

**2019-2020
Spiritual Growth & Development
Annual Report**

Written by the Reverend Cassandra Hartley

Our program offers religious education opportunities for all ages - from infants to elders. Our program is served by two dedicated staff members: our SGD Coordinator, Mark Van Kempen and Assistant Minister for SGD, Rev. Cassandra Hartley. The SGD Committee for 2019-2020 was: Henrike Florusbosch, Stella Anderson, Delphine Benard, Tim Miller, Lora Girata, and the SGD staff.

Summer Program

During our 2019 summer SGD session, we continued our new curriculum called "Reviews and Previews." This curriculum, which was the brainchild of Chris Pellar-Kosbar, took the "best of" from each grade's curricula and translated them into short lessons aimed at multiple ages. This curriculum was successful for a second year in a row and will be continued when we are able to have in-person summer programs again. We also experimented with having occasional programming for teens, which was well-received. We hope to expand that when possible.

Program Highlights

This has been another busy year, including very full and successful classes, engaging multigenerational worship services, and countless youth-led service projects. Other highlights include:

- We revamped the Coming of Age Initiation weekend ceremony (which we will implement in the Fall for current students or Spring for new students, depending on when we open again).
- We supported the creation of an LGBTQAI+ support group for teens.
- We had another great youth service trip with Re-member.
- We started monthly family resources posted on the bulletin board, including materials families could take home. These were enthusiastically received.
- We instituted a mandatory abuse prevention class for all teachers.
- We successfully completed a Sunday morning fire drill for the first time in over 10 years.
- We expanded the SGD committee, added new committee roles, and held our first committee retreat.
- We worked with NAMI to offer a presentation on mental health and suicide prevention for teens and parents.
- We shifted to online classes for children of all ages on zoom during the pandemic.
- We implemented OWL classes for all ages except 4/5th grades.

Adult Education

We had many great new offerings this year, including a very popular Storytelling Seminar, which we hope to complete when it's possible to meet in person again. We also had a successful Adult OWL class that met for several weeks. The OWL teachers plan to offer more, but shorter, offerings for adults in the coming year.

Looking Forward

As we face the uncertainty created by the pandemic, we're trying to think creatively about more small group ministry opportunities for all ages and more opportunities for online education. Currently our focus is on community building and fun online, but as we settle into this new way of doing SGD, we plan to find new ways to meet the spiritual growth needs of all ages. We're also thinking about what parts of our online ministry might need to continue being available even when we are able to meet in person again.