

GROUND'S MINISTRY ANNUAL REPORT, 2019-2020

Chair: Susan Baker (George Lally was co-chair for part of the year)

Members: George Lally, Amanda Haynes, Valerie Bidwell, Joe Powers, Dean Mook, Walter Pirie, Connor Hicks

On-site members: Alyssa Short, Linda Cherry, Greg Evanylo, David Warner

Purpose of Ground's Ministry

**To create and maintain a place of beauty and welcome that provides spiritual and emotional sustenance for members, friends, neighbors, and other visitors

**Consistent with the Unitarian Universalist principle seven, *'respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part,* to serve as stewards of the land and supporting its flora and fauna

Achievements:

*placement of landscape timbers to prevent erosion on the slope by the parking lot

*participation in Friends of the Library Garden Tour with over 300 guests touring the grounds and over 35 congregants helping prepare for and stage UUC's part in the event

*construction and landscaping of the memorial walkway and wall to acknowledge famous/significant UU's and their contributions to a better world

*enlarging natural areas; doubling size of the pollinator garden

*Addition of 14 new trees to aid in reducing the carbon footprint of the church and to provide habitat/food for wildlife (tree sponsorship program); landscape elements were added to the tree plantings

*transplanting of additional trees and shrubs to promote land management and wildlife use

*additional signage to inform visitors to the grounds where to find ground's features and the philosophy of the ground's ministry

*procuring three beehives (on loan from Richard Reid); constructing fencing and adding signage around the hives; adding a solar panel (R. Reid) for the electric fencing wire

*replacement of six damaged bumper guards in the small upper parking lot

*painting and repair of seven picnic tables

* removal of three dead/dying trees along the entrance driveway; replaced with a viburnum hedge

The primary achievement of the year is keeping up with maintaining almost six acres of church property. Without volunteers this would be impossible. Our volunteers are appreciated and loved!

Lessons Learned: Much can be accomplished with help and a can-do attitude. UU's are the greatest!

Expenses:

Anticipate using all of the \$3250 landscape budget and the \$1,000 mowing budget. Anticipate spending about \$200 of the \$875 playground budget (\$500 of the \$875 is supposed to go into the carry-over fund for new playground

equipment; I don't know if this will happen because of budget stresses) and have used \$125 of the \$600 snow removal budget. At this time about \$70 of the \$200 labyrinth budget has been spent

Grounds Supports the UUC Mission and Vision:

We welcome neighbors and community members to join congregants in walking the grounds. We show hospitality to all through our actions. The grounds speak for themselves for the spirituality of the outdoors and the joy and peace that can be found there. Critters, large and small, co-habituate on the grounds and play a crucial role in the web of life.

Goals for the Coming Year:

- *make further improvements for erosion control and wildlife habitat (We are caretakers.)
- *designate volunteers to specific maintenance duties. Enlarge cadre of volunteers, particularly on the spring and fall workdays
- *train ground's recruits in management of the grounds for a time when members of the ground's committee retire from duties.
- *provide ongoing educational information about the beehives on the church property
- *improve the bonding of the congregation to the church grounds and usage of the grounds by providing information and photos of what is happening on the grounds via the monthly newsletter and features in the list-serve messages.
- *replace remaining bumper guards in the small, lower parking lot.
- *maintain what we have on the grounds (mulching, mowing, trimming, fertilizing, weeding, etc.)

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Baker, Chair

George Lally, retired co-chair