



Minister's Report

April 7, 2021

Monthly Worship Theme: Transformation

Opening Words: ** The Journey by Mary Oliver

	Ministerial Observations	Minsterial Wonderings	Ministerial Flags	Ministerial Celebrations
Governance and Leadership	RPG continues to consider safety guidelines for reopening, including: summer worship and outdoor gatherings, RE Pod+ events, and beginning thoughts about Fall worship.	Nominating Committee is all set with new members and has 3 potential new board members. We still need a new Moderator.	The Finance Committee has begun to lead conversations about the church comparison study results. This promises to be a lively and engaging topic, with wide-ranging viewpoints.	The Canvass team has shown great leadership, once again, with exceptional videos, training, and ongoing canvasser encouragement.
Staff	Alisa's last full day was April 2 nd . She worked hard in the past weeks to train Ebiere and was impressed with her quick learning and excellent skills. Ebiere has now taken over all admin responsibilities.	Laci continues to work on setting up family "Pod+" gatherings and other events, and has successfully recruited two new RE committee members, Sally Ruderman and Matt O'Rourke.	Emily Wheeler will continue to do video editing for our prerecorded and Summer worship services.	We welcomed Ebiere Omoregie as our new parish admin this month. She has already become an indispensable part of our staff team!

Worship, Ritual and Ceremony	We will have a “New to UU” gathering on April 13. We hope to have a new member Sunday in April or May.	The worship team is beginning to imagine what Fall hybrid worship might look like, with limited numbers in the pews, prerecorded singing and continued live streaming.	Worship team met with professional production consultants to make plans for video, lighting, audio and other improvements for our live streamed worship in the Fall. We expect to be able to provide high-quality hybrid worship.	Rev. Lisa and Emily Cherry hosted a moving Pandemic Anniversary event online, offering remembrances of the past year.
Congregational Life and Spiritual Development	The solar panels and Building and Grounds conversations highlighted some divides in the congregation, with regard to how we think about money and our endowment. People are clearly grateful to be having these conversations.	The Pastoral Care team found the congregational calls very worthwhile; we plan to do them again this Fall.	Small groups appear to be thriving, according to their small group leaders. Some will continue into the Fall; others will end in June. We should add more groups in the Fall and Winter.	Our Spring Festival event on Saturday, April 3 rd 2-4 pm was well-attended (approx. 70 people) and enjoyed by all. More in-person outdoor events will be planned for Spring/Summer.
Community Engagement and Social Justice	Common Hope is planning two potential trips to Guatemala – one in 2022, possibly for adults and one in 2023, for parents and teens. More information will be forthcoming this Spring.	Climate justice is working on several “green church” initiatives. Solar panels discussion, in combination with finance presentation was sobering.	There is still active conversation about the engagement of First Parish in investing with Ujima at the Racial Justice Committee, either as a congregation or individually.	Donations to an “egg fund” were collected at the Spring Festival event and delivered about 13,000 eggs to La Colaborativa families. Over \$1000 has already been raised, with more coming in.

Finance and Administration	We are in the process of applying for our first PPP loan forgiveness and have received our next PPP loan.	Canvass has made it to over 80% of its 2022 goal.	The church comparison "Road Show" was very well-received at the Climate Justice and RJAC meetings. Kudos to the team who prepared and presented it!	We have a Fall online auction chair! Debba Andree has agreed to lead the auction team; there is already a lot of excitement and some great donation ideas.
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**** The Journey**

*One day you finally knew
 what you had to do, and began,
 though the voices around you
 kept shouting
 their bad advice—
 though the whole house
 began to tremble
 and you felt the old tug
 at your ankles.
 "Mend my life!"
 each voice cried.
 But you didn't stop.
 You knew what you had to do,
 though the wind pried
 with its stiff fingers*

*at the very foundations,
though their melancholy
was terrible.*

*It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.*

*But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do—
determined to save
the only life you could save.*

—*Mary Oliver*