

Pastoral Care Associates Annual Report 2020-21

Pastoral Care Associates: Moe Daniels, Hal Holway, Kim Steele, Diane Wolfe, Steve Ladew, Kathy Fletcher, and Jim Woolsey

The purpose of the Pastoral Care Associates (PCAs) is to extend the reach of the minister in providing pastoral presence and care to members and friends of the congregation and to support the congregants in their joys and sorrows. The PCAs meet regularly with Rev. Allison Palm and Ben Atherton-Zeman and have been active since September 2012.

The PCAs take turns being the designated PCA during Sunday worship services. In this role we collect Candles Cards before the service, light candles during the “Caring Candles” time in our worship service, follow up as needed with those who submit a card, and send out the weekly email with the candles to the UU Cares email list. Throughout the year, PCAs offered care by staying in touch with those who can no longer attend church services regularly, listening to and holding space for those who needed someone to talk to, sending cards, reaching out by telephone and email, and visiting as appropriate. We have also organized members of the congregation to provide meals for short periods of time for members who are in need. Rides have not been offered due to COVID-19 constraints.

This year, the PCAs started the year with an online training, including training on the technology needed to communicate with one another, and restriction requirements enacted to protect ourselves and others from COVID-19. The PCAs and staff use Trello to track pastoral needs in the congregation. Training for all PCAs will take place again in August.

With the continuation of online church and the need for social distancing due to COVID-19, the PCAs modified their work somewhat, refraining from in-person visits. The caring circles program was dropped after several months since many recipients didn’t respond when we initiated calls.

We look forward to restrictions being lifted to allow us to better serve the congregation.

No one is leaving the PCAs at the end of this church year except for our beloved Ministerial Intern, Ben Atherton-Zeman. It has been delightful working with him. We will miss him, but know some lucky congregation will be blessed to welcome him as their settled minister!

The Pastoral Care Associates are always considering how best to serve the needs of the congregation. If you have ideas, feel free to reach out to Rev. Allison or one of the Associates.