

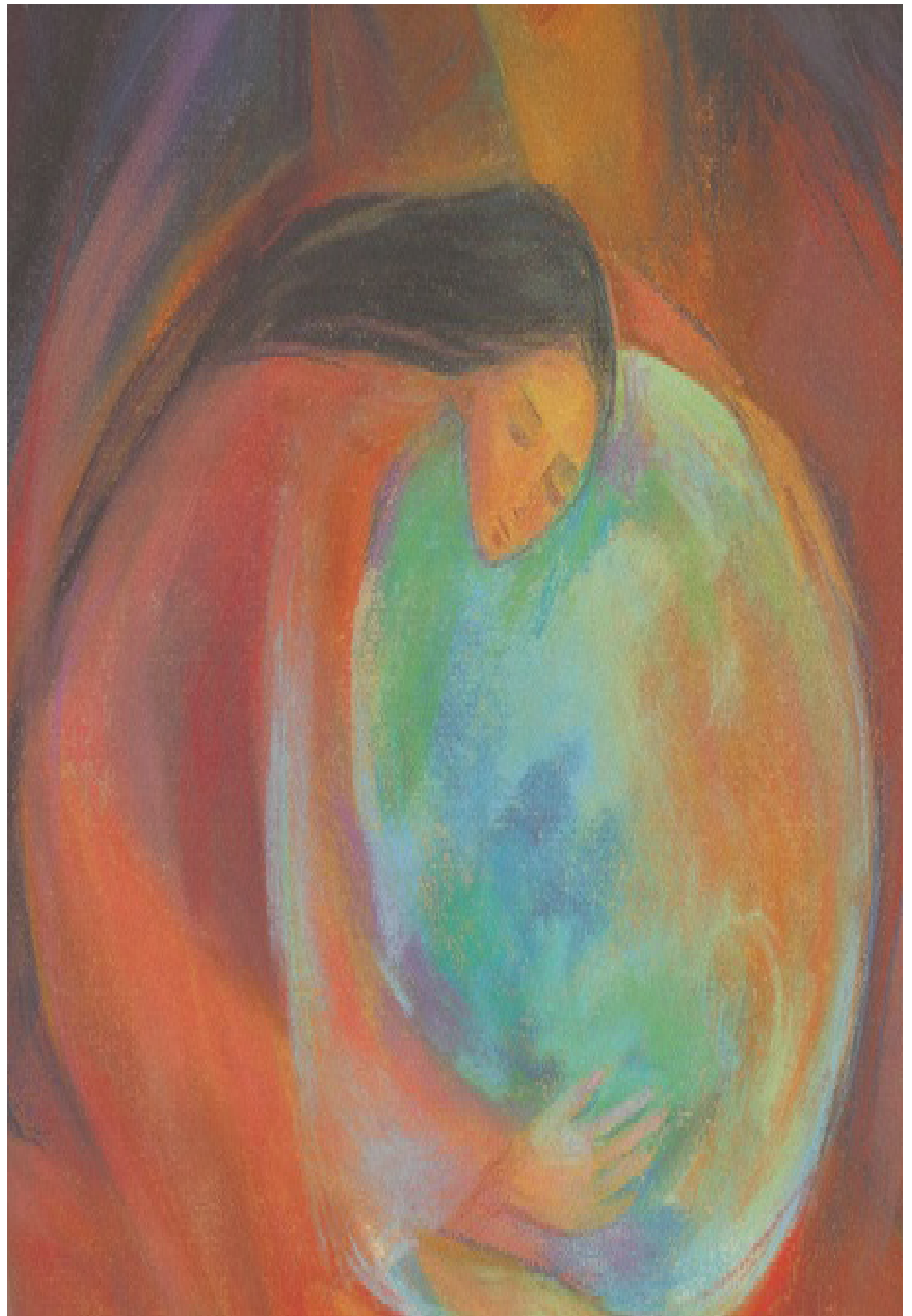


# CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation, *where diversity is treasured.*  
A member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

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*The Board of Directors met on March 18, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.*

I'm sure you all know the focus of actions taken at the March Board meeting. Our response to COVID-19 occupied most of our agenda and prior communications. The decision to stop holding services was an obvious response, but addressing the impacts of that decision was more difficult.

