

Members of Faith United Church of Christ,

Thank you for putting your trust in me to lead the Ministry Leadership Council this past year. I am proud to say that our MLC team made plans, set goals, and did great work. We could not have achieved anything without your support and assistance.

Our focus verse guided our collective spirit, mind, and heart:

Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

Isaiah 43: 18-19a

This led us to discussion and discernment regarding who we are as a congregation in this time and this place:

United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we strive to be a witness in these days and in this place to welcome all and seek justice for all creation.

Out of this purpose, we defined goals for our congregation:

1. Offer theologically progressive* **worship and teaching in the Hillcrest area.**

*question tradition, accept human diversity, social justice, care for the poor and oppressed, environmental stewardship

2. Nurture loving **communion with one another, our guests, and neighbors.**

In planning specific tasks for 2017, we focused on **Invitation** and **Visibility** via participation in community activities, 60th anniversary celebration, information shared with visitors, and our presence on Richmond Road. Even our parking lot repair and redesign fed into a more welcoming canvas for ourselves and others. Our pollinator garden made an impact immediately in reducing our storm water utility and will literally and figuratively, feed the future as blooming begins.

As a new year begins and new members join MLC, I look forward to continuing our efforts to be God's church. Our active presence in Richmond Heights has changed lives, especially in our schools. As we minister, it is truly about God's grace and hope. I invite you to be part of this journey through your giving of offering and time. We are the hands, voice, and heart in God's creation.

Peace,
Barb Holtz