

**Peoples Church
Unitarian Universalist
Annual Report
May 16, 2021**

**4980 Gordon Ave. NW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52405**

www.peoplesuu.org

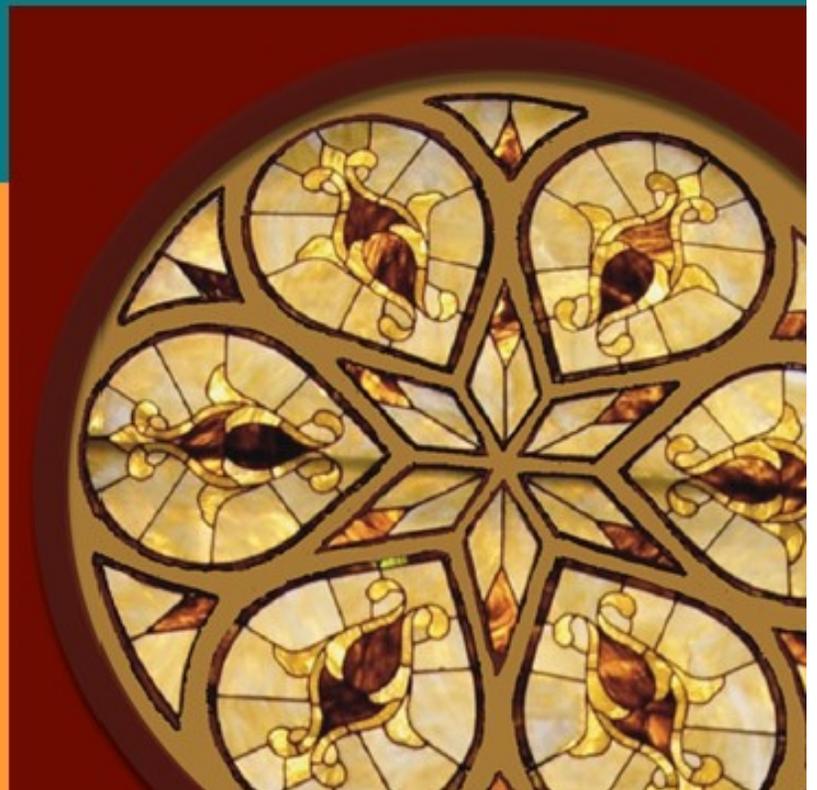


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No report submitted by the following:

- ◆ CUUPS
- ◆ Interior Design
- ◆ Membership
- ◆ Paraministry

BOARD OF TRUSTEES & STAFF

Church Officers

Marion Patterson, President

Erin Ogle, Secretary

Gary McGraw, Treasurer

Trustees

Charlie Cizio

Sue Davis

Erin Ogle

Marta Hershner

Kris Davis

Staff

Reverend Rebecca Hinds, Developmental Minister

Christine Kullander, Operations Coordinator

David Wise, Director of Faith Formation

Brian Reeves, Custodian

AGENDA

- ◆ Call to Order
- ◆ Chalice Lighting
- ◆ President's Report
- ◆ Developmental Minister's Report
- ◆ Developmental Ministry Evaluation report
- ◆ Faith Formation Director's Report
- ◆ Treasurer's Report
- ◆ Stewardship Team Report
- ◆ Social Justice Team Update
- ◆ VOTE ITEM: New Board of Trustee Members
 - ◆ -Marcy Mattison
 - ◆ -Steve Hershner
 - ◆ -Susan Davis
- ◆ VOTE ITEM: Board President
 - ◆ -Marion Patterson
- ◆ VOTE ITEM: Nominating Committee Members
 - ◆ -Bryan Davis
 - ◆ -Lu Wilcox
 - ◆ -Geoff Johnson
- ◆ Other Business for the Good of the Church
- ◆ Closing Words and Extinguish Chalice
- ◆ Adjourn

MINISTER'S REPORT

Developmental Minister—Rev. Rebecca Hinds

Five years ago, we made a commitment to journey together towards the fulfillment of your five developmental ministry goals. Since then, we have made considerable progress in all five areas!