Most of the board actions were discussed in an emailed letter sent to members and friends on Thursday, March 19. The letter was part of our intent to increase the frequency of communications during the period that we do not have congregation-attended services at the church. During this time, services will be livestreamed and recorded, and will be available on All Faiths' website ([www.allfaiths-uc.org](http://www.allfaiths-uc.org)) for you to access.

In addition, Rev. CJ will broadcast videos and commu-

nicate with the congregation through other means. A summary of board actions follow:

The Board passed a resolution that Sunday services and programs will be suspended until April 22 and reassessed at the April 22 Board meeting.

Chris Stotler, Ed Elrod and Regina Kilmartin will conduct the Annual Meeting as planned at 10 am, March 22. The majority of the meeting will consist of counting the absentee ballots and recording the results. Issues on the ballot included: one bylaw item to waive the requirement that Board Directors must be a member for a minimum of one year before serving on the Board; the vote on approving or disapproving the proposed budget for the coming fiscal year; and electing Directors and Nominating Committee members. Enough absentee ballots have been received to meet the required quorum for the Annual Meet-

ing. Therefore, we ask members to not attend in person.

Until the April Board meeting, services will include Rev CJ's message and Joseph's music. Regina will live-stream the service and Ed will audio record the service.

The Board passed a resolution that the pay increases for Regina, Rev. CJ and Joseph originally planned for April be postponed until the budget can support those increases; their pay will remain unchanged until that time. Because Joe Gayton will not be needed to direct parking on Sunday, Joe will help Michael Pierre with repairs needed around the building. His pay increase and new hospitality duties will be suspended, but he will receive compensation commensurate with his pay rate before assuming Robert Bennett's hospitality duties last month. Regina was charged with working out the details.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for April 22nd, and the Finance Committee meeting will also move one week later than usual.

The Board authorized the Finance Committee to borrow from our Capital Fund or our Legacy Fund to meet operating expenses, if needed. This action is needed because our operating reserve fund is lower than normal entering a new fiscal year and part of our operating reserve fund is in a CD that does not mature until June 2020. If we cash the CD early, we will incur a significant interest penalty. The "borrowed" money will be "repaid" when our CD matures in June, thus avoiding the interest penalty. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we anticipate that revenues could be low and more than normal funds may have to be taken from operating reserve.

*(continued on page 3)*

## Mission Statement

"All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is a welcoming, caring community, seeking diversity, practicing openness, and encouraging personal and spiritual growth. "We are working toward a just, free, peaceful and compassionate world."

## All Faiths Collection Schedule (New slate of organizations will start in April 2020)

### **Share-the-Plate (10% of undesignated donations on the 2nd Sunday of the month)**

April - Community Forum Foundation, Dunbar (CAT)

May - Meals of Hope

June - The Change, Alliance for the Arts (Racial Justice)

July - City Gate Ministries (Hearts for the Homeless)

### **Food, Clothing, and Other Collections**

McGregor Clinic - April 19, May 17, June 21, July 19

### **Second Collections**

December 6 - Employee Bonuses

***The March Share-the-Plate resulted in \$243.20 for Operation Joy***

# FROM MCGREGOR BOULEVARD

by Rev. CJ McGregor



Another spring has arrived and I've been thinking about my Easter Sunday message. I might have told you that this can be the most difficult message to craft year after year as a Unitarian Universalist minister. Birth, natural wonder, the pagan roots of Easter, moving from darkness to light, etc. are all themes beaten like the proverbial dead horse by our ministers.

But, it is in these times that I easily access hope, resurrection, celebration. Sure our present reality may be dim, isolative, and scary. It is good

to include in our reality that this is temporary, there will be an end. Our sacrifices will not have been made in vain. We know that with endings come beginnings, a return to health and community, a resurrection.

We are presently trapped under the threats of disease, loneliness, and fear. Continue to be brave. We will rise from this. We will rise with a new understanding of the fragility and gift of life. We will rise deepening our connections and the need for the true love of a congregation. We will rise no longer longing for interconnectedness. We will roll that stone away that traps us and we will rise.

I look forward to being together again.

– Blessings, CJ

“And the people stayed home.  
And read books, and listened, and rested,  
And exercised, and made art, and played games  
And learned new ways of being, and were still.  
And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some  
Prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows.  
And the people began to think differently.  
  
