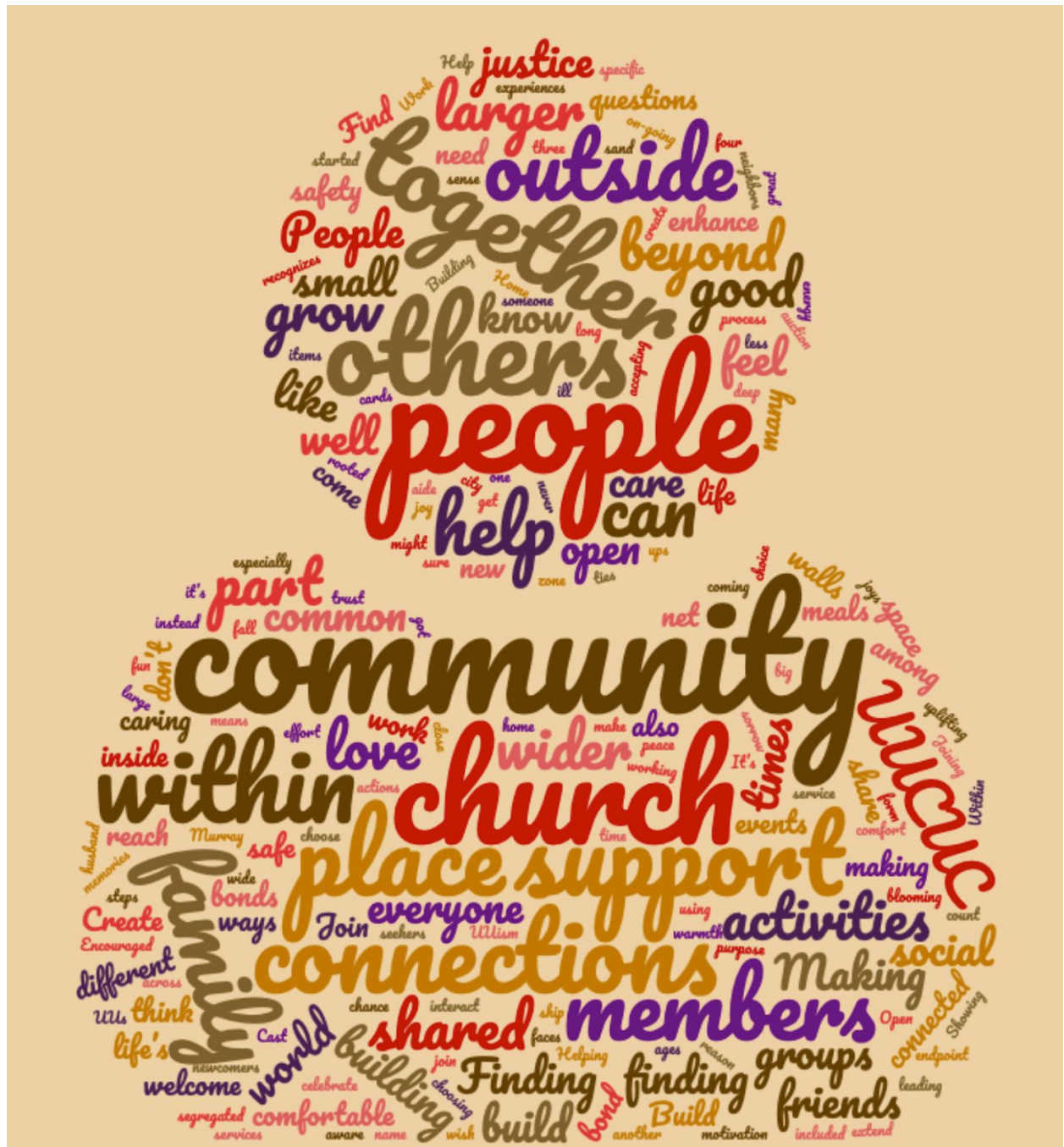


Transcription by Kelly Halcom of 61 responses written on blue inserts in OOS during reflection periods on each of the four statements of UUCUC mission during January 12th, 2020 Sunday Service. Word clouds created by Ben Galewsky for each of the Four Mission elements: Build Community, Promote Justice, Seek Inspiration, Find Peace.

## Build Community



***Verbatim reflections from our congregants on what Build Community means for them***

Being with people who share similar views about the world and are open to those who think differently. A place where people feel welcome and less alone. A place that takes care of all people inside and outside our walls.

