

Dear Friends of That All May Freely Serve,

Thank you for your steadfast support in many, many ways over these last 26 years. In March of 1993 it all began when Rev. Dr. Jane “Janie” Adams Spahr was called to serve the Downtown United Presbyterian Church in Rochester, NY. After charges were filed challenging the call, Janie was denied the pastorate because she identified as a Lesbian. It was in response to that event that That All May Freely Serve (TAMFS) began and its work of serving the LGBTQAI+/Queer Community was born.

Since late in 2013, we have operated as an all-volunteer organization. Using our vast network of friends and allies, we have been able to continue as a force for prayer, presence and advocacy in the cause of love and justice for our community.

As we ask your help to continue our mission, we also announce some recent changes. Jim Rees, our amazing and faithful friend and ally retired on March 15th. Jim and Mary have been with us from the very start; and in recognizing Jim’s service, we thank Mary along with him. We love you both and hold you in our hearts as co-shakers and movers in all that has transpired since the earliest of days.

We are grateful, as well, that Jim and our single recommendation for his successor, Marie Gibson, has agreed to carry on the work! Marie will be responsible for the record-keeping and acknowledgment of giving and donations to That All May Freely Serve and is already on the job. Thank you, Marie!

Now, about a change to our all-volunteer status:

Anyone who knows Janie Spahr knows that her life’s work of ministry has continued long into her retirement. Through all my time of leadership with That All May Freely Serve, Janie has been there every time we asked (and often without needing to ask!).

In addition to her work with San Francisco Theological Seminary’s Center for Innovation in Ministry/The Janie Spahr Initiative; The Spahr Center in Marin, and Trans HeartLine – Janie continues to serve the virtual congregation that grew around her when so many of us had no where else to go. And all of this work, all of it, is part of how we see the ministry and mission of That All May Freely Serve.

With that in mind, I am delighted to announce that Janie will return to That All May Freely Serve as a paid member of our organization, helping us in specific instances, especially as we focus on the critical mission to the Trans Community. She will be our only paid staff member.

So your donation in 2019 will help us to continue our work in these many ways, including being part of recognizing and supporting Janie’s efforts on behalf of us all.

Thank you for all each and everyone of you do to change our world, just by being who you are each day. And, thank you for holding us and each other in your prayers. We love you!

Peace,
Ray

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This It is also a pleasure announce that Janie Spahr will continue her workd for Janie Spahr for her life in service to many of us and many who might never know her name. . It is. Our love and gratitude , who along with Mary have been with us from the very start - In 2013, TAMFS transitions to an all-volunteer organization. We enhanced our social media presence and the national community that grew with us over the decades, continuing our mission of pastoral care and progressive legislation within the Presbyterian Church (USA). With many others, we were actively engaged in the *finally* ratified changes to our constitution that would eventually lift any restrictions for queer folk in having their marriages officiated by Ministers of Word and Sacrament in the PCUSA, as well as the ordination of people who identified as LGBTQAI+/Queer. Even the language of marriage in our constitution was changed to “between two people” rather than a “man and a woman.”

In 2015, we sponsored *Rock Stars and Prophets: Generations of Love and Service* at Stony Point Center in Stony Point, NY. More than ninety (90) leaders that spanned five decades of change in the church gathered for this once in a lifetime event. These are the folks who began and continue the foundation for the future work and challenges still before us.

Following the conference, TAMFS originated an overture to the 222nd General Assembly that called the church to acknowledge the harms it had done as an institution to the Queer Community. We believed then and continue to believe today that until the church admits to the negative impact its earlier teachings and practices have had on LGBTQIA+/Queer folk that healing and reconciliation will be held in check.

Many will remember that the 222 General Assembly in Portland, Oregon convened one week after the Pulse Nightclub shooting, a gay bar in Orlando, Florida. It was on June 12 that a gunman killed 49 people, people just out having a good time being who they were. They were killed for who they were...Queer.

Hopes that the General Assembly and the PCUSA would accept a national role in the voice for healing and make it clear that we as a denomination had turned a corner toward justice and love for all – was not to be. The overture that would have provided a foundation for moving forward was voted down, in part due to the active opposition and lack of support by some of the other progressive groups. Personally, it remains one of the lowest points in the life of the church, since a previously inadequate response to the murder of Matthew Sheppard.

Still, we are here and we are committed to providing pastoral care through our network, as well as participating in very specific ways to move our church and community forward.

Early last year, Janie Spahr began working with Jordan Decker. Jordan is a trans man who had a dream of providing a home for folks following surgery for transition; a place of support by those who knew the journey of transition, as well as those committed to the sacred care of others in becoming who they were meant to be. That All May Freely Serve acted as the fiduciary agent with Downtown United Presbyterian Church to assist the newly formed “TransHeartline” establish itself in the Bay Area, while it pursued its own status as 501(c)3.

For the last year, we have focused our efforts, time and resources in helping to Jordan and TransHeartline become established, including opening a house on the campus of San Francisco Theological Seminary.