

**Coordinating Team
Report to the Board of Trustees
September 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 report from last month: Truist Bank, our lender for our PPP loan 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 The ODS Managing Team—Meghan Beverley, Stephanie Clemens, David Flynn (chair), Alesia Hutto (UUCS staff liaison), Sheila Locklear (ODS Director), Elaine Peed, Jennifer Taylor and Jim Van Fleet—reconvened on Thursday, September 10 to begin the process of redrafting a plan to potentially reopen the school in January 2021. Over the next six weeks, the team will work with the ODS Director and Office Manager to gather input from families, teachers and the larger community to help develop a reopening plan that is within the guidelines of the current safety plan, determines how the school will reopen (types of classes, class sizes, learning environment), and allows for the enrollment needed to sustain the school. Throughout this time, ODS staff will continue to keep ODS families connected through regular e-blasts, Facebook and personal calls. The Managing Team will meet on October 12 to make the final decision on a potential ODS opening in January 2021.

FOCUS 2020 Focus 2020 Task Group recently finalized the decision on a new logo and is now awaiting the delivery of the new full branding package. The group originally anticipated having the full branding package by the end of August but due to unforeseen circumstances, unfortunately that deadline was missed. This resulted in delaying the launch of the website (see website info below.) We expect to have the finalized package by the end of the week (September 14.) When the Focus 2020 Task Group receives the finalized full branding package, only two stages of their work will 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. The Group anticipates delaying the focus of the marketing effort until we can resume meeting in person.

Website The long effort of creating a new website for the UUCC is in its final weeks. Our hope was to stage a “soft” launch of the new site on September 8 and to use *Currents* on September 10 to inform the congregation of this new resource. Unfortunately, the launch is now deferred due to the delay in receiving the branding package. Once we have the package in our possession, we anticipate a new launch date shortly afterwards. Overall, we still expect the launch to occur in the month of September. Our new website will debut our new name, tagline and branding. We eagerly anticipate the website’s new launch to showcase our new name and branding while also offering a more fluid platform for communication, that can and will be updated on a regular basis.

2020 – 2021 Theme We informed the Board last month that our theme for this congregational year is “Becoming the Community We Want to Be: Barriers, Boundaries and Belonging.” We will begin with a kick-off to this theme on Sunday, September 13 led by both of our ministers. Subsequent services and other programming will invite members to explore this theme in light of our Vision, Mission and the Board’s “Call to Action.” We anticipate using the recent UUA publication *Widening the Circle of Concern* as a resource in framing our work in the larger context of the UUA’s work to become a more intentionally anti-racist organization.

New Core Groups We are almost at the deadline for application to be included in our new round of year-long Core Groups early this fall. In keeping with our cycle, this year we’re returning to a focus on Cultural Justice and on Economic Justice. Members were informed in a special eblast in August and reminded both in service announcements and in subsequent issues of *Currents* about these new opportunities. To date we’ve received relatively nominal interest through our experience suggests that many wait until the deadline (or shortly thereafter!) to submit their requests. As a reminder, Eve Stevens will be leading the Cultural Justice Core Group assisted by prior participants in this intensive experience and Jay Leach will be leading the Economic Justice Core Group assisted by members of the Group itself.

UUCC CARES Fund The UUCC CARES Fund, created by special member contributions in the early stages of the pandemic, has a current balance of \$27,637. To date allocations from the Fund have enabled two of our members to avoid foreclosure, obviously a very significant benefit at a time of deep economic distress. We have recently received a third such request and are in communication about how best to address this need. Requests for support can be communicated to either of our ministers.

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** Our new Worship Team met recently to evaluate the summer series of services around the theme “Celebrating Community.” In general, there was affirmation for these services, for the effort required to create them by our professional staff, for the contributions of many member reflections, and for the remarkable array of music we are experiencing.

The typical transition back to a two-service format is obviously not occurring this September. We are, however, transitioning from our summer focus to a more challenging theme for the year. We are continuing to explore ways to make virtual services more accessible and engaging.

•**Adult Programming** Our Adult Religious Education and Spiritual Development Team is creating a broad array of offerings for the fall. Chaired by Sharon Baker, this Team is creating offerings intended both to enable the discovery of deeper spiritual meaning and to align with our approach to the work of justice.

•**Intersectional Justice** Our partnership with the Reentry Housing Alliance is fostering a new opportunity for engagement as we continue to help build a data base of available housing for those with a criminal record. The RHA remains immensely grateful and impressed with the work of our members this summer.

We have just received information from our co-conspiratorial partner, Kristie Puckett Williams, about how our members can support voter efforts specially

targeted to those with criminal records in North Carolina. We will be circulating these opportunities to the congregation and encouraging involvement.

We are reaching out again to Engagement Groups encouraging them to renew their efforts to find meaning for ways for us to “partner in the work of justice.” We’re hopeful that new members on the Environmental and Racial Justice Engagement Groups will infuse those Groups with new energy. We’ve recently engaged in supportive conversations with leadership of our Cultural Justice Engagement Group urging their pursuit of opportunities as well.

•Children, Youth, and Families Eve Stevens and Kathleen Carpenter met with a small group of our members who are either educators or mental health professionals to gather feedback on how to offer meaningful support for children, youth, and families as the pandemic continues. In response to this conversation, we are now in the process of creating virtual offerings that will allow families the chance to honor or celebrate life transitions in community and to share in rituals to express grief and overwhelm. In addition, we’re beginning to explore the possibility of small in-person activities for families who feel comfortable gathering in small groups for social interaction after long days of screen time.

The Congregational Care and Family Ministry Teams continue to provide meals and to reach out to check on families.

Our Parenting in the Pandemic groups continue to meet monthly for guided spiritual reflection and a chance to offer one another support. These will conclude in October. Meanwhile, Parent Discovery Circles are forming to begin in October. Children’s Choir in virtual form will begin this month with John Herrick and a rotation of our musical members leading our first through fifth graders in learning new songs and preparing performances for services later in the fall.

Kathleen and CYRE Team volunteers are in the process of providing Activity Bags for families filled with hands-on materials that will be used as part of CYRE classes this fall as we continue to experiment with ways to keep our youngest congregants creatively and meaningfully engaged virtually.

Congregational Care Our Congregational Care Team and Ministers continue to reach out in response to needs and simply to check in with our members. The Congregational Care Team is continuing to provide meals and cards as well. The Rest and Revitalize series sponsored by Congregational Care offered member-led sessions providing guided meditation, information on how to better nourish the body, and letter-writing all in the service of reducing anxiety and overwhelm.

Discovery Circles are in the process of forming for an October start.