And the people healed. And, in the absence of  
People living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and  
Heartless ways, the earth began to heal.  
  
And when the danger passed,  
And the people joined together again,  
They grieved their losses, and made new choices, and  
Dreamed new images, and created new ways to live  
And heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.”

– Kitty O'Meara –

## BOARD NOTES (Cont'd from page 2)

Office hours are to be established as needed by Regina; we ask that office visits be kept to a minimum and that business be conducted via email or by telephone.

The hiring of an assistant for Regina and a Religious Education consultant will be postponed. The board retreat planned for April 11 is postponed.

Regina reported on the recent A/C repairs, water heater replacement, and broken window repair. The water heater invoice was paid from maintenance funds. The window repair is being covered by a

congregant. Funds not needed for the window repair will be used to help defray the cost of purchasing a new dishwasher (see below).

The Board authorized the purchase of a new, sanitizing dishwasher to replace the current dishwasher. Costs not covered by the congregant's gift will be taken from the Capital Fund. It will be installed before we resume in-church services.

The ACMA has asked that their organization be included on our street-side sign. They have offered to design and get permitting for the new sign.

The Board will review ACMA's proposed design before approving it.

We also discussed concerns about financial difficulties that All Faiths will likely face if services are discontinued for a long period of time or if the shutdown of businesses triggers a major recession. We need to encourage those who can afford to do so to make extra donations to All Faiths and to pay their 2020-21 pledge early in the year which starts April 1. We recognize there will be members who will be out of work and because of lost

income will not be able to meet their pledge, so others will need to do extra.

Please practice social distancing to stay safe and healthy but increase communications with your friends to check on them and help keep spirits up during these difficult times. If you have comments or suggestions for your Board, please email All Faiths or contact me: Chris Stotler at [gcostotler@gmail.com](mailto:gcostotler@gmail.com).

*Our next board meeting is April 22 at 1:00 p.m.*

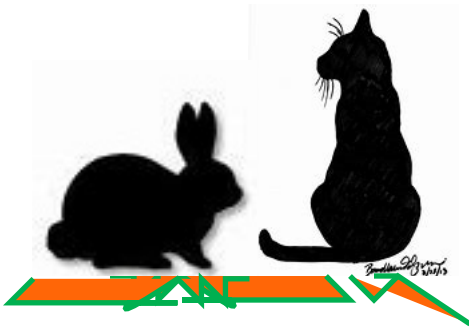
*Happy April  
Birthday to you!*



April 1 Carol Heilsberg  
April 3 Bill Snider  
April 4 Barbara Goolsby  
April 10 Diana Camp  
April 19 Diane Cartwright  
April 20 Joy Reinhart  
April 24 Ann Batal  
April 24 "Weezie" Close  
April 27 Kathleen Weber

*And Coming Up...*

May 7 Ed Kleinow



### **Solos Group Events**

Contact: Annely Hudanick,  
[annelyblue@hotmail.com](mailto:annelyblue@hotmail.com)

Everyone is welcome to join the solos for outings and lunch w/wo a movie date. The potlucks, however, are reserved for "single" solos.

**Saturday, April 4, 1p.m.**  
Potluck - Cancelled

**Saturday, April 18, 1 p.m.**  
Lunch w/wo a Movie  
Cancelled

## **Happening at All Faiths**

***All events will be cancelled until further notice. If the gathering ban is lifted for any All Faiths' events, we will let you know via email and Facebook.***

### **Book Club & Brown Bag - April 13 at Noon**

*Meeting on the 2nd Monday of the Month*

Contacts: Diane Chernow, [dianecher@comcast.net](mailto:dianecher@comcast.net).

Be prepared to give a brief talk about a book you're reading or you have read.

### **Meditation - Fridays at 10:30am**

Contact: Judy Alberda, [judyalberda@yahoo.com](mailto:judyalberda@yahoo.com)

Join friends to develop your mindfulness, compassion, and sense of serenity.

### **McGregor Clinic Collection - Sunday, April 19**

*Collection is on the 3rd Sunday of Every Month*

Coordinator: Joyce Schaffer, [joycelschaffer@gmail.com](mailto:joycelschaffer@gmail.com)

This month the clinic is in need of clothing, high protein and non-perishable foods.

