, Jace Purdy, Hannah Thiemann, Nora Beauchamp, Sandis Walter, Emma Larson, Isreal Miller, Sydney Anderson, Molly Klingner COLLEGE SENIORS: Sami Scovel, Dalena Groen, Betsy Naas, Olivia Thomas, Malcom Goldman.

### Holding in love the families and friends of those who died:

- All those who loved community leader Laura Studer, especially her partner Diana, after Laura's death in early March
- Kiri Saftler, whose father passed away of COVID-19
- Jennifer Crane, on the loss of her brother
- Charlie Tucker, whose mother died
- Chris Bettlach, on the loss of his mother

## Signs of the Times

In the month of June, we distributed 100 of these lawn signs. We've made another order, but they'll be going fast, so if you want one, email [hello@foothillsuu.org](mailto:hello@foothillsuu.org) or call the office. You can have one free, or make a donation to the Minister's Discretionary Fund.



- Deb Lindner, whose cousin died
- Sherri Coe, whose father died of COVID-19
- Al Stafford, whose aunt died
- Lynn Young and her family, after the death of her son Wes

### Happy (COVID) birthday to those who hit a new decade....

**March** Mary Lou Smith, Jack Morgan, Diana Kline, Lois Winegarner, Diane Hunt, Michelle Venus, Jacqui Wallace, Evelyn Van Maren, Mark Cunningham, Chloe Cropp, Hudson Watkins-Brown

**April** Bodhi Burns, Alex Cornwell, Abby Koss, Nick Castellon, Marla Nelson, Patti Cochran

**May** Michael Abramovich, Walter Eskridge, Jane Everham, Jane Haycraft, Pam Webber, Hugh Wallace, Lisa Pruitt, Lorna Younger, Carri Ratazzi, Suzanne Cronin, Julie Estlick, Meghan Oleson, Allison Marshall, Sean Neil-Barron, David Wells, Henry Weinmann, Dorian Johnson

**June** Hope Winkleman O'Dell, Lila Dhakal, Ryder Scully, Amber Lamb, Melissa Monforti, Erica Dickson, Patti Nash, Sandra Freeman, Fred Kerst

**Special Happy Birthday notes to** Duane McIntire **who turned 92 in April and Michael Abramovich who turned 90 in May**

### Welcome recent new members:

Bryan Hulse; Lisken and Jamie Hays.

## Welcome, Tanner!

Tanner Linden, our new Digital Marketing Manager, will be starting July 12. Look for an introduction to him in the next *Communicator!*



