What a year! What an understatement. Regardless of who you are, where you live, your profession, or your financial status, the pandemic impacted each and every one of us. And while each of us could talk about the negative impacts we have experienced, I choose to do the opposite. I hope to capture what we experienced here at InterFaith: a hard, unprecedented year that was still full of hope, joy, and blessings.

We learned how to pivot! And some days, it felt like we pivoted, then pivoted, and pivoted one more time just to end the day. But during unprecedented times, we had to adapt. We confirmed that change was hard. We confirmed that we didn’t really like change. And sometimes we shed a tear or two, but not because change was hard or we didn’t like it; we shed those tears because we saw people blessed in ways we would have never dreamed of. All of those changes enabled us to bless more people in more ways than if we had not faced those challenges.

Just a few lessons learned: How to provide medical care with the patient sitting in the car. How to triage dental patients over the phone. How to use telehealth for medical and mental health visits. How to run a food pantry in the middle of a health care clinic. Oh, yes—and we learned how to operate a vaccine clinic while not interrupting a single other patient visit!

Speaking of vaccines, we were excited to be one of the first clinics in the state to have the COVID-19 vaccine. Then reality hit: how are we going to do this? But we did—an example of tears of joy. I never expected to see an injection bring such joy.

I mentioned our food pantry. What a blessing! Often times you could literally see the weight lift off a mother’s shoulders when she realized she would be leaving the clinic with food for her children. We saw the concept of “community” demonstrated right in front of our eyes as strangers would share how to prepare a fresh vegetable someone else had never cooked before. And yes, we teared up when a patient asked, “Since I live alone, I often cook for my neighbors who are elderly. But I haven’t been able to do so lately since my hours were cut. Could I take a little extra to prepare a meal or two for them?”

We showed up! And by “we,” I mean each and every person who gave of their time, treasure, and talents. Our staff showed up day after day, amidst changing protocols and uncertainty, and never once backed down from providing care to those who walked through our doors. Volunteers showed up. Donors showed up. Our board worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure we had everything we needed to show up another day.

And one more little thing—we turned 30 this past year. And while our celebration was low-key, the impact of 30 years of health care ministry to those in need was tremendous.

Yes, it has been a year of tears. Tears for missed opportunities. Missed relationships. And even tears over death. But this clinic has also been blessed beyond measure with tears of JOY!

Thank you for continuing to be part of our gift of hope and joy.

Melissa H. Knight
In 2021, InterFaith Health Clinic celebrated 30 years of service to our community. This gave us a window to reassess our offering—the pressures of the pandemic notwithstanding. Indeed, our COVID-19 response proved an excellent indicator of our ability to meet the health care needs of those we serve. Low-income uninsured and underserved people can rely on InterFaith for quality, affordable wraparound services—including medical care, dental care, mental health care, prescription medication assistance, and access to specialty care—as well as for interventions such as free testing, vaccinations, and help with case management of COVID-19. This year affirmed our mandate to keep InterFaith’s doors open for the foreseeable future to those in the greatest need of a health care home.

**FY21 SERVICES OVERVIEW**

One of six Safety Net clinics initially chosen by the State of Tennessee to administer the COVID-19 vaccine, InterFaith Health Clinic began vaccinating patients in February 2021 and by June 30, 2021, had administered 2,076 vaccinations.
InterFaith’s on-site volunteers include physicians, dentists, oral surgeons, dental hygienists, nurses, counselors, specialists, and lay volunteers. During the difficult circumstances of the pandemic, these volunteers gave 580 hours of their expertise to our patients here at the clinic—a contribution valued at more than $49,000.

Off site, a network of literally hundreds of medical professionals donate their services through InterFaith specialty referrals. Patients can receive care at substantially reduced cost from specialists in practices that include:

- Allergy and Immunology
- Anesthesiology
- Cardiology
- Dermatology
- Gastroenterology
- General Surgery
- Neurology
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Oncology
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedics
- Pathology
- Psychiatry
- Urology

InterFaith provides prescription medications to our patients for a $15 handling fee for a 3-month supply. In FY21, InterFaith dispensed a total wholesale value of $1.2 million in medication, all of which was donated.

DENTAL CARE

InterFaith’s dental clinic performed 781 hygiene cleanings and took on 253 new patients in FY21. We hired additional dental staff that allowed this department to increase its services by 23% this year. The value of all the cleanings, fillings, root canals, crowns, bridges, dentures and partials we provided this year represents more than $1,000,000 in the private-sector market.

FRESH-FOOD PANTRY

In response to nutritional needs created by the pandemic, InterFaith launched a fresh-food pantry one afternoon each week. Last fiscal year, InterFaith treated 319 new patients. With your support, we are able to continue reaching those who need health care.

MENTAL HEALTH

InterFaith’s mental health counseling department saw 105 patients successfully complete their mental health treatment plans in FY21.

319 NEW PATIENTS

During the past year, 4,928 individuals received fresh produce and healthy pantry items through 67 food distributions.
InterFaith strives to keep overhead costs low so we can funnel every available dollar to patient care. In-kind donations and support from volunteers help minimize expenses.

In FY21, InterFaith received contributions from 857 individual donors totaling $2,775,752.91. Support from grants, 5 special events, and coordinated appeals comprised the majority of our income and offset the decrease in patient services fees caused by the pandemic. United Way of Greater Knoxville, local governments, and the state of Tennessee also support our health care ministry.
This report is dedicated to Dr. Harry Kay Ogden, volunteer, board member, and the first paid medical director of InterFaith Health Clinic. Dr. Ogden passed away just days after InterFaith’s 30th anniversary. At the end of his service as Medical Director, one of his sons brought Dr. Ogden’s well-worn leather doctor’s bag to InterFaith, where it sits to this day—a touchstone for our tradition of compassionate care.