This success, and the strength of Peoples Church, were made abundantly clear to me this year as we lived through a global pandemic, national unrest around racism and police brutality, and a devastating derecho. For example:

- ◆ Our membership stayed steady and we even gained a few new members who found us online!
- ◆ After the derecho, the whole community came together to take care of one another and clean up the church grounds.
 - ◆ The damage to our property and building were repaired and the process was well managed by staff and an abundance of volunteers.
- ◆ We deepened our commitment to anti-racism work and partnering with others in the community. We continued to read, learn, and talk about the issues of our time.
 - ◆ Many of us showed up for local protests in the wake of the George Floyd murder.
 - ◆ We also openly and publicly supported the Advocates for Social Justice, among other local groups working to end racism.
- ◆ We discovered that our new Policy Governance model is really working. During all the ups and downs and crisis we faced, we remained clear on issues of authority and accountability and got through it.
- ◆ A dedicated, skilled task force completed a full evaluation of our Developmental Ministry. (I hope you had a chance to review their report which came out in April!)
- ◆ We ended 2020 with a surplus and exceeded our 2021 pledge goal.
- ◆ And finally, we are living into our values by installing Photovoltaics (Solar Panels) on the roof of the church this summer.

All of this during an incredibly difficult year!

So, what's next?

If you ask me, Peoples Church, you are ready to leave Developmental Ministry behind and move forward with grace and confidence. You are ready to call a minister. And that minister cannot be me. As you know, I will be leaving this summer to accept a call to serve the Unitarian Church in Charleston, SC.

I know this is the right thing for both of us, but I am incredibly sad to leave. I love you. I will miss you. And I believe your next chapter as a congregation will be strong, healthy, and stable. I wish you the best of luck in your interim ministry and your future search.

Thank you for everything. Thank you.

Yours in faith,
Rev. Rebecca

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Board President—Marion Patterson

“Not everything is seen from a distance.
That is why we need both overview and attention to details.”

These past five years, policy governance has provided Peoples Church with this structure of overview and attention to details. The result is a deeper perspective of our wants, needs, accomplishments, and vision.

The board's emphasis is on outward vision, encouraging diverse viewpoints, strategic leadership, clear distinction of board and minister roles, collective decisions, the future informed by historic wisdom, and being proactive.

In short, empowering others and supporting the details.

These practical sounding areas are actually spiritual equipment we use to honor the work of past boards and our sources of authority – You!

We have grown into Policy Governance. Core values are foundational to the board's monthly meetings and communications. The mission and stated ends guide activities of the church's various teams. What difference do we want to make? For whom? At what cost efficiency/priority?

Board meetings begin and end with centering readings, are focused, and include time to get to know each other. Board members complete tasks. We discuss then speak as one voice, delegate to the executive team, monitor, and link with the congregation. We encourage members to attend.

As you read each report, may you appreciate the details of all that staff and teams do. This is how Peoples has worked together for success into the future. The unsung stories of many hands guiding us forward. I thank each of you.

Perhaps because of what 2020-2021 has brought our way, we have affirmed our strength.

Henry Ford stated: "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

Marion Patterson
Board President

FAITH FORMATION

Director of Faith Formation—David Wise

What an interesting year this has been! When we gathered for this meeting a year ago, we were just beginning to fully realize how devastating this pandemic could and would be!

Faith Formation has continued. It has been very strange not being able to hear the voices and see the faces in person. I keep looking at the bulletin board outside my office and hoping for the day when we can have the kids all together and new pictures can be colored. We know it will come. We just don't know when that will be.

This past year we worked our way through the book *This Book Is Anti-Racist* by Tiffany Jewell. The book is an opportunity to learn about identities, true histories, and anti-racism work. There are 20 lessons on how to wake up, take action, and do the work. Each family in the program has a copy of the book and have been encouraged to read through as a family and talk about the questions in each chapter.

We have also continued the use of Soulful Home and added Chalice Home. These Soul Matters products are shared with everyone in the congregation, and I encourage you to take a look and even share with friends and family!

Plans are being made for a safe summer program. Families will be encouraged to visit area museums or attractions, while practicing safety guidelines, and then we will gather for a time of discussion. In order to make sure all are able to participate program funds will be used for admission costs if needed by a family.

