

**Coordinating Team  
Report to the Board of Trustees  
August 2020**

This item requires a Board vote:

**PPP Loan**

In April, the Board of Trustees approved the acceptance of a loan for \$173,062 from the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) as a part of the Federal CARES Act. We applied for the loan primarily because Open Door School lost almost all of its income when it closed in mid-March. The goal was to help cover the ODS shortfall through August 31 which was projected to be approximately \$110,000.

As a reminder, this loan can be forgiven if the recipient maintains and pays staff at 2019 levels and uses it to cover eight weeks of salaries and benefits during the crisis. We have documented our expenses accordingly. While the opportunity to apply for loan forgiveness is not yet available, we are prepared to do so and anticipate that the full amount of the loan will be forgiven.

At this stage we are now able to present our recommended plan for the distribution of these funds. To honor the terms of the loan, we forwarded ODS an amount to cover eight weeks of salaries and benefits. In July, we transferred the actual amount which totaled \$67,889. With this transfer of funds and the cash on hand ODS can cover payroll and expenses through August 31.

In keeping with our original projections and in order to insure that the school can reopen in a fiscally sound position, the Coordinating Team, following the advice of our Treasurer, Ron Maccaroni, is recommending that the Board approve allocating our PPP loan in this manner: from the loan amount of \$173,062, we recommend allocating \$107,889 to ODS and \$65,173 to the UUCC.

As you will note in our year-end financial report, should you approve this distribution, the amount allocated to the UUCC will offset our deficit for 2019 – 2020, providing for a nominal surplus. It also creates an available reserve for cash flow upon the reopening of our school. [See below for more on our school and reopening.]

In addition to the financial and membership reports, the Coordinating Team (CT) brings the following items to the Board for your attention and awareness:

- Open Door School In March the Open Door School closed its doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During this closure, the ODS Managing Team with the help of the Coordinating Team submitted a reopening safety plan that was approved by the UUCC Board of Trustees. This plan presented the terms under which our school could safely reopen. Per the plan, the ODS Managing Team would assess the situation of the school under the guidance of the reopening plan to determine if ODS could open safely in September. Based both on local health statistics and on low enrollment at that time, a decision was made by the Managing Team not to reopen in September. Under the rules of the original reopening agreement, the ODS Managing Team will reconvene in October to assess a possible January 2021 opening.

- FOCUS 2020 The Focus 2020 Task Group—led by Barry Arendt with participation from Manny Allen, Kim Hutchinson, Tom Nunnenkamp, Sherry Sample and from Joe Argent representing the Communications Team—continues its work. The Group is now focused on “rebranding” the UUCC. They have contracted with a design firm who is creating a new logo for us; they have offered an initial round of feedback on proposed options from the firm. They anticipate finalizing the selection of the logo in the next few weeks. With this, they will have completed the work of leading us through the selection of a new name, of creating a new “tagline” for us, and of a new “brand.”

There are two remaining stages in their work: with the involvement of the Building and Grounds Team, they will create new signage for our site. And, they will launch a marketing effort in support of our new identify. The Group anticipates delaying the focus of the marketing effort until we are able to resume meeting in person.

- Website The long effort of creating a new website for the UUCC is in its final weeks. Our hope is to stage a “soft” launch of the new site on September 8<sup>th</sup> and to use *Currents* on September 10<sup>th</sup> to inform the congregation of this new resource. Our hope is that this new site—admittedly designed with an in-person congregation in mind—will serve to help attract new participation in the congregation while also informing our ongoing membership. We look forward to

the opportunity to incorporate the new name, tagline and branding in our new website. It has been intentionally created with the intent to offer a more fluid platform for communication, one that can and will be updated on a regular basis.

- 2020 – 2021 Theme We have spent the summer engaging with the theme “Celebrating Community: “. . . knowing that the place is shared . . .” As we move into the fall, we’ll launch our new congregational theme in the service on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>: “Becoming the Community We Want to Be: Barriers, Boundaries and Belonging.”

We will continue with a celebratory focus on community while also asking hard questions of ourselves and of the larger community about what may be keeping us from being the community we aspire to be. We’ll look at both positive and challenging aspects of boundaries, at the ways what helps create a shared identity can also foster a barrier to others’ participation, at the ways dominant cultures oppress and exclude, and at how we both reflect and challenge so many of the injustices about which we are concerned.

- New Core Groups We will launch a new round of year-long Core Groups early this fall. In keeping with our cycle, this year we’ll return to a focus on Cultural Justice and on Economic Justice. Members will be informed in a special eblast and in upcoming issues of *Currents* about these new opportunities; these communications to members will explain the ways they can express interest in participation. As some Board members are aware, these Groups require a commitment to a deep and challenging process of exploring implications of injustices and of coming to a deeper understanding of the need for comprehensive transformation.

