

**Annual Report for the Music Ministries at UUAU 2021-2022**  
**submitted by Carter Smith, Acting Director of Music**  
**rev. theresa rohlck, Director, Chalice Bells**

## **Chalice Singers**

Acting Director Music Ministries Carter Smith leads the music ministries at UUAU, and serves as the conductor of the Chalice Singers. Just as the congregation navigated returning to in person activities in September of 2021, the music ministries had to figure out safe ways to resume their programming. This included the presence of soloists, duets, trios, etc., to provide musical leadership for in-person services, as well as an increased role of the Chalice Bells in services. In the spring of 2022, the congregation was allowed to resume congregational singing and expand the number of people leading the music in services.

The Chalice Singers are supported by an active team of volunteers from within the ensemble, who assist with score preparation, social events, and sectional rehearsals. Of note is the work of the congregation's pianist-in-residence, Allison Halerz whose recorded music has been heard (and seen) in just about every service created during the pandemic. Allison also plays a vital collaborative role in rehearsals for the Chalice Singers, not only as pianist, but sectional leader and occasional conductor. Of note is the work of rev. theresa rohlck, the congregational chaplain and director of the chalice bells, who also provides leadership in sectional rehearsal and occasional conductor. Additionally, rev. theresa assists with the spiritual leadership of Chalice Singers rehearsal by leading the chalice lighting at the beginning of rehearsals and reflections for the choir at the end of rehearsals. Of note is the work of Debita Graham, the music librarian, who has recently completed an online database of the Chalice Singers music library. She and Robert Graham also sort, organize and prepare folders and scores for the choir at the start and end of each church year.

In Fall 2021, the Chalice Singers resumed in person rehearsals for the first time since the pandemic began. They met in the sanctuary to accommodate social distancing and rehearsed with strict health and safety measures in place. The group prepared several anthems that were recorded and edited to be featured in services throughout the congregational year. Mike Halerz, our Technology Consultant, played a pivotal role in developing and fine tuning the recording process, as well as editing and mixing the videos. A small subset of the Chalice Singers were finally able to sing in person for services on Sunday, May 8th.

The lay-staffed **Music Ambassadors (MA) Team** continues to serve the broader UUAU community as a resource in responding to questions or feedback related to

our Music Program and by providing support to the Director of Music as needed. Team members are selected by and report to the Director of Music to serve staggered three-year terms. The MA Team for 2021-2022 is Jim McCargar, Kristin LeSueur, Deana Shields, and Debita Graham. The MA Team will be expanding the membership beginning the Fall of 2022.

### **Chalice Sparks, Music Programs for Youth**

The Chalice Sparks children's choir remained on hiatus due to pandemic restrictions on singing and vaccine protocols for younger people. We look forward to expanding the music programs to include youth in the coming church year. This is a time of creative imagining of what those music programs might look like.

### **Chalice Bells**

The Chalice Bells, under the direction of rev. theresa rohlck, returned to in-person rehearsals in Fall 2021, with Covid precautions in place. Of note was the presence of the ensemble in the sanctuary for the first in-person worship service since March of 2020, the water communion service in Sept. 2021. The Chalice Bells made frequent appearances in worship during the year as we navigated adjusting the music programs to accommodate Covid restrictions on singing. We are excited to start a new season after a break in the summer, and look forward to possible collaborations with the Chalice Singers. Members Debita Graham and Robert Graham had primary responsibility for rehearsal set up, as well as organizing and preparing scores as needed.

### **AUUMM CONFERENCE**

In 2019, our Congregation accepted an invitation from the Association for UU Music Ministries (AUUMM) to host their 2020 conference. The conference welcomes nearly 300 staff and volunteer music leaders, ministers, and religious professionals from across the country. Due to Covid-19 safety protocols, the AUUMM annual conference was canceled in both 2020 and 2021. We are happy to announce that the conference is going forward in-person (with virtual options) in Ann Arbor in July of 2022.