

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

## Accomplishments

As classes began this year, our religious education program took a meaningful step forward with the hiring of a new RE director, whose role was expanded by five additional hours per week, and the return of the OWL class for our 8th and 9th graders. Education flourished beyond the children's wing as well, with Caring Hands training equipping members to support one another, sermon training preparing congregants to share their voices from the pulpit, and a noon arts and lectures series exploring the history of our building.

Music and worship deepened throughout the year. We increased the music director's hours by one, watched Guitars Aloud expand with new instruments, and welcomed a new electric piano into Hattie Porter Hall, where we also installed a permanent audio system. The choir has grown noticeably in depth and expression, our sanctuary AV equipment received a long-awaited upgrade, and we began posting YouTube videos of services without having to cut out the music. New chairs in the sanctuary made worship more accessible to everyone.

Our community widened in visible ways. We welcomed 14 new members, introduced new member lunches, and recruited new greeters straight from the welcoming table. A coffee-hour table was set up specifically to encourage people to sit and connect, and congregants gathered for a family campout and a group outing to a San Jose Giants game. Small group participation increased, and we added a new small group to the lineup.

Stewardship and generosity defined much of the year. We ran a well-organized and successful stewardship campaign, doubled our service auction goal, and watched the auction itself become a real builder of congregational connection. We finished the projects funded by the Capital Campaign, and our partner church visit was supported with ten scholarships so more members could take part.

The building itself was cared for inside and out. The interior was refreshed, the back door was upgraded to electronic locks, and broader security improvements included better fences and a garbage can lock. Fire alarm repairs are underway. Outside, the drought-tolerant garden in front of the church was improved, and a new labyrinth was installed for contemplative use by members and visitors alike.

Our witness in the wider world was strong and steady. The Immigration Accompaniment Team was formed, we restarted our sandwich-making activity for unhoused neighbors, and we held several successful Service is Our Prayer days.

We launched Action Sundays, organized a SUN-day service, gathering, march, and rally, supported No Kings, marched in the Pride parade jointly with other congregations, and shared an InterFaith Booth at Pride day.

We also took meaningful steps as an employer and an organization. We pay our employees above the living wage and implemented sick leave for staff. The Nominating Committee filled ten positions, the Board adopted a new Dog Policy, and rental inquiries for our space have increased. With gratitude, we conferred Minister Emerita status on Rev. Lindi Ramsden, honoring a relationship that continues to shape who we are.

### What we didn't accomplish

Even with all we accomplished, our religious education program is not yet as lively as we want it to be, and that remains a clear area for growth. Related hopes for our young people and families also went unrealized: we didn't manage to launch the intergenerational activities we'd envisioned, more regular family events stayed on the wish list, and a mystery dinner and play that several folks were excited about never came together.

On the staffing side, we did not succeed in raising the music director's hours to twenty, nor were we able to provide medical benefits for the position, both of which we'd hoped to address this year.

Several organizational and administrative projects also remain unfinished. Rental policies still need to be finalized, the membership directory is due for an update, our website is overdue for improvements, and QuickBooks needs to be reorganized. We did not stand up a communications team or outreach effort, and the Right Relations Team still awaits its re-organization.

Our connections, both within and beyond our walls, have room to deepen. We didn't connect with Third Street as fully as we could have, partner church teas didn't happen, the circular suppers we'd hoped to revive didn't get off the ground, and college outreach and collaboration remained an unmet opportunity. We also still owe ourselves better, more thoughtful ways to honor the needs of all the people in our congregation.

Finally, a smaller but visible item lingered on the list: replacing, lowering, and adding a lock to the flag out front.

## What we hope to do next year: our top 5 priorities

- 1) Website Refresh and Committee Creation: We discussed formation of a Communications and Outreach Team, and found volunteers to lead it.
- 2) Promote and Plan Well for GA 2027 in San Jose: Amanda Sullivan and Ro Morris are on the planning committee for the UUA's General Assembly in 2027, to be held at the San Jose Convention Center. We will be hearing more about how to volunteer and make our church's involvement in this event a success.
- 3) Excellent compensation and benefits for all our staff
- 4) Specialty Programs: We would like to provide programs that provide outreach to the community, such as Yoga, Meditation, and Sound Bath, among others.
- 5) BIPOC (Black Indigenous People Of Color) Caucus Creation: We would like a group for BIPOC church members to meet each other, and learn each other's stories and traditions.

Members of the Board, OMC, and Noming Committee came together on April 25, 2026 for a leadership retreat (see photo below). This report is compiled with the inputs of everyone who participated.



