

**Coordinating Team
Report to the Board of Trustees**

February 2020

STAFF AND CONGREGATIONAL ISSUES AND TRENDS

•Environmental Justice Core Group

The 2019-20 Environmental Justice Core Group has now held five meetings. We have examined environmental injustice playing out at the local, regional and global levels and during this exploration tested hypotheses about causes. At our March meeting we will de-center the human species as we consider the moral and practical consequences of our use and abuse of other living creatures. In April we explore the theme of “despair” and in May look for “hope.” The group is comprised of 13 members and staff facilitators Kathleen Carpenter and Doug Swaim. The goal for the year is to gain a deep understanding of systemic environmental injustice in preparation for working for transformative change.

•Racial Justice Core Group

We continue to have a committed group of 12 participants for this year’s group. The structure laid out in the 2017 – 2018 group is proving very helpful as a guideline. Each month participants do work outside of the group, engage in a paired conversation on an assigned topic, work to prepare an end of year book report, then in sessions learn a new term and explore a portion of our 400-year history of white supremacy.

Our February meeting will include an in-depth exploration of the Reconstruction and examine the notion of self-determination, reflecting on three key black leaders—Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, and Marcus Garvey—and the ways they each embodied this notion. We continue to find this a group much further along in its thinking than the initial group, something we think reflects the ever-deepening work in the congregation as a whole on issues of racial injustice.

• The Focus 2020 Task Group is coordinating the multi-phased “rebranding and outreach” project that won MET grant funding last spring. Group members are

Barry Ahrendt (chair), Manny Allen, Sherry Sample, Kim Hutchinson, Tom Nunnenkamp and Doug Swaim (staff). After discussions between the Task Group and UUCC Board, a decision was made to call a special meeting of the membership on Sunday, March 8, to vote on a possible name change to either the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlotte or the Unitarian Universalist Community of Charlotte. Of course, if neither wins a 2/3rds vote, then our name will remain the Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte. The Task Group is beginning to look ahead to the next phases of the Focus 2020 project: rebranding, new exterior signage and marketing.

- Eve Stevens will begin her family leave by Friday, February 21. The UUCC policy will provide eight weeks of paid leave. Eve is opting to extend her time away by two additional weeks, using vacation time for this extension. She will return to her role in early May.

- Approximately 20 participants attended the Coordinating Team’s session on Sunday, February 09. The CT presented an overview of how we operate as a congregation, reviewed ENDS and MEANS work, and offered three different depictions of our organization. The session included extended dialogue with those present.

- Our Intersectional Justice Team has now met at 7:30 a.m. for the past three Tuesdays. The middle session included a “summit” of representatives from each of our four Engagement Groups. The Team is now planning for a presentation to the congregation to take place on Saturday, April 4, and repeated on Sunday, April 5. This will help bring members up-to-date on our process and the challenges we are facing.

- Recent days have presented special opportunities for us to host two significant events in March. The new president of the Meadville Lombard Theological Seminary, our UU seminary in Chicago, Dr, Elias Ortega, will be offering a talk here on Sunday, March 15. Well-known singer-songwriter and folk musician Holly Near will be in concert on Sunday, March 29. Both Ortega and Near approached us to inquire about the prospects of coming here.

TEAM REPORTS

CONGREGATIONAL CARE TEAM

submitted by Martha Kniseley, Adult Programming Coordinator

This year's Congregational Care Team includes Sage Brook, Craig Corzine, Annie Flint, Karen Foster, Nancy Greene, Jane Kusterer, Sheila Lay (chair), and Judy Love. We embrace the roles of providing support to our members who have long- and short-term health concerns, who are grieving the loss of a family member, or celebrating the birth of a new baby.

Over the past three months, about 24 cards expressing sympathy or encouragement have been sent to our members. Six meals were delivered. In December, thirty holiday cards were sent to members, particularly folks who are unable to get to church on a regular basis. Poinsettias were delivered to nine members who experienced significant losses or health challenges this past year, and to staff members.

Two of our members who are mourning the death of a spouse or are experiencing long term health challenges received a beautiful prayer shawl from our Healing Threads ministry.

The Memorial Service Reception team created two receptions in honor of Gaynelle Freeman in December and Bob Bushorn in January. Visitors and members alike continue to express appreciation for this ministry to the families and friends.

We receive regular reports from members engaged in our Visitation Program. They see members on a monthly who still feel connected to the UCC but are unable to attend.

We have also heard from members suggesting the adoption of a Stephen Ministry-type model of care. While we understand that members may need extra support during personal crises, this program requires a selective process of choosing caregivers who are not professional therapists, many hours of training, and most importantly, ongoing support from the ministers. It is something to

consider for the future; in the meantime, members are welcome to contact our ministers for pastoral care and resources.

The CC Team will continue to be responsive to the needs of our community. It should be noted that “small groups” such as the Discovery Circles, the Music Team and choir, women’s groups, book groups, and affinity groups continue to provide congregational care for their own members. Building on the Small Group Ministry model will serve us well as we strive to take care of each other.

