I am a narrative person. I enjoy the story-telling format of conversation and reporting. So, for better or for worse, that’s how this report will read. I am taking some tips in formatting that I acquired from some of my fellow ACMs and infusing them into this document. The truth is that it’s really hard to not write solely from the perspective of the last two and a half months. In many ways, I don’t remember what I did pre-COVID very clearly at all. This recap is my best attempt at trying to briefly review a whole year that has been very skewed in a very short amount of time.

**Personal Favorite Highlights:**

Annual Meeting: May 2019 - Poughkeepsie, NY

First Day in Amistad Center in new position: May 22, 2019

First Ordination in this position: June 2019 – Rev. Anesta Vannoy-Kwame

First Ecclesiastical Council: July 2019 - Rev. Sam Kinsman

General Synod in Milwaukee, WI: June 2019

UCCNY Staff Retreat: August 2019

1st Conference Council Meeting: September 2020

Visiting Southern Africa & meeting potential new partners for NYUCC: November 2020

Ugly Sweater Christmas Party: December 2019

**What Keeps me up at Night?**

At the time of the writing of this document, we are in the midst of a global pandemic. What keeps me up at night these days? Everything. Metaphorically, of course, but everything, nonetheless. In terms of our churches: the future of their potency, their current relativity, and their work in the past of creating legacy. It is in those moments, that true vitality is modeled before me and informs the work I do for the church. It’s a cycle of sorts.

**Surprises in Ministry?**

My surprises in ministry never cease to amaze. I am always caught off guard at how our job descriptions are all so detailed and yet at the same time nowhere near comprehensive of all we do and all we are called to be. I am sometimes overwhelmed by the amount of politics
played in the Church and just when I feel like all is lost, there are people who outside of a building show Church is its truest and most authentic form.

**What are a few emerging priorities?**
A few emerging priorities for me are re-defining vitality from what it was before and what it can look like in the future. I also need to begin to carve mental space for reimagining ministry opportunities in communities of color and rural areas. I do not believe I need to do this on my own; but I do feel as though some freestyle brainstorming wouldn’t go amiss. Moreover, an emphasis on mental health and mental illness needs to be on a front-burner. It’s always been a passion of mine; however, there really hasn’t been time to emphasize it the way I’ve wanted to in my ministry program. Now that (what seems to be) the entire world is taking note of mental health fragility, I do believe there is an opportunity to make this forefront and not feel like I’m neglecting other parts of my job.

**What are the Questions I am not asking?**
Out of sheer terror, I am not asking: Will there even be a Conference in five-ten years from now? Out of fear of being right, I am not asking if the UCC will buckle down and let go of what makes it a system and embrace the faith that it teaches but lacks. In our local churches, I am not asking what are you afraid of? To our Pastors, I am not asking: What would you rather be doing? What binds you? What makes you feel free? All of these neglected questions are tied together by one thing: If I asked those questions, I have no idea where I place the answers. They say not to ask a question unless you really want to know the answer. More than likely, I don’t want to hear the answer because then I don’t have to feel inadequate about not being able to solve the problems.

**Pinches or Crunches?**
A pinch and a crunch continues to be money. I say that full understanding that its not unique to me or my area of ministry. I am stuck when I know that so many churches and ministries could be reimagined and vital in their communities but there isn’t currently an open source of money to fund any of these things. Pre-COVID, money was scarce. Post-COVID, I expect it to be invisible for a long time. The flip side to that is that money doesn’t define possibility. So, things are possible despite dollars; AND, securing some sort of well to draw from is a non-negotiable.

**Spirit Sightings?**
Oh my goodness! It may not seem like it based on some of the paragraphs above; but, I see Spirit everyday. Now, I’m also LOOKING for it everyday at this point. But, yes, everyday! I see it in our virtual worship services, I see it in our FB posts, and our multiple weekly conversations. I see Spirit clearly in the fact that David Gaewski was moving us toward virtual office PRE-pandemic which put us in a smoother transition space when the pandemic actually reared its head. I see it in the ability of the Conference staff to name that we have NO IDEA what we are doing…and still…get up everyday and try to figure it out again. I can’t explain enough how nothing but Spirit could be responsible for that. Nothing else makes any sense but Spirit keeps us going.
**Where is Hope in what is being done?**

I feel hope in adaptation. I see hope in people’s determination not to die in the many ways that death is possible. I see hope in a faith that allows room for doubt and yet remains strong enough to (so far) weather the daily storms in which it finds itself. Hope is now not just a feeling. It exists in touch after being separated. It lives in feeling sunlight on our faces. It grows through conversation with one another. It is made tangible because we need it to be so – now more than ever.