

President's Message – December 2015

Another year has come and gone. As we all settle into the Holiday season and look back at 2015, we should all be proud of the progress we have made as a congregation. Not only in working through our interim ministry in a productive manner, but also in not letting the interim ministry define our present circumstances. We have continued to march forward even as we seek to bring a new minister into our caring community.

Specifically, I have been impressed that we have begun to generally become more involved in social outreach and social justice in the past year as a congregation. Particularly in the past month, members have begun to take the initiative and organize to show support for Syrian refugees and the wider Muslim community in Kansas. Additionally, we are beginning to make our values more publicly known by demonstrating at a local Islamic center and seeking to place a #BlackLivesMatter sign on the property, and demonstrating against gun violence (in the rain). These are courageous acts that speak to our values, and encourage others in the wider community of similar mind to join us. I applaud these efforts and hope to see many more as we move into 2016.

Looking forward to the New Year, we will be entering the home stretch in our ministerial search. The Search Committee will soon start receiving information about those ministers indicating their interest in being called by our congregation, and we will have a new minister starting in the fall. We will also be re-visiting our goals as a congregation in the spring by looking over the draft budget, conducting our annual stewardship campaign and settling on the 2016 - 2017 church year budget in June.

I find myself in an anticipatory mood for what next year holds for our church. Join me in fostering the growth, change and ongoing work we hope to accomplish. Let's make 2016 a banner year for SMUUCH.

Zach Irwin
Board President