

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

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

PPP Loan

Following up briefly on our PPP Loan, Truist Bank, our lender has yet to open the opportunity for us to apply for loan forgiveness. While we still anticipate that our \$173,062 loan will be forgiven, regrettably, we have no progress to report since last month.

Open Door School

After much analysis, thought and careful consideration, the ODS Managing Team unanimously voted on Monday, October 12 to reopen the school in January 2021! The team is still actively working on developing specific plans on class configurations (that are supported by the safety plan), but our plan is to reopen in the safest way possible in January. In the coming weeks Alesia Hutto will work with Sheila Locklear, ODS' Director and Suzy Moore, ODS' Office Manager, to help develop a timeline of the reopening process which will include a registration period, developing a schedule of classes offered based on enrollment, securing teacher contracts and preparing the facility. Sheila and Alesia will then work directly with the managing team to shore up the timeline and ensure its proper implementation. We will inform the congregation of the school's opening in *Currents* and keep the board informed on any need to know information throughout the reopening process.

FOCUS 2020

The Focus 2020 Task Group has officially received the full branding package from Airboat Inc., our contracted design firm. We will be bringing our relationship with them to a close this month. The professional staff will now proceed with

implementing our new branding materials with the help of the Communications Team and the Building and Grounds Team.

Only two stages of Focus 2020 work remain; the creation of new signage for our site (with the help of the Building and Grounds Team) and the launching of our marketing effort (with the help of our professional staff.) The Focus 2020 Task Group anticipates delaying the focus of the marketing effort until we can resume meeting in person.

Website

After many delays the new UUCC website is officially live! The new website was made possible through the hard work of the Website Task Group, The Focus 2020 Task Group, and the professional staff. The new look incorporates our new name and logo, brighter colors and an updated tagline. We will continue to highlight its launch in the coming weeks by drawing attention to our intentional features of the site. The new design of our website will allow staff and the Communications Team to update the site more easily. Overall feedback has been positive. We hope that you find our new website more accessible and user friendly.

We did find when launching our new website that we are currently being underserved by our web host. For \$134 annually, we don't get adequate service for the site that we have created. We don't receive appropriate technical support if an issue arises and we are on a shared network which slows down our website. We have identified a new webhosting service with a company that we currently have a relationship with. For \$80 a month, not only will we receive personal technical support, we will also be on a private network (which will make our site faster and give us better security), our website will be backed up daily and we will get one hour per month of web development assistance. We will be transiting to this company in the month of November. This will result in an increase in office expenses, but the benefit far outweighs the cost.

Core Groups

•Cultural Justice

The Cultural Justice Core Group met for the first time on October 13 with sixteen participants. We got to know one another a little better and set norms for how we'll relate to one another to create a safe space/brave space for learning.

Our first session included discussion about the meaning of the word "culture" and what we mean when we say "dominant culture." Participants reflected on the four threads of injustice we will be exploring this year: patriarchy/sexism, xenophobia, and injustice toward LGBTQ+ persons, and those deemed religious outsiders and reviewed the questions we'll ask ourselves throughout our journey through U.S. history: What story did the dominant culture tell about this marginalized group? How was that story told? How might each marginalized group reframe/retell the story told about them? Throughout our history, who has been deemed "deviant or subversive"? What were they deviating from? Who were they subverting? When meaningful change has taken place in our history, who drove that change and who resisted it? As a congregation, why have we invested our time, energy, attention, and resources in the work of societal transformation rather than reform?

Next session we'll explore Iris Marion Young's framing of oppression, having reflected on the meaning of injustice and oppression, participants will offer their definitions of "justice", and review colonial history related to the marginalized groups mentioned above.

•Economic Justice

The Economic Justice held its initial session on October 06 with nine participants. Following a time of getting acquainted and of personal sharing, the session focused on European colonization of the Americas, especially focused on Columbus and on Pope Alexander VI's "doctrine of discovery," an assertion that would prove foundation in U.S. history and expansion.

Central to the learnings was the introduction on the notion, in historian Jill Lepore's words that "The European extraction of wealth of the Americas made possible the rise of capitalism . . ." Our whole economic systems rests on a foundation of stealing some people's land and other people's lives.