I don't know beyond the "I" what is community? Being part of an "us" or "we." Being attached, connected to people, concepts, places.

Bringing people together in peace, justice, and love, both within the local community and the world community.

People, connections

Create chosen family, have a support system to help, weather life's ups and downs.

Making our small community at UUCUC part of our larger community locally. Making us aware of the needs of our larger community.

Join - reach out - it's action more than passive intention

Create a lasting network of connections to other humans that centers on love, encouragement, and support. To find others that can help you grow and that you can help grow.

An inclusive work-in-progress, responsive to all members. Unified with a shared mission. Open, inviting, where people can know each other's name and feel safe to care.

Cast a "wide net." Be courageous enough to "create community"

Maintain what we have, enhance growth, extend our reach to grow a community in UUCUC and beyond

Involve all members who want to and can in activities of the church

Welcome the stranger, participate with groups in CU that promote equality and justice

Small - within church, Medium - within city, Large - country; newcomers invited and involved, social groups - many ages, building space that is comfortable and open, group meals and special events

People choosing to spend their precious time connecting with others, being our genuine selves among others

Social cohesion - finding the “glue” that binds us - is key as long as we don’t become insular and exclusive. These connections - longstanding and new are part of why we gather, why I come.

Join with others to enhance the life of the church,

Having people to turn to for support during difficult times

Arms outstretched, the circle is open

Common tasks, common joys, common activities, bond of love and friendship

Knowing each other more deeply, grappling together, facing an uncertain world with friends and people actively confronting so many challenges, a good place to wrestle with any questions and our purpose

Within this church, welcoming new members and providing unconditional support, seeking opportunities to form bonds with the wider community

Safe place to be during highs, lows, everyday life; friendship, shared values, connections across generations

Welcoming everyone, having fun together

Recognizing our similarities in place of focusing on our differences

Embrace all members of our church and those in the wider community who wish to join us

Having a ship to offer succor in good times and bad, as well as reciprocating for others

Acceptance with no judgment

Seeing people I love on Sunday mornings and giving and receiving hugs, taking over meals when church folk are ill, sending cards, building cherished friendships

Strengthen relationships inside and outside our church family

Active steps to make sure everyone is connected to someone

Build church community: support each other in times of joy, sorrow, need; celebrate milestones/transitions; support our congregation; help our wider community; welcome seekers

Find ways to interact with people in space outside your comfort zone, recognizes that CU is a segregated community.

An on-going process, never has an endpoint

Encouraged in the participation and motivation in building togetherness and uplifting neighbors within the community

Home and family are rooted in chance! They grow by choice and actions. UUCUC, Channing Murray and UUism are where I choose to build home, family, and community.

It is like family. It is the warmth caring of those to whom I am close. I means accepting all those who are part of family (church) and especially to those who I might not be so comfortable.

Building trust between people who think they are different from each other. Finding what's the same instead of what's different. Making connections between those within and outside the congregation.

Finding like-minded people and making an effort to get to know them.

Helping

Friend-making, finding a safe place

People - all - coming together and working together for each other and for larger good purposes.

Help to generate meaningful bonds and connections among the members of this church - bond and connections that go well beyond Sunday morning services.

"Growing great humans!!" (Picture of flowers blooming, with faces, like children.)

Creating a sense (and place) of safety and support, both within the UUCUC congregation and also by outreach in the larger community/world.

Joining people you can count on, joining people open-minded to life's big questions.

Find friends, share thoughts

Build bridges, friendships, safety net, understanding, and confidence in others' intelligence

Truly knowing others here and others outside our four walls

Finding ways to help and be helped within the church and beyond it

Community to UUs is both internal (to members and friends who care about each other and work together), we also work in the wider community - primarily through social justice efforts

RE, small groups, activities (leaf-raking, card-writing, service auction)

Conversation with others, finding commonalities and exploring difference, large and small gatherings, shared experiences leading to shared memories

Accepting others and embracing them, making everyone feel included

Work together for specific items to promote common good

A combination of social and humanitarian events that promote community and further aide those of the community in need

Showing up and caring for one another, then using that energy to bridge to the outside community as well

The reason that most people come to an organization like a church. It's why my husband and I got started here. We were looking for a community where we could build deep ties with others. Most of the activities that we do to build community fall under the other three statements.

## Seek Inspiration



**Verbatim reflections from our congregants on what Seek Inspiration means for them**

UUCUC should be a place that challenges and supports us to make the world a better place.

