



2 West 64th Street • New York, NY 10023 • www.aeu.org
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ANNUAL SOCIETY REPORT

Society Report for Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County

Leader(s): Curt Collier (3/2021-present), Joe Chuman (2020)

President(s): Susan Lesh

Administrative Director/Office Contact: David Bland

Please provide brief updates on the following areas of your Society that occurred or developed in 2020:

Ethical Action:

- Climate:
- Racial Justice:
- Economic Justice:
- Development and Peace:
- Other:

Ethical Education (children ages 2-13) & Youth of Ethical Societies (teens ages 14-18) & Future of Ethical Societies (young adults ages 18-35): Our ethical education of children and youth suffered greatly during 2020 due entirely to the pandemic. While we attempted to offer Sunday school classes online, via Zoom, the children reportedly experienced zoom fatigue and were not engaged on that platform. We shifted to suggested activities at home with a once a month zoom conversation to check in; we changed our Sunday school's name to the "What's Up" club, to give it a more fun vibe. The goal of these conversations was to allow the children to have fun interactions, like show and tell, dance party, etc. When weather conditions permitted, we occasionally held physically distanced, masked outdoor gatherings; families gathered together and these were successful.

Communications: We are currently producing a monthly newsletter, online and physical, using FaceBook with a public and a private account, Twitter, and Instagram.



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Finances: We had several very generous large donations given to us to see us through these very challenging times and our main renter, a daycare center, re-opened in late spring 2020 and we have continued to receive her rent.

Membership: We experienced hardship in connecting with new people via the Zoom platform. While we have inducted a couple of new people, we are far below the trend we had established in recent years. We have also lost a few members, some to COVID, some to natural deaths.

New Developments: In December 2020, our Leader of 46 years, Joe Chuman, retired from our leadership. This was a momentous event in our Society and we spent much of Fall 2020 preparing for the transition. Our Leadership Advisory Committee determined that we would benefit from an Interim Leader, to allow for an appropriate time for the membership to acclimate to a different leader's style. We hired Curt Collier who joined us in March 2021 and is currently providing intentional leadership to help us with the transition.

Goals for 2021:

1. Search for a permanent leader
2. Have the lay leadership engage in vision and mission work
3. Open safely with COVID precautions with a hybrid model for platforms and large meetings