### **All Voices Choir Practice - Wednesdays at 4:45**

*Meeting every Wednesday*

You do not have to be a professional singer or read sheet music to join. Contact: Joseph Brauer, [jodabrauer@gmail.com](mailto:jodabrauer@gmail.com).

### **Trivia Night - April 27 at 7:00 p.m.**

*Meeting on the 4th Monday of the Month*

Team or individual play, depending on how many show up. This is not Jeopardy, there are no buzzers or speed restrictions - and it's a lot of fun! Winners take home the trophy.

## **AMERICANA COMMUNITY MUSIC ASSOCIATION**

### **April Concerts Cancelled**

Concerts Start at 7pm

\$15 General Public/\$10 ACMA Members

[www.AmericanACMA.org](http://www.AmericanACMA.org)



# April 2020 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1       <b>4:45pm</b> No Choir Practice	2	3 <b>10:30am</b> No Meditation	4 <b>1pm</b> No Solos Potluck   <b>7pm</b> No ACMA Concert
5 <b>10:30am</b> Service Livestreamed  <b>No Adult Ed. Forum or Children's RE</b>	6	7      <b>1:30pm</b> No Climate Action Team Mtg .	8      <b>4:45pm</b> No Choir Practice	9      <b>12pm</b> Exec. Comm.	10 <b>10:30am</b> No Meditation	11      <b>7pm</b> No ACMA Concert
12 <b>10:30am</b> Service Livestreamed  <b>No Adult Ed. Forum or Children's RE</b>  <b>Happy Easter</b>	13 <b>10am</b> No Sun. Services Team   <b>12pm</b> No Book Club	14 <b>10am</b> No Membership Mtg.	15 <b>10am</b> No Racial Justice Team Mtg.  <b>No</b> Board Meeting (Rescheduled to April 22)	16 <b>10am</b> Finance Comm. (Remote) Mtg.   <b>2pm</b> <b>No</b> Homeless Action Team Mtg.	17 <b>10:30am</b> No Meditation	18 <b>1pm</b> No Solos Lunch   <b>7pm</b> No ACMA Concert
19 <b>10:30am</b> Service Livestreamed  <b>No Adult Ed. Forum or Children's RE</b>  <b>No McGregor Clinic Collection</b>	20	21      <b>6-7:30</b> No PFLAG Mtg.	22      <b>1 pm</b> Board Meeting   <b>4:45pm</b> No Choir Practice	23	24 <b>10:30am</b> No Meditation	25      <b>7pm</b> No ACMA Concert
26 <b>10:30am</b> Service Livestreamed  <b>No Adult Ed. Forum or Children's RE</b>	27	28	29      <b>4:45pm</b> No Choir Practice	30	31      <b>10:30am</b> No Meditation	

Check the online calendar at: <http://www.allfaiths-uc.org>  
for post-printing updates

## APRIL SUNDAY SERVICES

Our Sunday Services are being suspended until the COVID-19 virus restrictions on gatherings have been lifted. Our Minister and Board of Directors will be making a decision on when we can resume on-site services.

In the meantime, we will provide livestreamed **Messages by Rev. CJ McGregor and Music by Joseph Brauer** to our Facebook page on Sundays at 10:30 a.m.. Inspirational messages and uplifting music are good for the soul in stressful times like these.

You can reach our public Facebook page by searching [www.facebook.com/allfaithsuc](http://www.facebook.com/allfaithsuc) or from our website ([www.allfaiths-uc.org](http://www.allfaiths-uc.org)) where there is a Facebook button at the bottom of the page which will take you directly to the Facebook page. Once you get to the Facebook page, click "videos" in the left margin.

The Message will also be available via audio recording on the website by clicking on the microphone image at the top/right of the page.

### *April's Theme is Liberation*

**April 05 - Instructions for Passover,  
by Rev. CJ McGregor**

**April 12 -The Promise of Easter  
by Rev. CJ McGregor**

**April 19 - 50th Anniversary of Earth Day  
by Joan Marshall**

**April 26 - Collective Liberation  
by Rev. CJ McGregor**

## APRIL CHILDREN'S RE

No Children's RE in April

## APRIL ADULT ED. FORUMS

No Adult Ed. Forums in April

## FOR THE HOMELESS NEWS

by Barb McFarlane

Since 2756 McGregor Boulevard is on "lockdown" and there won't be an opportunity in the near future to say thank you as a congregation.....the Heart for the Homeless Team wants to recognize the leadership that *Judy Alberda* and *Barbara Gaiser* have provided in creating and steering the Heart for Homeless team over the past two years. They have decided to step down as co-chairs but remain on the team.