Being open to inspiration, reading spiritual literature, being open to the unknown

Seek the good question not expecting a pat answer

Finding meaning

Involves seeking that which keeps me move forward to do good, to grow, to live

Surround ourselves with people who encourage us to do better

Through diversity and curiosity and openness beyond our own community

Find the things in life that give us the reason for being and the energy to move forward and make ourselves and our world better than it was yesterday

To actively search and be guided by and towards what gives purpose to our lives

Engage with those doing the real work

Fill our hearts then use our hands and mind to help our world

Explore ideas of all kinds. Support people in finding answers they need. Challenge people to explore new ideas.

Open my heart and spirit to mysterious phrases that come into my mind. Weave words that reflect those insights, to share with others.

Guidance from experts explore and education and self study and research, positive progress for all, create better conditions

Finding what brings purpose to your life, finding what motivates you to create/build/learn/grow

Inspiration is the fuel for hope, the bright flame that ignites our compassion, imagination, and intention

Seek guidance in how to live and serve better

Expand your horizon

Support each other, be for one another

Keep learning, keep singing, reach out to others, give and take, contribute

Need to move from sadness/despair to action and finding purpose, I wouldn't find a few answers

Providing opportunities for all of us to question our individual assumptions, our limits, and act when it might be more comfortable not to

Inspiration helps me be the best person I can be to others

Looking at the people around me whom I admire and aspire to be more like, inspiration = challenge

Continuing to open our eyes through insightful Sunday services - opening words and sermons

To find inspiration from others' answers as I seek my own personal answers true for me

What path, what actions can I take to build a better me and leave a better world? This is what I seek intensively

Be challenged by topics that are the focus of soul matters each other; be moved, comforted, and challenged by sermons and readings; be inspired by the example of my fellow members

Being part of this church community helps me be less selfish, less absorbed in my own problems, and more aware of the wide world and community

Inspiration is found everywhere in our world - we only need to look. To look in many places and keep asking.

Listen, create, participate in worship, learning, teaching in order to be my best self and to help others do the same. We cannot do it alone.

Look for inspiration from people who battle poverty, racism, and inequality in their personal lives and keep going

Continue the variety of all UUCUC activities

Thinking at this moment how inspired I am that others are in the place I am to desire and strive to be better. But not only to be better for myself, but what can I do to make those better around me. Pray for me.

Look past the noise that is often focused on the negative.

Who can say it better than Joe. Make the world, our community, ourselves better than we were yesterday

To find a stepping stone on my path through life, to have options highlighted

Opportunities to grow spiritually (soul matters is a great example), being challenged

Influencing



From as many “teachers” as possible

I seek a pathway to inspiration, a pathway with many rest stops of support and encouragement. I cannot travel alone, even though I do so everyday.

Picture of light bulb with the words poems, crafts, creation, music, words, art

Inspiration to know in which of many directions and initiatives are the ones for me to work on - and to find the courage to continue these efforts

The place that makes me think about the big questions, meaning of life

Look for good questions, permission to find our own answers

No fear, seek the right action at the right time, listen to meditation for ideas/thoughts

I need to always look to see/hear what is around me so I can learn

Ideas that make us want to take actions, actions that sustain hope

UUCUC inspires us to questions and work together to find answers, to think deeply, to listen carefully, to learn and grow

Poetry, music, art, readings, shared book titles

Learning from others around me, listening deeply and openly on Sundays, Find connection with others, letting go of believing I have answers

Maria Rainer Rilke (UU Philosopher) “Stay in the questions, don’t move to quickly to the answer.” or something like that

Finding things that make you want to move forward along a chosen path

Open up to ideas and thoughts toward building community and promoting justice

Enlighten and uplift those all around us while providing a safe space for those who require it

Looking to one another and within to find wholeness and beauty

To be educated about issues in our world that require people to get off their butts and work for just me. To also strive for understanding myself and how to tame my monkey mind through things like meditation. To also be educated about the wider world and social justice issues. To become educated helps me know why I want to be involved in building a better community.

Hearing the stories of people in this church and community inspires me. Joe, Marilyn, Pam and Jenny inspire me. This was a beautiful service.

## Promote Justice



### Verbatim reflections from our congregants on what Promote Justice means for them

Partnering with organizations and people in the community to support their work. Making space for ideas and needs that people bring and providing real support to them. Committing financial

resources Could we stretch to give more for shared offering? After being educated and inspired to become involved in social justice, the goal is to actually get involved doing the work of justice. Learning about it and being inspired are not enough - they are however the first steps.