Next year is a mystery in so many ways. At this point we do not know if Faith Formation will continue to be on-line or if in-person will be safe. Tentative plans are being contemplated for both options. I hope for a return to in-person however we must be absolutely sure that it is safe!

A huge part of my time this year has been spent on the tech issues of the church. Most weeks I “run” the Zoom meeting that is used for worship. I have also been responsible for recruiting, training, and scheduling the tech volunteers who assist with the service either in the sanctuary or from home. Thanks to Bryan, Cate, Deb, Gary, Kathleen, and Robyn for all of their help this past year!

Some weeks have been rough, some almost perfect, and many in the great middle! Through it all the Zooming of the services has allowed Peoples people to keep a connection with each other. I am thrilled to have played a small role in making sure we were on Zoom and YouTube most of the time to allow that connection to happen. I know it has been challenging for many of you learning all these new tech things. You have done an amazing job!!

Plans are being made for the future! With the hope of re-opening the building for worship for everyone we realize that for some coming into the building is not practical. Since we began Zooming our worship, we

FAITH FORMATION (Cont.)

Director of Faith Formation—David Wise

have had visitors and friends from all over the country join us. We have had those traveling for leisure and for work tune in on Sundays. And for those who are challenged at times and can't get out as easily as they once did; Zoom and YouTube have been tremendous friends to allow them to participate. Once we are back in the building, we don't want to forget all of those Peoples people! Conversations and plans have begun to make the sanctuary video friendly. A task force of Gary McGraw, Bill Hart, Bryan Davis, and Kathleen Mavity have joined me to look at ideas and plans. We look forward to working together to help Peoples nurture the flame in even more places!

Finally, on a personal note. The last four years here at Peoples have been some of my happiest in ministry. I am so thankful for my relationship with Rebecca. The leadership she has brought to Peoples has been amazing and something I am going to greatly miss!

David Wise

Director of Faith Formation

Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist

OFFICE REPORT

Operations Coordinator —Christine Kullander

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

Office Communications

Generate weekly newsletter – either eWeekly or the Voice. Implemented style changes in the Voice.

- ◆ Ensure the Order of Service email is sent each week.
- ◆ Prepare worship slides.
- ◆ Create flyers to promote events in our newsletters.
- ◆ Post content to our new website
- ◆ Assist with email and phone inquiries.

Office Administration

- ◆ Assist the Minister and DRE as needed.
- ◆ Supporting the Board of Trustees with the Annual Meeting mailing and Annual Report compilation.
- ◆ Gathering material to support the Stewardship team in the annual campaign.
- ◆ Liaison with Voices of Christ in rental and use of our building.
- ◆ Ensured the annual UUA Congregation Certification and the Biennial Report to the Iowa Secretary of State were submitted in a timely manner.
- ◆ Maintain worship music and worship calendar spreadsheets.
- ◆ Process payment for guest musicians
- ◆ Keep CCS Worship Cast license reporting current.
- ◆ Ensure timely submission of Gazette advertisements for Easter and Christmas.

Facilities

- ◆ Ensuring sufficient supply of disinfecting supplies.
- ◆ Maintain the facility book – building systems; maintenance; repair information.
- ◆ Post Derecho:
 - ◆ Documented our losses.
 - ◆ Liaison with Church Mutual
 - ◆ Secured bids.
 - ◆ Working with vendors to see completion of work.
- ◆ Activated a free water alarm system from Church Mutual – sensors are located next to the hot water heater and the sump pump in the kitchen closet.
- ◆ Created a spreadsheet to track gas and electric utility use and cost over the last 3, going on 4, years.
- ◆ Ensured annual inspections were conducted – lift, emergency lights, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, fire panel.

