

Dear Beloved Community,

As I reflect on this year, my first year as your pastor, I am filled with gratitude for the journey we have taken together. Since joining UCC Parker Hilltop in late March, I have witnessed this congregation's incredible spirit, resilience, and openness to growth. Together, we have navigated challenges, celebrated accomplishments, and taken meaningful steps toward deepening our relationships with one another, with our community, and with God. It has been a joy and a privilege to walk alongside you on this path.

## **Worship and Special Services**

This year, we transitioned to the Narrative Lectionary as our primary worship guide, complemented by readings from the Inclusive Bible and NRSVUE. These changes have enriched our worship life and allowed us to explore scripture with fresh perspectives.

We also introduced a new practice: a prayer of self-dedication at the conclusion of each service, a reminder of the priesthood of all believers and our collective call to ministry.

Special services have been a cornerstone of our worship calendar, including:

- **Graduation Sunday** to honor our students.
- **Pride Month** celebrations that uplifted our commitment to being an open and affirming congregation.
- A **Poetry Sunday** service.
- An **outdoor worship and pet blessing** service.
- **Advent contemplative evening services**, beautifully led by the Lundbergs.
- A **youth-oriented Advent service**, guided by Eileen Enterline.
- Two **healing services**, offering a space for renewal and comfort.

## **Groups and Ministries**

This year, we nurtured our spiritual growth through meaningful small groups:

- **Grief Group:** Co-led with Martha Sprague, we explored Francis Weller's *The Wild Edge of Sorrow*, creating a sacred space to process loss and support one another.
- **Weeknight Book Group:** In partnership with Ralph Datema and Karen Graham, we delved into Brené Brown's *Atlas of the Heart*, fostering deep connection and vulnerability.

These groups have been vital in building community and engaging with the emotional and spiritual needs of our members.

## **Special Events and Outreach**

Our congregation stepped up this year to make a meaningful impact in our wider community through a variety of events:

- The **Art Fair**, led by Eileen Enterline, celebrated creativity and connection.
- **Church workdays** and **highway cleanup events** engaged us in stewardship.
- The “**Tell My Story**” **film screening**, hosted with the Mental Health Team, sparked important conversations about mental health awareness.
- A visit to La Puente offices and a **potato gleaning project** yielded over 500 pounds of food to support La Puente and the Parker Task Force.

At **Douglas County Pride**, we showcased our open and affirming spirit with a new banner, custom stickers, and an easy-up awning—all made possible by a grant from the Juniper Formation.

### **Administrative Improvements**

This year, we welcomed Rebekah Troyer as our new administrative assistant after Peggy Campbell’s departure in July. Peggy graciously helped orient me to existing procedures before her departure, and we are grateful for her dedicated service to UCCPH. Rebekah brought needed graphic and web design skills to our team. She has revitalized our communication tools, including redesigning the weekly newsletter, Sunday worship bulletins, and a soon-to-be-launched church homepage. Her efforts have brought new energy and organization to our office.

To enhance coordination, I have utilized Google spreadsheets for worship planning and volunteer scheduling, ensuring smoother collaboration across our teams.

### **Pastoral Care**

Pastoral care has been a central focus of my ministry. I have made a point to visit with our church elders, members who are hospitalized, and have engaged in countless meaningful conversations, both in person and over the phone. These connections have deepened my understanding of our congregation and strengthened our shared bonds.

This year, I presided over the **celebration of life for Jack Nordin** and the **baptism of Lukas Galloway**, sacred moments that underscored the richness of our communal life.

### **Membership and Engagement**

While church membership ebbs and flows, we have been blessed with several new members finding their way to UCC Parker Hilltop. To foster engagement and retention, I

initiated and led a **focus group** targeting working-age adults and families, seeking ways to better meet their needs and deepen their connection to our church.

### **Continuing Education and Training**

I have committed to my own growth as a pastor through:

- Monthly participation in a **community of practice** led by Diane Weible.
- An intensive **coaching program** focused on personal and professional growth, led by Vince Tango.
- Required **boundary training** at the RMC Annual Celebration and upcoming **anti-racism training** this spring.

I remain connected to my home congregations in Oklahoma City and Wichita and stay grounded through relationships with colleagues, friends, and family in ministry.

### **Association and Conference Involvement**

This year, I represented our church at the **RMC Annual Celebration**, attending alongside Ralph Datema and Kay Frunzi. Following this, Leslie Parsons developed profiles of our association's churches. I also participated in the **Southeast Association meeting** in the fall and was honored to be invited to serve as a member-at-large on the **Southeast Association Board**, attending my first board meeting in January.

### **Vision for 2025**

As I reflect on 2024, I am deeply grateful for the spirit and dedication of this congregation. Together, we have taken meaningful steps to strengthen our worship, outreach, and connections with one another. Looking ahead, I am excited for the possibilities of 2025: deepening our community's engagement, expanding our ministries, and continuing to live into our call as a welcoming and affirming church.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your pastor. It is a joy to be part of this vibrant and loving community. Together, we will continue to journey forward, guided by faith and love.

Faithfully,  
Rev. Quinn