Caring for each other in a way that gives us energy and education that can impact the wider community

Ensure the congregation is kept abreast of current social issues and working to correct the wrongs we see

Take action to bring about fairness for all (A balancing)

Finding ways to preemptively help those who are less fortunate and would choose a path of destruction. Striving to ensure equality and more equal opportunities.

Activist members leading on engagement, volunteer and financial support to justice initiatives and organizations, remaining open and welcoming of all people

Financial support, being aware of others' needs (fragrance-free, etc.)

UUCUC promotes justice through 2-year initiatives that address social action concerns - and those initiatives almost always lead to ongoing work in those areas

Listening, especially to voices that often go unheard and then doing what we can to amplify those voices

We need to remember the needs of others, not just ourselves and work toward filling those needs

Fair play, understanding, empathy

Working for those downtrodden, most unfortunate people in our community, seeking fairness in democratic process

Through individual and the combined efforts of the UUCUC community to be a voice heard in the CU community and a visible presence in work that brings about greater racial, economic, legal, and environmental justice and equity

Lady justice picture

Increase active partnerships with selected local organizations to magnify our potential, contribution to justice by joining hands with our neighbor

Keep up what we're doing and do more as needs and ideas arise - putting our hands/putting us to work where such work is needed

Equality

As Pam stated, UUCUC does a lot of work toward promoting justice. I appreciate that about this community, that they do the work of love (and justice is love). This church doesn't just talk; they walk the walk as well.

Speaking out when someone says an unjust thing - our culture is filled with hurtful words

Ending large injustices is important, but so is it important to bring justice in our li'l dealing with others.

The natural trend toward power to corrupt needs to be countered by actively working for justice. Just is for all, not just for us and not them.

Emotions overwhelming within my spirit at this time Can't quite explain. Extremely encouraged and full within my spirit.

Can we make people feel safer? Encourage hope and action

Support bail coalition, Support First Followers, Fight war, Punishment is never the solution

Promoting Justice must be at the center of all we do. Our world and hearts are broken. We must heal and inspire together in order to promote justice. The difference between us and a justice organization is that our purposes includes the whole person. Helping each of us to do what we can do.

It means first a way of being and then ways of doing. We do. Do we do enough?

The justice we should promote is social justice. How do we leverage our privilege into justice for those who need it? Local and worldwide

Be intentionally inclusive. March and protest. Share our resources. Speak out.

Ensuring equity and access for all

Do what we can to help those treated unfairly and change the systems that create that unfairness and cruelty.

I'm proud of our recent efforts here - we are certainly more active than we were. I think this should be moved up in the order of our mission statement.

Helping to make the world a better place. Showing up and being allies.

Resisting divisive and discriminatory efforts in the wider local and national community. Seeking the truth, even when that is difficult. Helping provide opportunities for those who have suffered discrimination to be reconciled and have success.

Deeds not creeds; social, environmental, economic justice; coal ash activism; reaching out to congregations we would not have any contact with without UU; learning about injustice - I have never considered before

Vote, talk, struggle, think, contribute, questions

Listen closely and learn what others need

Making the world a better place through intentional actions

Promoting justice can be by active participation or financial backing

Any thoughts of justice I might have are small beside the powerful words from our guests. Justice seems elusive and I know my Whiteness acts as such an opaque screen for issues all around me. Justice starts with opening our eyes and hearts.

Work to make our community/world a place where people are valued and able to be successful (whatever that means to them) no matter what personal identities they contain

Consider our laws and change to correct bias over years - fair and equal; rationalize system to order change; join together on projects to solve injustice

Continue our self-education on our own white bias, support ( and identify new prospective) groups working on interfaith and interracial issues.

A variety of social causes, protecting the environment (social panels, environmental activism) is most important to me

Live our words

Provide real and concrete opportunity, direction, support (e.g. First Followers)

Live our principles, our mission, daily in our community. Support the goal of fairness, equity, widely.

Making sure every individual of any background has equal opportunities to be fulfilled by being treated fairly and honestly by all

Do, connect, reach out, join, speak, give, advocate

Increasing the work of racial and social justice in our church, our community, and our world

Helping others

Treating all people with fairness, equality, and dignity - allowing free speech and ideas to make a better world in which to flourish

How can we leave this planet a better place each day? How can we promote a community of healing each day?

Working together to make sure that the world is fair and safe for all. Partnering with community organizations who are engaged in important social justice work.