Other

It has been an honor and pleasure to work under Rev. Rebecca's leadership the last two and a half years. I will greatly miss her.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer—Gary McGraw

2020/2021 Active Members	Bob Butikofer, Judy Price, Rich Patterson, Doug Ogle, Charles Cizio (Pledge Treasurer), Rev. Rebecca Hinds (ex-officio)
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Job Description of the Group:

The Finance Committee is responsible for the financial activities of the church, including:

- ◆ Weekly accounting and deposit of Sunday collection and other income.
- ◆ Monthly review of bookkeeper reports, monitoring income and expenses and the church balance sheet, including endowment activity, providing monthly reports to the Board of Trustees (BoT).
- ◆ Oversee investments with RBC Money Fund and monitor UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF) and the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation (GCRCF).
- ◆ Provide advice to BoT and the Minister on financial matters.
- ◆ Develop church policies and practices for financial operations.
- ◆ Development of annual budget, including support to the Stewardship Council.

Activities of Note:

In 2020-2021 the church continued in its Developmental Ministry goal of achieving long-term stability.

- ◆ We finished 2020 with a **surplus** of \$ 12,195! This was due to strong pledge payments from our members, endowment income and rental income from Voices of Christ Ministry. This surplus was allocated to future ministerial search expenses.
- ◆ We have maintained adequate cash reserves, while funding building improvements, such as new high-efficiency lighting. These investments will save us money in the long run and contribute to being a greener congregation.
- ◆ Derecho repair damage (roof & siding) will be largely covered with insurance, but we have received contributions to pay for deductibles.
- ◆ We will be installing photo voltaic solar panels on the roof after the storm repairs are completed. The funding for the PV project is the result of the generosity of several members and will result in substantial long-term savings.
- ◆ Our Endowments now total in excess of \$1M and are contributing a significant portion of our operating income.
- ◆ We have created a committee description to continue on our policy-based governance journey.

Continuing Needs:

Additional people to help with the weekly deposit, join the committee, or participate in Stewardship Campaign. Besides providing an important service to Peoples, serving on the Finance Committee provides an opportunity to learn about the functioning of non-profit organizations, which is useful experience, both personally and professionally.

MINISTRY TEAMS

Ministry Teams

- 14 Faith Formation Team
- 15 Good Neighbors Team
- 16 Heritage Team
- 17 Social Justice Team
- 18 Stewardship Team
- 19 Van Vechten Guild
- 20 Worship Arts Team

FAITH FORMATION TEAM

Chair	Lu Wilcox
2020/2021 Active Members	Amy Bostwick, Lu Wilcox, Jackie Wedeking
Staff	David Wise

Job Description of the Group: Reflecting the mission of the church and our third end statement, the Faith Formation Council's mission is to support the Faith Formation Program in teaching our youth to articulate the UU faith and live it in the world by leading compassionate lives through spiritual growth and just action. The Faith Formation Council focuses not only on the current activities and lessons taught in classes, but also on sustainability of the programming, increasing connection between youth and adult members of the church, and continued growth of programming and facilities in the future.

Activities of Note: Faith Formation has occurred throughout the year. The Council has not been actively meeting.

Continuing Needs: Once it is safe to resume in-person events Faith Formation will do so and plans will be made. There is still a strong desire to complete a Peace Garden that is both meditative and a safe place for kids in the near future.

GOOD NEIGHBORS TEAM

Chair	Kathy Juba
2020/2021 Active Members	Amy Bostwick, Kris Davis , Kathy Juba

Good Neighbors provides church members with occasional help of the type that a “good neighbor” might do. Services include supplying a meal, transporting to church or medical appointments, assistance with moving, yard work, shoveling snow, light household repairs, house cleaning, pet sitting or other small, one-time tasks.

Activities of Note:

- ◆ This was a less active year for Good Neighbors. Approximately five people provided rides for medical appointments and errands as well as assistance with packing to move for two members.
- ◆ These services were provided in about 44 appointments spread throughout the year.
- ◆ We also arranged meals for Rev. Rebecca and her family when they first contracted covid. Many Peoples’ people participated in this.

Continuing Needs:

Good Neighbors is always looking for additional people to “lead compassionate lives” at Peoples by volunteering to provide transportation, supply a meal, or perform any of the other Good Neighbor tasks on an “as needed” basis. (Forms to sign up are always available outside the church office.) We would also appreciate more volunteers to be the monthly contacts for Good Neighbors. These volunteers do not need to provide the services, only to arrange for others to provide them.