# 2020

## July

**1, 8, 15, 22 (Wed.) New Jim  
Crow  
Book Study**

**3 Office Closed Independence  
Day**

**11 (Sat.) Wake Up! Coffee and  
Conversation on Race**

**12 (Sun.) Food Bank @Foothills**

**16 (Thu.) Priestley Book  
Discussion**

**19-26 Faith Family Hospitality**

**26 (Sun.) Food Bank @Foothills**

## August

**8 (Sat.) Wake Up! Coffee and  
Conversation on Race**

**9 (Sun.) Food Bank @Foothills**

**20 (Thu.) Priestley Book  
Discussion**

**23 (Sun.) Food Bank @Foothills**

**30 (Sun.) Water Communion**

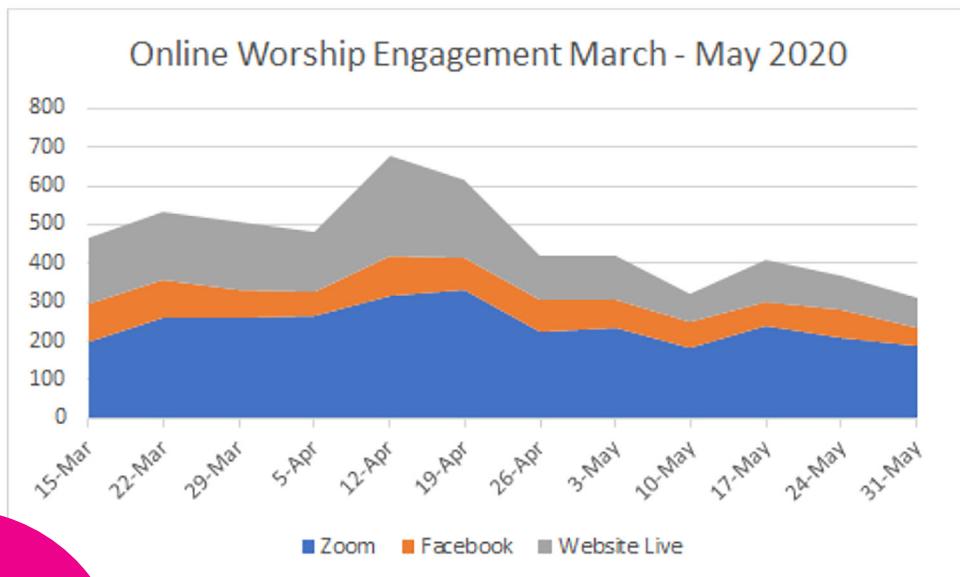
## Weekly Groups

**Sun.: Kids' Summer  
Sundays  
Youth Group Online**

**Mon.: T'ai Chi Chih  
Online Meditation  
w/Kelly Dignan**

**Wed.: AfterNoon Break  
for Preteens  
Online Meditation  
w/Kelly Dignan**

# Relevant Worship is Worship Worth Attending



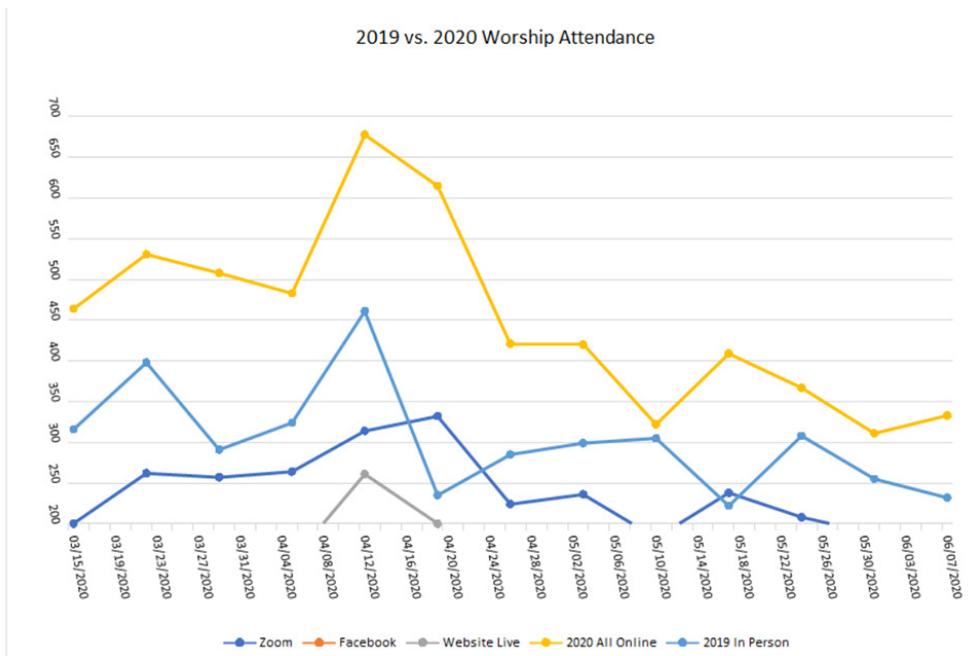
**18**

Seekers engaged  
for the first time

**8**

Newcomers  
completed Base  
Camp (Orientation)

2019 vs. 2020 Worship Attendance



## Publication Information for *The Communicator*

The Communicator is published every other month when we are in the building. During social distancing, we will publish when we can. Standard articles include:

- Note from our ministers
- Update from our Board of Trustees
- Upcoming Worship Series information
- Financial Updates
- Member Milestones
- Building News
- Data points about our congregation

Each issue will also feature two or three of our ministry areas. In the next issue, look for updates on our new staff, including

introductions and an updated organization chart!

For more timely news, visit [foothillsuu.org/subscribe](http://foothillsuu.org/subscribe).

Editors: Anna Broskie and Rev. Gretchen Haley

Feedback or Questions, email [anna@foothillsuu.org](mailto:anna@foothillsuu.org) or call the office, 970.493.5906

# COVID ConnAuction!

**Online Auction and Church Patio Silent Auction \* Live Auction on Zoom**

*by Kay Williams, Auction Team Chair*

COVID has put a kibosh on our usual exciting socially-satisfying Annual Auction! But let's do a Plan B. It will be smaller, but still fun.

**Silent Auction: Saturday, Sept. 19**, 4-7 p.m.  
(rain date 9/26) — and **Live Auction, Sunday, Sept. 20** on Zoom. The Silent Auction will be by sign-up only (10 people at a time) — social distancing and masks required on our patio! More details will follow.

If you have a donation (note: this isn't the time to get rid of the stuff you've been cleaning out during lockdown!), use this form. If you already submitted your donation "BC" (Before COVID), the Auction Team may be in touch to see if your idea is still feasible.

In normal times, we like to emphasize fun events over “stuff.” But these are definitely not normal times! We’ll need to be aware of the limitations we may have and the precautions that we need to take. (Vacation cabins are even BETTER now!) If you want to do an event at your home (this may be in 2021), we ask that you plan for fewer people (6-8 total), and maintain some distance. And masks are encouraged. We are thinking that people would only bid on an event if they are comfortable attending it. But we would also have the option for you to cancel or reschedule your event based on what COVID is doing at that time. And we would allow buyers to cancel at that time if they were then uncomfortable. Flexibility will be key. So, keep that in mind if you want to donate an event. The Auction Team reserves the right to not accept an event if we feel it would pose too much of a risk to our congregants.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Donation (Name of Item or Event)

Description: Please be complete and thorough with your description! Be creative and entertaining!

If an event is planned, please provide the date:  
(subject to COVID) \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Value based on fair market value –  
please don't inflate to anticipated bids! \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form to the church (address on back), call Kay Williams at 970-310-3093,  
or use the online form at [tinyurl.com/2020FoothillsAuctionForm](http://tinyurl.com/2020FoothillsAuctionForm)

**Deadline for submitting the donation form is Thursday, September 10th.**

## Blessing When the World Is Ending by Jan Richardson

Look, the world  
is always ending  
somewhere.

Somewhere  
the sun has come  
crashing down.

Somewhere  
it has gone  
completely dark.

Somewhere  
it has ended  
with the gun,  
the knife,  
the fist.

Somewhere  
it has ended  
with the slammed door,  
the shattered hope.

Somewhere  
it has ended

with the utter quiet  
that follows the news  
from the phone,  
the television,  
the hospital room.

Somewhere  
it has ended  
with a tenderness  
that will break  
your heart.

But, listen,  
this blessing means  
to be anything  
but morose.  
It has not come  
to cause despair.

It is simply here  
because there is nothing  
a blessing  
is better suited for  
than an ending,  
nothing that cries out more

for a blessing  
than when a world  
is falling apart.

This blessing  
will not fix you,  
will not mend you,  
will not give you  
false comfort;  
it will not talk to you  
about one door opening  
when another one closes.

It will simply  
sit itself beside you  
among the shards  
and gently turn your face  
toward the direction  
from which the light  
will come,  
gathering itself  
about you  
as the world begins  
again.

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