We've compiled a list of accomplishments that the team and congregation have made, too numerous to list here. Perhaps as cabin fever sets in over the upcoming weeks, I will find a way to share. None of it would have happened without Barbara and Judy's perseverance.

Thank You...Hats Off!

### Synopsis of the Annual Meeting March 22, 2020

At the Annual Meeting, the following nominees were elected to their respective positions:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Term</u>
Treasurer	John Conrad	2020-2022
Director	Chris Stotler (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	2020-2022
Director	Eileen Moran (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	2020-2022
Director	Marge DiGalbo	2020-2022
Director	Linda Runkle	2020-2022
Nom. Comm.	Lisa Leonhardt	2020-2022
Nom. Comm.	Donalie Benyak (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	2020-2022

Chris Stotler recognized the services of the outgoing Board members, *Doug Cartwright*, *Barbara Gaiser*, and *Sharon Gray*. Their contribution to the success of our congregation is most appreciated.

The Secretary read the names of Congregational members who have died since the last Annual Meeting:

Ellie Boyd  
Tim Brady  
Rosemary Loveday  
Howard Remson  
Joy Ellyn Ryan  
Ernie Fierro  
Lou Pizzini

# CLIMATE ACTION TEAM NEWS

by Joan Marshall, Co-Chair



April is the month we celebrate Earth Day. This year's celebration was planned to be the biggest global climate event to ever take place as we mark Earth Day's 50th Anniversary. But instead of rallying in the streets, people around the world are sheltering in

their homes as the COVID-19 pandemic threatens our health, our well-being and our very lives.

Although there may or may not be any direct causal connection between climate change and COVID-19, there are lessons to be learned from this pandemic... lessons about how to deal with global disruption and the impact of natural disasters that climate scientists warn are in our future. As in the current crisis, the degree of damage from climate change will be dictated by how rapidly and effectively we act to protect ourselves while we still can make a difference.

We are globally steadily increasing the amount of CO2 we are pouring into the atmosphere. We must reverse this. We are still pursuing energy-intensive lifestyles and basing our global economy on unsustainable levels of consumption and growth. We must transition to a circular economy that will reduce waste and help to regenerate our natural environment.

As you "shelter in place" this Earth Day, your Climate Action Team asks you to spend some time exploring what you can do personally to reduce your carbon footprint and to directly engage online in the growing movement to protect and preserve our planet for future generations. Celebrate a virtual Earth Day; spend time online where there is a vast trove of information about how we can transition to new sustainable ways of being that will help to protect and preserve a livable planet for our children and grandchildren. Their future rests in our hands.

## GREEN TIP: Websites to explore:

Union of Concerned Scientists: [www.ucsusa.org/climate](http://www.ucsusa.org/climate).

Citizens Climate Lobby: [www.citizensclimatelobby.org](http://www.citizensclimatelobby.org).

Climate Reality Project: [www.climateRealityproject.org](http://www.climateRealityproject.org)

Project Drawdown: [www.drawdown.org](http://www.drawdown.org).

# TREASURER'S REPORT

by Sharon Gray, Treasurer

The following is the accounting of our finances through February 2020.

## February 2020

Income	\$ 23,947
Expenses	<u>25,905</u>
<b>Net Loss</b>	<b>(\$ 1,958)</b>

## FEB. CASH ASSETS (after payroll deducted)

General Operating Funds	\$ 8,625
Operating Reserves	14,916
Operating Reserves CD	20,336
Legacy Account	36,667
Paypal	255
Capital Fund	<u>4,933</u>
<b>Total cash assets</b>	<b>\$ 86,132</b>

## APRIL-FEBRUARY - 11-MONTH P&L

Income	\$ 192,485
Expense	199,335
<b>Net Loss</b>	<b>(\$ 6,850)</b>

February expenses are typically above budget due to building insurances due in February. We had unexpected expenses in March: \$2,250 in air conditioning repairs, \$387 on a broken hurricane window, and \$420 on a new water heater, which Michael Pierre installed. Monies for the window and a proposed sanitizing dishwasher were donated by a generous congregant. The ACMA, who uses our building regularly, graciously donated \$500 toward the air conditioner repairs.