HERITAGE TEAM

Chair	Clarice Krippner
2020/2021 Active Members	Jan Federer, Bill Hart, Marcy Mattison, Bev Philpott, Joye Winey,

Mission or Focus of Group:

Collecting and organizing historical materials of the congregation and organizing the Heritage room.

Activities of Note:

- ◆ January and February of 2020 were spent organizing materials and space.
- ◆ The committee has not met since because of Covid 19.

Other Comments:

Fellow members of Peoples,

We are saddened by the news that Rev. Rebecca Hinds will be moving on to her next assignment and maybe a little frightened about what that means for our church. We are all going to miss her, her family, and her talents; but we are well equipped to move into the future.

The Archives committee, which has spent the last decade studying the history of our church, wants to remind you that we have faced much bigger challenges in the past: financial crisis, difficult staffing issues, a decaying building, congregational discord as well as a flood and a pandemic just to name a few. The church faced those challenges and soldiered on. Our congregations kept the institution alive and worked on social justice needs: poverty, civil rights, peace initiatives, reproductive rights, marriage equality amongst others.

Because of Rev. Rebecca’s talents and work with us, we are well equipped to move forward.

With good structures for governance, financial management, and staffing, and a clear definition of our mission, we are ready. We have cleaned, repaired, repurposed, redecorated and made our home more energy efficient, usable and attractive. And we have continued to go on with our social justice work.

Our work is not done, but through Rev. Rebecca’s leadership we have the tools and courage to move forward and become the church we need to be.

With love and gratitude,

Bev Philpott
Clarice Krippner

Jan Federer Joye Winey

for the Archive Committee

SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM

Chair	Marcia Swift
2020/2021 Active Members	Jan Federer, Rose Gabe, Kathy Juba, Clarice Krippner, Laura McGraw, Paulette Montague, Jim Wasta, Jo Wasta

The Social Justice Council each year identifies social justice priorities for the congregation and how to make them actionable and build community partnerships. These social justice issues, along with a slate of nominees for the First Sunday Plate Collection are presented at the December Congregational Meeting for voting. The Social Justice Council plans events and activities each year that further our understanding of a social justice issue and addresses social injustice, equity, and inclusion.

Activities of Note:

- ◆ The SJC participated in the Juneteenth Celebration sponsored by the African American Museum of Iowa for the third year in row; this time, it was via Zoom due to the pandemic.
- ◆ We hosted a webinar with Dr Kesho Scott on racism and rural Iowa with 80+ attendees.
- ◆ We supported the Advocates for Social Justice with donations and participation in Black Lives Matter rallies.
- ◆ After the Derecho of August of 2020 we were blessed with support from the Iowa Unitarian Universalist Witness & Advocacy Network with donations from the IC UU Society and the Storm Lake UU Fellowship. We sent these donations on to local groups in the community providing relief to citizens who were most impacted by the Derecho.
- ◆ We continued to collaborate with Bethel AME Church as an active participant in the Allen, Lincoln, Douglass Project.
- ◆ The SJC held Forums about community issues, being an anti-racist, and with the groups and organizations that were recipients of our First Sunday Plate Collections.
- ◆ We are hosting a book club on Caste: The Origins Of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson.
- ◆ We continue to provide land for our African immigrant neighbors to grow their crops. We continue to provide \$2,000 each year to the Ecumenical Center to assist individuals and families with meeting their basic needs.

Continuing Needs:

- ◆ The SJC always welcomes new members.
- ◆ In 2021 The SJC will be guiding the congregation in understanding the 8th Principle with the goal of formally adopting it at the December Congregational Meeting.

STEWARDSHIP TEAM

Chair	Judy Price
2020/2021 Active Members	Judy Price, Charles Cizio, Bob Butakofer, Susan Davis, Brenda Meshak, Bryan Davis
Staff	Rev. Rebecca Hinds

The essential functions of the Stewardship Team are promoting generosity within the congregation and conducting the pledge drive for the annual operating budget.