Eve Stevens will be leading the Cultural Justice Core Group assisted by prior participants in this intensive experience. This Group will be focused on sexism, patriarchy and misogyny, immigrant issues, LGBTQ issues, and on religious exclusivity. This group will take an historical approach, asking the questions “Who are we?” and “Who really belongs?”

Jay Leach will be leading the Economic Justice Core Group assisted by members of the Group itself. Among the issues this Group will explore are: the ways our chosen founding narrative obscures our historically-rooted economic injustice,

the place of property and privilege in establishing a hierarchy in our nation, the long reach of slavery and the ongoing question of reparations, the egregious specter of pay inequity, and the continuing struggle for a living wage.

- UCC CARES Fund The UCC CARES Fund, created by special member contributions in the early stages of the pandemic, has a current balance of \$28,402.97. There have been no distributions in recent weeks. We continue to anticipate that the ongoing challenges of the pandemic will create needs among our members that may be met with support from this Fund. Board members may wish to help communicate the availability of this support to members who are experiencing hardship as a direct result of the pandemic. Requests for support can be communicated to either of our ministers.

- Building and Grounds In May, the Coordinating Team reported several building issues based on what we thought was the result of a power surge that took place during one of our spring storms. We have since investigated each of the issues separately with the help of our outside contractors and are pleased to report the following:

The malfunctioning HVAC unit is up and running after we fixed an electrical connection; the elevator failure was traced to an aging hydraulic line, which has been replaced without cost under our maintenance agreement;

Our solar array is still functioning and only required a computer reset on the data analysis portal;

Additionally, an outdoor blockage causing the leak at the end of the hallway in the office area has been cleared and repaired by two of our wonderful Building and Grounds Team members.

We have also recently had the entire building thoroughly cleaned and have established an ongoing cleaning schedule during the time when the building remains closed, we have replaced the carpet in the elevator, and have scheduled the installation of nosing on the stairs in the vestibule.

In the coming months members of the Building and Grounds Team along with Alesia Hutto will continue to meet with contractors to secure estimates for

upcoming Memorial Endowment Trust (MET) grant projects which include a change in signage based on the outcome of our Focus 2020 project, repair of the Freeman Hall roof, upgrades to the Sanctuary, installation of additional assisted listening devices and an electronic bulletin board in the vestibule.

### **Ongoing Activity**

We continue to strive to be a vital and engaged virtual congregation despite the many challenges that presents for all of us.

•Sunday Services We are exploring how to take advantage of the opportunities created by the virtual format. We'll soon have yet another opportunity to enjoy guest musicians who have created music for us from afar. We're able to expand our musical options significantly and will continue to explore ways to offer other kinds of music in this format.

Members have been engaged in creating the content of summer services under the leadership of our ministers. We've continued to offer this platform to a wide range of our members, many of whom particularly appreciate both the opportunity to reconnect in real time on our public Facebook page and in virtual coffee conversations after each service.

•Adult Programming Our ARES D Team has created a robust list of offerings around the notion of "common love" for this summer, small group conversations exploring shared affinities. Each month we continue to offer an engaging exploration of one of our member's spiritual experiences and commitments in our "Credo" series. This is a very accessible way to listen in on the heartbeats of our congregation. The Team is gearing up for a wide range of offerings in the coming months.

•Intersectional Justice Dozens of our members participated in Zoom trainings enabling them to participate in work to which we have been called by the leaders of our new co-conspiracy, the Reentry Housing Alliance. The RHA has expressed deep appreciation for the remarkable work of our members who have created an extensive data base charting potential housing opportunities for prior participants

in our carceral system. We are now exploring new ways to be engaged in the work of this group.

Engagement Groups have had challenges getting traction during the time in which we have been virtual only. We have recently infused our Environmental Justice Engagement Group and Racial Justice Engagement Group with new participants who have recently taken part in the Core Group experiences. We are beginning to work both to try to create more support and a heightened sense of urgency among our four existing Engagement Groups.

•Children, Youth, and Families Eve Stevens and Kathleen Carpenter are working with a small group of our members who are either educators or mental health professionals to create a series of offerings to provide spiritual and emotional support for children, youth, and families this fall as families face again the impossible task of schooling and working simultaneously from home.

We have three “Parenting in the Pandemic” small groups currently meeting monthly for guided spiritual reflection and a chance to offer one another support as they navigate the intensity of pandemic life with children at home. Those taking part in these groups have children in a variety of ages and stages from infant to high school age.

Kathleen continues to provide online programming for children and youth each Sunday while also beginning to prepare curricula and take-home materials for the fall in hopes of providing additional ways for children and youth to engage with CYRE.

•Congregational Care In addition to responding to care needs, our ministers and the Congregational Care Team continue to make phone calls and send cards to check in with our members. In addition, the Congregational Care Team is working with the Family Ministry Team to reach out to families regularly.

We are in the midst of offering a series inviting members of our community to join on Zoom for a series of hour-long “mini-retreats” focusing on easing anxiety.