The group is engaging in personal discussions between sessions, exploring the early messages each received about economics, about who is wealthy and why, about who is poor and why, about their family's economic standing and about how our economic system works. Participants will continue in November with a reflection of the differences between the earlier Jamestown settlement and the later arrival of pilgrims.

UUCC CARES Fund

The UUCC CARES Fund, created by special member contributions in the early stages of the pandemic, remains at its prior balance of \$27,637 as there were no allocations in the past month.

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** The Worship Team continues to explore ways to make our services (and other Sunday morning activities) as accessible as possible. Members now receive an email on Sunday morning at 9 with all relevant links for the day's programming. These links continue to be featured prominently in *Currents* as well.

Our initial services under our theme for the year "Becoming the Community We Want to Be: Barriers, Boundaries and Belonging" have generally been well received. We continue to receive affirming messages from members appreciative of the added efforts required to create and offer our virtual services. Special thanks to Board members for your contributions to recent services.

We will have three particularly important services in the coming weeks. On Sunday, October 25 we will observe our annual Memorial Sunday, a somber time to remember the members of our community we have lost in this past year along with others in our lives who will call to mind on this day. The following Sunday, November 01 we will offer a service focused on the impending election, just two days away from election day. We are also aware of the dramatic importance of preparing a post-election service for the next Sunday, November 08. November will also include our annual senior high service.

•Adult Programming Our Adult Religious Education and Spiritual Development Team led by Chair Sharon Baker continues to plan for and provide robust offerings for our community. This month marks the launch of our “Exploring Borders and Boundaries through Books” series with the initial session led by Board member Ann Doss Helms. Each month a member will lead a discussion of a book in conjunction with this year’s theme.

We have just arranged for a session with local historian Tom Hanchett who will offer his insights into “How Charlotte Got Segregated.”

Team member Joe Hoff will lead a discussion on *The 57 Bus* that will offer a helpful lead into Eve Steven’s two sessions on “Mapping Gender.”

Jay Leach will be continuing his “Snapshots of Spirituality” series begun last year with sessions on a philosophical view of spirituality and on spirituality and art.

We are being very well served by this vigorous group of our members. Jay Leach is fortunate to serve as professional staff liaison to this group.

•Intersectional Justice We have wrapped up the initial assignment in our new partnership with the Reentry Housing Alliance and will soon launch a second opportunity for members’ involvement in this co-conspiratorial effort.

In conjunction with our co-conspiratorial partner, Kristie Puckett Williams, we have had a couple of dozen of our members working in various aspects of voting rights efforts coordinated by the state ACLU.

Activating our Engagement Groups during this time is proving to be an immense challenge. Waning commitments on the part of our members who had initially taken leadership roles is proving to be our biggest challenge. We will continue to work to find ways to create additional ways for our members to be engaged in transformative work in the larger community.

•Children, Youth, and Families The attempt to create a parent/child virtual Religious Education offering for 3-5 year olds has gone well with consistent attendance and parent support for this method which is helping to keep young children engaged with our programming.

K-1st and elementary programming has been well received and is sustaining similar attendance to recent years' in-person classes.

Though Middle and High School groups initially struggled more with the virtual format, a hybrid of new virtual and in-person offerings is in the works to help keep our teenagers connected and engaged.

Our Coming of Age program continues with opportunities to offer adapted, socially-distanced versions of the traditional ceremonies and retreats associated with Coming of Age.

The Family Ministry Team is coordinating an afternoon of outdoor games for all ages this month, our first in-person family-friendly event since the pandemic began. The Team will be sharing observations and learnings following the event in hopes of having additional outdoor all ages opportunities in the coming weeks. Our support for Parenting in the Pandemic groups meet for the last time this month. We will have two Parent Discovery Circles meeting monthly through June beginning next month.

•Community Building We will host a Plant Swap this month, our first in-person Community Building event since the pandemic began. We are asking that everyone wear a mask and have arranged the event to account for social distancing. The Community Building Team will be sharing observations and learnings following the event in hopes of having additional outdoor Community Building opportunities in the coming weeks.

•Congregational Care Our ministers continue to reach out to our members in times of crisis, celebration, and simply to check-in.

The Congregational Care Team continued to provide our members with cards, meals, rides, and virtual or socially-distanced visits this month. The Team also continued to go the extra mile reaching out specifically to families with kids at home to offer support and meals.