

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Message from the President:

As I write this, I am headed to sub-freezing highs and single-digit lows in Santa Fe to spend the New Year's weekend with my husband's family. It'll be a good reminder that not everyone goes Christmas shopping in short sleeves. It is snowing there right now, something I have missed (sort-of) for the fourteen years I've been in Arizona. Beyond the snow and cold, I look forward to this short sabbatical, and especially some quiet time after a really busy year, and rejuvenating my mind for what is to come. Our Senior Minister leaves today also for his annual month-long sabbatical, returning in February with renewed energy, new learning, and innovative ideas. May you all have some time to decompress and enjoy as we ring in 2019.

The Board has been diligent in working between meetings to process and digest the items we set out to discuss at those meetings - policies, new initiatives, stewardship and finance and ministerial reports. We come prepared, our discussion is robust, and we rarely land where we expected to, because as a team we are able to process new and better ways than we can each consider alone. Together we watch and hear and talk about the great work being done in the crowded corners of VUU in service to our vision. Each of us enjoys spending more time in community on Sunday mornings with so many of you, and more visitors than ever before. Most impressive in recent weeks has been attendance at Faith Formation Hour between services; lifelong learning and sharing is measured exponentially from any prior year for adults, and children/youth attendance is growing as well. Words from [our vision and ends](#) comes to our minds those mornings - words like transformation, radical hospitality, intergenerational experience, innovative congregation, and partnerships.

VUU has never in my experience been labeled as stationary or stagnant, and 2019 appears to be driving us faster toward even greater transformation. At the wheel of two vehicles are the Capital Planning and Capital Campaign Committees who are completing a feasibility study and opening conversation with our architects on the road to the next phase in creating more space for even more good work. Social action, Sunday morning worship, covenantal and social groups are thriving, and welcoming new and old comers regularly. Our East Valley group grows and blossoms in the desert winter.

I hope your holidays were filled with love, and you are able to take a breath as we enter this New Year. As my dear singer-songwriter friend Sarah Dan Jones wrote, "When I breathe in, I breathe in peace; when I breathe out, I breathe out love."

Breathe, and then hang on for the ride. Better yet, grab the shared wheel with us, friends.

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