Activities of Note:

- ◆ Pledges comprise roughly 75% to 80% of Peoples Church UU yearly income. But it is you, the members of Peoples Church who determine how successful each year's stewardship campaign will be and in 2020 you responded magnificently! The Team innovated with video presentations and virtual strategies but it was you who came through with the highest pledge total in recent memory, \$166,840. Well done!

VAN VECHTEN GUILD

Chair	Ann Woodward
2020/2021 Active Members	25-30 members

Job Description of the Group:

Prefer the word focus or mission; do not consider that we have a “job.” Van Vechten Guild provides support to the church, members of the church, and the greater community. The Guild is a pledging unit to the church and makes other contributions to the church when needed.

Activities of Note:

- ◆ With the Covid pandemic this year, our meetings were either held outdoors or on Zoom.
- ◆ We met twice at the Noelridge Pavilion.
- ◆ Presentations were made to the Guild by Carl Rush, representing RISE, and Lisa Williams, representing Trees Forever.
- ◆ We will also have a presentation in May from Jennifer Leatherby , a current board member of IAAF.
- ◆ A drive-thru cookie exchange was held in December, which was enjoyed by many.
- ◆ The Guild held a successful pecan sale in the fall, profiting \$811.00.
- ◆ \$500 of our \$1000 pledge was paid and the remaining \$500 designated for church derecho recovery.
- ◆ Contributions of \$434 each were paid in 2019-2020 to RISE and Mission of Hope.
- ◆ In 2020-2021 contributions are being made to Trees Forever and IAAF.
- ◆ The Guild also continues to support the Linn County Chapter of the United Nations Association. Our donation is \$50.00 and our liaison to the organization is Dorothy Hershner.

Continuing Needs:

A meeting place at Peoples Church, or access to zoom for monthly meetings and an advertisement of meetings in the weekly and monthly church newsletters.

Other Comments:

- ◆ The Guild mourns the loss of two members: Doris Hamilton and Janet Obando. They are remembered with great fondness and respect. In both cases, significant memorial contributions were made to the Guild. Members are in discussion about how to use the funds. Assisting the church with an outside play area or landscaping seems most likely. Both Doris and Janet loved flowers.
- ◆ The Guild invites anyone to attend our meetings. Meetings are held at noon on the second Monday of each month – September through May. We do not meet in January. Dues are \$15.00 with a portion of dues contributed to a non-profit group or agency.

WORSHIP ARTS TEAM

Committee or Group	Worship Arts
Chair	open
2020/2021 Active Members	Rev. Jorge Montes Clausen, Bryan Davis, RC Eichhacker, Jim Federer, Kathleen Mavity, Deborah Maynard, Paulette Montague, Angie Pierce-Jennings, Cate Sheller; Rev. Rebecca Hinds and DFF David Wise

Job Description of the Group:

The Worship Associates work with the Minister to intentionally craft and participate in worship services. The goal is to help listeners, no matter what their spiritual path, to connect with something bigger than themselves (AKA the Divine, for the non-humanists 😊).

Activities of Note:

- Brainstorm ideas for sermon topics in our monthly WA meetings with the Minister.
- Serve as reader and overall assistant when the Minister leads service.
- Create and lead the service, including the sermon, on the Minister's Sunday off. (This is on a purely voluntary basis - no one is ever assigned a service.)
- Participate in a class called *The Shared Pulpit* in order to become more intentional and effective lay ministers when it's our turn to lead a service.
- Stay sane when using Zoom to provide those services.

Continuing Needs:

People who are interested in exploring this type of lay ministry, can commit to attend and actively participate in monthly planning meetings, and are willing to assist at services and to push past any discomfort to share their unique message by leading an occasional service.

Other Comments:

The Worship Arts team is like a mini-Peoples when it comes to spiritual diversity. We've got your pagan, your recovering Catholics, and your Buddhist-leaning humanist, among others. As far as backgrounds are concerned, there are people who in past lives have been engineers, therapists, teachers, nurses, and more.

In other words, there is no "right type" of person who can meaningfully and powerfully contribute to spiritual life at Peoples. If you've been telling yourself you "don't have what it takes to do that"...just stop that right now. Talk to any of the current WA team members and see if it's time to expand your comfort zone just a tad.