We are thankful to those of you who have been generous with your pledges. We appreciate all donations, particularly now that we will not be "passing the basket" for an undetermined period of time. All Faiths can accept your pledges and donations through Paypal on our website (3% fee deducted), direct deposit, bill pay, or just good old fashioned U.S. mail. Our salaries and facility needs continue through this temporary suspension of services.

At the conclusion of the March 22 Annual Meeting, John Conrad (Ainsleigh's grandpa), was elected Treasurer. I wish John the best of luck and thank him for his service to All Faiths. I would like thank you for allowing me to serve as treasurer and for all of your support over the past five years.



All Faiths 3rd Annual  
Live & Silent Auction

Stay tuned...

Our auction will go on, one way  
or the other. The auction team is  
discussing options, so stay tuned,  
we will keep you informed!  
*Going once, going twice...*

## LIFE RALLY & NEHEMIAH ACTION

by Regina Kilmartin, LIFE Team Leader

Despite early fears of the CORVID-19 virus, LIFE supporters showed up in numbers at the LIFE Rally and Nehemiah Action to fight for affordable housing and affordable child care in Fort Myers.

340 people showed up at the Rally on February 24 at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 28 of them from All Faiths. 575 people attended the Nehemiah Action at Dunbar High School on March 9, 21 of them from All Faiths.

I want to thank All Faiths' Justice Ministry Network for supporting me and LIFE this year. It was a year filled with a lot of reasearch and meetings, and much was accomplished. While the CORVID-19 virus has put a damper on a lot of things, the work still goes on behind the scenes at LIFE.

The LIFE Celebration scheduled for April 6 will most likely be cancelled or postponed, but I will keep you informed.

And, lastly, I would like to thank Donalie Benyak, Diane Cartwright and Lewis Robinson for stepping in as team leaders, it certainly made my life easier, and I appreciate that.

## All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 – Email: [office@allfaiths-uc.org](mailto:office@allfaiths-uc.org) – Website: [www.allfaiths-uc.org](http://www.allfaiths-uc.org)

**Executive Board:** Chair t/b/d, Vice Chair t/b/d; John Conrad, Treasurer; Ed Elrod, Secretary; Diane Cartwright, Past Chair.

**Directors:** Marge DiGalbo, Peter Erickson, Annely Hudanick, Eileen Moran, Linda Runkle, Rachel Spiller, Chris Stotler.

**Staff:** Regina Kilmartin, Administrator; Joseph Brauer, Music Director; Joe Gayton, Sexton.

**Minister Emeritus:** The Rev. Dr. Wayne Robinson

### Communications

Regina Kilmartin

*Newsletter*

Regina Kilmartin

*Proofreaders*

Carol Elrod,

Joyce Ramay

*Social Media & Website*

Regina Kilmartin,

Kendra Maroon, Sharon Gray

### Adult Education Forums

#### Sunday Service Team

Joyce Ramay

### Hospitality Coordinator

Nicole McDaigle

### Member Services

Fran Way

*Greeters*

Marsha Bates

*Care and Support*

Joyce Ramay

### Finance

Joyce Ramay

### Stewardship Committee

Howard Silverman & Janet Falk

### Nominating Committee

Kathleen Weber

### Sound Technician

Ed Elrod

### Building and Grounds

Michael Pierre

### Social Action & Outreach

*Climate Action Team*

Joan Marshall

*Community Events*

Richard Keelan

### Heart for the Homeless

Barb McFarlane

### Racial Justice Team

Rachel Spiller

*L.I.F.E.*

Regina Kilmartin,

*McGregor Clinic*

Joyce Schaffer

*Mano a Mano*

Charlotte Blitt

### Operation Joy & Solos Group

Annely Hudanick

Minister: Rev. CJ McGregor - Cell: 508-736-3361



Deadline for the **May** Issue of *Connections*  
is **April 18**

(Brief announcements may be accepted later,  
and will be included *if* space and time permit.)



OFFICE HOURS: 9am to 4pm, Monday thru Thurs;  
9am to 12pm, Friday and Sunday.  
Congregational Administrator: Regina Kilmartin