

Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM)

Annual Report 2020

AIM's mission is to:

- Strengthen the welcome our congregation extends to all individuals with disability
- Enhance accessibility and inclusion for everyone
- Educate ourselves and others in all dimensions of accessibility and inclusion
- Advocate for social justice in matters related to disability

AIM works to fulfill for all individuals with disability the UU principles that affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person, with justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

The activities of AIM for 2019-20 were largely determined by congregational responses to our AIM survey of 2019. Focused on the congregation's priorities, we directed our attention to the following activities:

- **Sound abatement in the Social Hall:** The Social Hall is a challenging listening environment during social hours. With a generous donation from an AIM member, we sought the expertise of a sound engineer who provided recommendations for what could be done to improve the acoustic characteristics of the social hall. We will be working with UUAA staff on a plan to implement these recommendations.
- **Improved seating for people with disabilities:** The armchairs provided in the past have been popular and there have been requests for more. With Ed Lynn's assistance, it was possible to provide an additional 12 armchairs.
- **Outreach to SGD:** AIM consulted with Mark VanKempfen about how AIM could be of assistance to children with disabilities who attend SGD classes. It was decided that we would ask for volunteers with experience working with children with disabilities. These volunteers would provide support during SGD. Unfortunately, we received very little response to our request for this support.
- **Exit Accessibility:** Emergency exits and exiting procedures have become important topics in all large organizations. AIM did a review of exits at UUAA and provided improved signage to alert congregants and visitors of those exits that are not accessible for users of wheelchairs and walkers. AIM also designed a brochure that includes a building map and information about exit accessibility. AIM identified temporary ramps for some exits and a 10' aluminum ramp to ena-

ble users of wheelchairs to move beyond the building in case of emergency. Permanent solutions to exit accessibility have been identified and discussed with the Administrator.

- AIM Brochure: To provide general information about the role and goals of AIM at UUAA, a brochure was designed and is ready for printing. This brochure will be available in the information rack in the foyer and in the newcomer information packet
- Increase involvement in AIM: We changed our meeting time from Sunday mornings to Wednesday evenings in hopes of encouraging increased attendance at AIM meetings. We also provided access to all meetings through Zoom.
- Transportation: With the generous service of Dick Barber, AIM member who has become a Lyft driver, rides to AIM meetings were offered.
- Luncheon for Seniors: A luncheon for seniors was planned for April, 2020, with a program to follow, "Becoming a Dementia-Friendly Congregation." AIM co-sponsored this program offered by a member of the Memory Support Ministry. Because of the Covid-19 crisis, these activities were cancelled until further notice.

Goals for 2020-21

- Get back to church: AIM looks forward to being able to attend services again at UUAA when the Covid-19 crisis abates.
- Transportation for people with disabilities: We hope to identify an effective means of providing rides to services and activities at UUAA.
- Sound abatement in Social Hall: Work with UUAA staff on a plan for implementing recommended changes that will improve the listening environment.
- Social Justice: AIM will discuss strategies for becoming involved in disability issues beyond UUAA.

The active members in the ministry are

Barbara Hall, Co-Chair	Dee Dishon, Co-Chair
Monica Cochran	Mark Dickinson
Dick Barber	Els Nieuwenhuijsen
Elinore Sommerfeld	Mary Burton
Meredith Ley	John Hagen
Caron Pelton	

Submitted by Barb Hall and Dee Dishon, AIM cochairs