

## **MSRE's Report to the Board of Directors**

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Santa Monica

Rev. Amelia Mumina Marie

September 2023

Information provided here covers the month of September from my arrival on 9/9-9/30. I hope to give you a clear understanding of how I'm spending my time and what I'm noticing in terms of challenges/patterns, and goals/accomplishments as well as what my overall "take-aways" are thus far.

### TIME

It's been my joy to co-lead in the sanctuary on two Sunday's this month as well as to plan and lead Intergenerational worship on a third Sunday. My time was primarily spent preparing for and leading worship, onboarding (including mandatory reporter training and becoming familiar with OneChurch and other methods of regular community communication), visiting with and getting to know our families at DeBennville Pines and in the courtyard, and more generally in what I call *the ministry of diagnostic care*.

### NOTICING

Despite our having two "intergen" worships this month and my being in the pulpit for at least a portion of every Sunday, it feels like we are two churches: the main congregation in the sanctuary and the RE Program in the cottage; we want and need to be one church and this is central to my understanding of the work that lies ahead.

### CHALLENGES/PATTERNS

Communication: as a community we use many methods of communication (apps like Zoom, One Church, and Slack, Google Drive, email, text, the newsletter, announcements, etc.) and this can create unnecessary confusion and busy work/duplicate/conflicting information.

### GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Pay attention to communication patterns and mediums to see how these might be streamlined and simplified. Already we've improved the process for securing nursery and other childcare as well as reimbursement for parents/teachers for snack and supplies and I believe we will continue to get better at this.
- Cultivate the awareness that we are one community where RE is part of the whole; the folks in the sanctuary know our kids and are known by them. We'll continue to address this by making our intergen services more accessible to all ages (integrating activities that do not alienate the elders or the youth, but allow all ages to embrace new ways of worshipping together).
- Build a children's chapel into our RE programming so that our young people become familiar with the elements of the liturgy in ways that center them and allow them to grow creatively in their understanding and ability to lead with confidence and authenticity, in the sanctuary (during intergen services) and in life.
- Start a volunteer recruitment initiative to address a need for volunteers, but also to build awareness, connectivity, and mutuality. I'm so happy to see Sarah and Larry rejoin the COA team, bringing their years of teaching experience with them and connecting the energy of the sanctuary community with the RE community, may this be a sign of our growing unity and the first of many additions to our volunteer roster, returning and new folks alike!

## TAKE-AWAYS

I want us to feel like we are one church, one congregation and families/RE/the cottage is part of our living, collective body, and visitors/regulars/elders are part of our growing, learning, connected body and together we are whole.