



The Spark

The Newsletter of
the Chalice Lighter
Program Committee
Winter 2022

As the Covid pandemic enters its third year, our UU Faith and congregations are more important than ever in connecting us to community and helping us find sources of hope. But this has been a challenging time for all congregations, especially smaller ones. This winter, \$20,000 grants from the Central Eastern Region Chalice Lighter Program, entirely funded by your generosity, are giving hope to two small congregations: The **UU Congregation of the Catskills**, in Kingston, New York with 100 members, and the **UU Church of East Aurora**, New York, with 35 members. Both are starting projects to solve the puzzle of how to grow and thrive as congregations face the barriers of the pandemic, distance, and aging congregations. Thank you for giving them this opportunity to reach for the future.

The **UU Congregation of the Catskills, in Kingston, NY**, is excited and appreciative to receive a grant to support their vision for the future.



“This grant will allow us to purchase new equipment for live streaming from the sanctuary to our online congregants, for virtually integrating the online and in-person attendees into one audience that can communicate with each other visually and verbally and participate in the service in similar ways, and for improving the sanctuary lighting to provide higher-quality streaming. Also, a membership/outreach program will be established targeting people of all ages, particularly younger adults, throughout the region. Today, we cannot rely on getting people to

our physical doors, we must instead reach out virtually, and this grant will help us prepare our space and technology to do this.”

The **UU Church of East Aurora, New York** is preparing to take action to create a growing and vibrant church.

“The Chalice Lighter Program grant will help us to enhance lives, create a more welcoming community, and create a stronger outreach system. This grant will allow us to:

- Restart our children’s program. We plan to use the new Jubilee Kids! and Junior Youth Jubilee programs to build an anti-racist, multi-cultural religious foundation for our community’s children while engaging in racial and ethnic identity development.
- Engage community leaders in a conversation about racial justice using a virtual reality program called the 1,000 Cut Journey as a starting point.
- Create quarterly educational and spiritual events to engage like-minded families and activists in our work to create a better world.
- Hire a part-time Membership Coordinator to help us create a more welcoming church.”



Thank you for your support of the Chalice Lighter Program, on behalf of the CER Chalice Lighter Committee and staff.