OPEN DOOR SCHOOL MANAGING TEAM

submitted by Doug Swaim, Director of Administration

The ODS MT manages the ODS, including hiring and supervising the ODS Director. The Team is composed of eight members: the ODS Director (ex-officio), ODS Parent Council Chair, UUCC Director of Administration, and five at-large UUCC members. Currently the UUCC member representatives are Mehgan Beverley, Roger Coates, David Flynn (chair), Elaine Peed and Jennifer Taylor. The UUCC Board approves all member appointments to the Managing Team.

Director Locklear reports that the second half of the schoolyear is off to a good start. After experiencing slight under-enrollment in the fall, all but two seats in “four-day fours” have been filled.

In January the Managing Team approved director Locklear’s recommended schedule of tuition increases averaging about 3% for the 2020-21 school year. In-house registration for 2020-21 took place the second half of January and “public” registration is under way now.

The Managing Team is exploring two initiatives. One is fairly straightforward: how to increase the resources available for scholarships so that the school serves as diverse a population as possible. The second is broader: exploring the notion of “expanding the ODS brand.” Subcommittees of the Managing Team are developing proposals to put before the full Team.

SECURITY TEAM

submitted by Doug Swaim, Director of Administration

We have an 8-10-member Safety Patrol that opens and closes our building on Sunday mornings and keeps watch during services and special events, providing a measure of insurance against untoward events. A subset of the Safety Patrol constitutes the Security Team. Evan Visco serves as chair. Other Team members are Scott Hickman, Rich Exley and Shawn Morton. Doug Swaim is the principal staff liaison, along with Belinda Perry, who represents the CYRE program.

The main challenge faced by the Team this year has been maintaining a full complement of Sunday morning Safety Patrol volunteers. Patrol members, and Team chair Visco in particular, had to take on extra assignments for several months as the Patrol was short members. Recruiting has been successful, however, and the Patrol once again has a full roster. The Team intends to run Sunday morning volunteers through training exercises this spring.

At the urging of one of our Board members, the Safety Patrol recently began putting cones at our entrances on Gaynor Rd. on Sunday mornings. The cones are a reminder not to obscure sight lines by parking too close to our parking lot entrances.

STEWARDSHIP TEAM

submitted by John Herrick, Director of Music

The Stewardship Team is charged with devising and implementing a stewardship campaign for the purpose of securing financial pledges from our members to support the work of the congregation. In addition, the team takes seriously the work of stewardship as a spiritual practice and discipline by giving members the opportunity to become an integral part of the congregation's mission through meaningful financial involvement. Members of the team include: Ben Baxter, John Burns, Kelly Greene, John Herrick, Cyndi Martinec, Franklin McClelland, Gwynne Movius, Neal Sigmon and Jim Van Fleet. Ben Baxter is the chair and Kelly and John are the staff liaisons.

Faced with a \$60,000 budget deficit this year, the team chose to focus its 2019-2020 stewardship campaign on raising pledges by that amount, which is tantamount to an 8% increase above current pledge income. Entitled the “2020 YES! Campaign,” the team is striving to make this year’s campaign upbeat and engaging and is asking all members to consider an 8% pledge increase. As of the writing of this report, and at five months into the 10-month campaign, the team has raised \$5,846 towards its \$60,000 goal. There have been some setbacks due to decreased pledges and deaths, but 118 of 439 pledge units have increased their pledges so far (as compared to 34 who have decreased their pledges). 95% of those who have increased their pledges met the 8% goal increase challenge, which is 22% of all existing pledge units. The average monthly response rate of those responding to the stewardship campaign over the past five months is 71.6%.

Realizing that the team isn’t close to reaching its \$60,000 goal, despite increased canvassing and positive campaign messages, the team has decided to target 36 individual pledging units within the congregation with specific pledge increase asks of \$1,500-\$3,000 year. With the pledge monies the team is able to raise, they will then go to the congregation citing the generosity of these members, even asking these generous members to speak to other members they know. This campaign within the campaign will begin in mid-February, with the broader appeal going out to the congregation in March. The timing is intended to give the Coordinating Team and Finance Team projected income figures they will need for their budgeting process this spring. The team is also working with the Coordinating Team in presenting a meeting open to all to discuss the congregation’s finances and budgeting process.

WORSHIP TEAM

submitted by Jay Leach, Minister

An energetic team consisting of Mic Elvenstar, Carol Hartley, Michael Kelly, Lee Movius, Erin Stody, Yasmiin Tarlton, Judy Weingarten and Paul Wilson continue to provide valuable guidance and feedback to our ministers and Director of Music.

In monthly meetings the team assesses the overall functioning of all aspects of our services and reviews each service in detail. These prove to be lively exchanges highlighting both appreciation and suggestions for ways to improve what we are offering in our Sunday services.

In upcoming meetings the team will turn its attention to our summer services and to the theme chosen for those services.

While the impact of this team may not be felt in any given month, over time this group has helped us make important changes and improvements in the functioning of our services. We remain grateful for the gift of their time and insights.

Attendance Data for January

Attendance Area	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Jan-19
ARESD Offerings	267	217	253	292
Community Building	204	363	106	135
Congregational Team Meetings	175	106	108	113
CYRE	446	448	516	651
Family Ministry	24	43	55	63
Music	145	187	188	341
Intersectional Justice	34	155	97	103
Visitors	70	111	91	79
Worship	1074	1558	1352	1215
Totals	2439	3188	2766	2992