Calm, serenity, harmony, resolve, love

Become more centered and grounded in this crazy world.

Breath, observe, accept (on personal level). Fight, act, intervene (on a collective level - think stop corruption, violence, greed, inhumanity).

Solace, comfort, quiet, reflection

To rest, to be calm, to be centered, to be grounded, to live out the golden rule, and to share love with whomever we come across

Commitments, empathy in action

Spend brief time on Sunday in perfect peace (quiet the mind)

Peace is not an outcome, but is a process that allows moments of calm and ease, and the ability to return oneself to the state after....(unreadable)

Calm space and mind

A place to be still in the middle of a crazy and busy life

Study the words of persons (current and historical) who have advice on letting go of worry and mental agitation. Pay less attention to the "news" of the day, and focus instead on habits of mind and being that are more productive and sustaining

To feel sense of calm and clarity even amongst tumultuous events, to promote policies/actions/initiatives that increase understanding and lessen violence in our community/world

To know and dissect triggers, embracing the Buddhist four Noble Truths

Replenish our spirit

By learning how to tame my ADD monkey mind, through introspection and meditation - I can hopefully be more at ease with myself and less scattered. With more focus it's easier to be successful at whatever I'm inspired to do to build that stronger, more just community.

Church home provides a safe place where people can be themselves, opportunities to work toward a more authentic self



Finding a community of "cohorts" who share our values, embrace those in need, I stand up against injustice in order to make our community and world a better place

You find it? Do those (take action) to make peace

Mindfulness, calming thoughts/feelings, finding ways to cope with what you cannot control

This ties to both justice and personal issues, peace for the world - a way to find commonality and respect in conflict with health resolutions, safe spaces, sanctuary (in all its meanings), a search for balance and authenticity

Calm, quiet, comfort, safe pace with or without words

UUCUC offers peace and safety to all who seek it within our walls, And we seek to move toward peace in the world - through social justice work that leads toward fairness to all

Picture of a bicycle with arrows showing it to be moving forward

Absence of conflict and calm

(Difficult to read) Create quite holy mood for yourself for \_\_\_\_\_ and ability to receive inspiration/ideas/wisdom/compassion and understanding

Finding and seeking that inner calm so I can face the world in a chaotic and troubling time UUCUC is a resource - a place and community of souls - where I can find a centering peaceful and reflective time and space - a refuge from many troubling incidents in society at large

Picture of bird, sun, and clouds

True worldwide peace requires that each human being feels safe and cared for. There are too many folks - including in our congregation - who do not feel sufficiently safe and/or cared for. Efforts are needed.

Inner, personal peace but also outer, community and beyond peace

Coexisting

Learning mindfulness, finding a safe place full of love - home

Find peace by easing struggle and suffering for others, take the time to center yourself

Not find peace, but make peace. Peace with all, including those we don't understand. And peace for all, again peace for those we don't understand. Belittle no one and the world might be a little more peaceful.

Stand still for I want to hear what God wants me to do. I want to know my purpose. I want to do His will. I want to be better today. Trusting the process and divine dynamic of people and situations I've encountered to this point. God is not God of coincidence.

Slow down. Observe. Breathe. Forgive myself.

Dismantle the military and prison industrial complex; green, green, green; peace is a presence, not an absence

Is this our mission? It feels so elusive. Find peace in a moment. Return to peace. Live in right relations. Returning to each other over and over. Give peace to others.

Our individual peace, and representing peace to the world, and reducing conflict

The three other parts of our mission help me to find peace. Also I get grounded each Sunday and that helps me spread peace.

As Ghandi said, "Be the change you want to see" - peace then begins with me. This journey is just that. A journey as I'm unsure if one can smile at this destination give the world we currently navigate.

Opportunities to reflect and meditate bring me peace

Maintaining a safe place to be safe with like-minded people

Peace has honestly become a somewhat meaningless word for me. I think this part of the mission can go.

That I will be okay as I journey through our chaotic world

Promoting non-violence solutions to conflicts, understanding the root of conflicts, providing ways that individuals can seek resolution to their inner conflicts and comfort for loss or in anxiety and fear.

Peace - so unreachable, so unattainable; maybe some day, hoping to do Florence's meditation group, can't fit it in yet, hoping to find a deep place in myself where peace might live

--There was one general comment, not associated with any of the categories

I find our mission statement to be as profound and succinct as it has ever been. For a person who usually hates mission statements - I love ours