**Unitarian Church of Montpelier**
130 Main St, Montpelier VT 05602
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*We welcome all*
*as we build a loving community*
*to nurture each person's spiritual journey,*
*serve human need,*
*and protect the earth, our home.*

March 1, 2021

Dear Members and Friends of the Unitarian Church of Montpelier,

I remember very clearly the last Sunday we were all together in the sanctuary. It was just about one year ago on March 8, 2020, and we were launching the Annual Pledge Drive. A banner hung above the chancel depicting our theme, "Transforming Our Love," with a colorful butterfly and spring flowers. The children had sneaked down to the Vestry during worship and transformed the space, filling it with hearts of love, thus setting the stage for a festive Gifts of Love Celebration after worship.

Coronavirus was already on our minds and a few days later on March 13, Governor Scott declared a State of Emergency in response to COVID-19. That State of Emergency continues today.

This past year, we have endured the unimaginable and persevered. We have made difficult decisions as a church community. We have done our best to maintain a sense of community and a commitment to fulfilling our mission and purpose.

It is not clear what the next year will hold in store for us and what continued adaptations we might need to make to meet this evolving challenge.

We do know that this church community will continue doing what it has always done: providing a spiritual home for people seeking meaning and truth; offering care and support to the sick, the hungry, the broken-hearted; nurturing joy and celebration; and engaging the challenging questions and callings of our time.

As a religious community that draws roughly 80% of its income from personal contributions, your financial resources make our ministry possible. I am so grateful to those in our church community who have made and fulfilled a pledge in the past year. I hope that you will be able to continue this commitment into the new church year ahead, or even increase your pledge if you are able. If you are new to our community or have not been able to make or fulfill a pledge recently, I invite you to consider doing so. It is the generosity of all of our contributions together – regardless of amount – that ensures that we will thrive now and into the future.

Thank you for the many ways that you share generously of your gifts with this community. Together, we can face the unknowns grounded in love rather than fear. Together, we thrive.

With immense gratitude,

Rev. Joan