

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

**February 2019**

**STAFF AND CONGREGATIONAL ISSUES AND TRENDS**

**•Economic Justice Core Group**

The Economic Justice Core Group's February meeting was devoted to the intersection of economic justice and racial justice. Participants had read Ta-Nehisi Coates' "The Case for Reparations." Discussion centered on the deep history of racial injustice in this country and the lasting impact on the economic prospects of those who have been, and continue to be, oppressed. As part of the discussion, Fred Dodson introduced us to political operative Lee Atwater and his legacy as seen in the "the politics of racial and economic injustice."

Sixteen members have committed to participate in this year-long deep dive -- listening and learning -- into issues around economic injustice and extreme inequality. The group is being facilitated by member Fred Dodson, along with professional staffers, Kelly Greene and Doug Swaim.

**•Cultural Justice Core Group**

At its January session, the Cultural Justice Core Group reflected on the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, examining this formative time in our nation's history through the lens of cultural justice. Discussion noted the prevailing heteronormative dynamic with its persistent image of hypermasculinity, the virulent anti-Roman Catholic mentality at play in immigrant issues, the mixed influence of the Second Great Awakening, and the continued subservient role for free women. In February, the group will be discussing the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, noting, among other dynamics, the complex intersection of the women's suffrage movement with issues of race.

Thirteen members are engaged in this experience. This group is being facilitated by our ministers, Eve Stevens and Jay Leach.

- The professional staff, under the leadership of Director of Administration Doug Swaim and in conversation with various of our program teams, is preparing a comprehensive proposal for funding to be submitted to our Memorial Endowment Trust trustees. This proposal seeks funding for a four-step process to include: 1. a facilitated conversation about the name of the congregation (one of the key questions raised during the envisioning process); 2. branding of our new identity based on our name, Vision and Mission; 3. construction of new external signage designed to heighten the profile of the congregation; and 4. a marketing “blitz” designed to expose more of our larger community to who we are.

- Plans are now in place for a second round of anti-racism training facilitated by the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond based in New Orleans. This March weekend will engage members of the congregation in exploration of issues of racism, racial injustice, and pathways to racial justice. This is made possible by a grant from our Memorial Endowment Trust and is another in an ongoing series of opportunities for members to explore the implications of our visionary commitment to societal transformation.

- Having two ministers on our professional staff is now allowing for significantly enhanced ministerial engagement with all aspects of the congregation. Both Eve and Jay continue to share in regular Sunday worship leadership and in leading the work of our Worship Team. On Sunday’s when they were not leading the services, both Eve and Jay have spent recent Sunday mornings with children, youth, or CYRE teachers. Eve’s launch and leadership of our new Family Ministry is offering a whole new avenue for ministerial leadership with families and children. Both Eve and Jay led sessions of a recent ARES D class on spirituality and Jay is offering two additional upcoming ARES D offerings. Both are now available to respond to congregational care needs. Eve continues to lead us in an expansion of our Community Building opportunities and Jay, joined by Doug, is providing professional staff leadership to our new Intersectional Justice Team. Eve and Jay continue in weekly exploration of the meaning of a shared ministry and how best to meet the needs of the congregation while expanding opportunities for our members and visitors.

## **TEAM REPORTS**

### **CONGREGATIONAL CARE TEAM**

submitted by Martha Kniseley, Adult Programming Coordinator

This year's Congregational Care Team includes Sage Brook, 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.

In the past three months, over 30 cards have been sent to express Condolences, Congratulations, Get Well, and "Thinking of You" messages. We have coordinated the delivery of more than 16 meals. Sage Brook, a retired midwife, has also delivered meals and baby blankets to two new families. Our prayer shawl ministry Healing Threads is delivering 20 shawls this month; Aldersgate retirement community's Hospice unit is one of the recipients. We have received cards and phone calls from non-members expressing their appreciation for this gift that comforts them after their loved one has died.

The new Visitation program is proving to be a good way to connect with members who are no longer able to attend. At least 15 visits have been made during this 3-month period; all visitors check in on a monthly basis with their assigned member. Contact has also been made with three members who hadn't been heard from in a while. We're reminded that they still consider themselves a part of this community even if the distance or lack of mobility prevents their attendance.

During this period, the Team provided five memorial receptions. Our prime coordinator Nancy Greene, and our chair Sheila Lay, recruit and organize as many as a dozen volunteers in two shifts. They shop, prepare food, set a beautiful table to welcome our guests, and clean up afterwards. While many are often unseen behind the kitchen doors, these volunteers exemplify our End as "...a joyful, loving, religious community of people deeply connected to each other..." We should remember that they too are among the grieving.

## **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 Meghan Beverley, Gillian Baxter, Cindy Thomson (chair), Roger Coates and David Flynn. The UUCC Board approves all member appointments to the Managing Team.

January was a busy month for ODS as the staff gave tours to parents considering enrolling their children for the 2019-20 school year. Enrollment remains strong and ODS Director Sheila Locklear is confident we will repeat the recent pattern of filling all seats and maintaining a waiting list of prospective students.

ODS staff also received several groups of education students from CPCC during January. According to Locklear, the CPCC students always give ODS “rave reviews.” In addition, she recounted the following story: “One of the older students shared with me that she had been a guest of Room in the Inn here when she was homeless at some point in the past. She is now pursuing a degree in Early Childhood Development at CPCC. . . .”

With assistance from the Finance Team, the ODS Managing Team is conducting a review of the Fair Share formula and resulting amount that the school reimburses UUCC for direct and indirect costs of operating out of our facility -- costs that are initially paid by the UUCC. The Managing Team is also helping to conduct a review of tuition charged by similar pre-schools in the area.

As reported previously, the members of the MT have been discussing ODS’s operations and relationship to the congregation in light of the new Mission and Ends for several months now. We can thank ODS MT chair Cindy Thomson for initiating this very interesting exploration. At its January meeting the MT voted to conclude that discussion -- in any formal sense -- so that we can focus on the more immediate needs of the school and its relationship to the congregation.

## **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 Dan Maples. Doug Swaim is the principal staff liaison, along with Belinda Perry, who represents the CYRE program.

The Team developed a plan for responding to a violent intruder and conducted two training sessions for Sunday morning volunteers last fall. In keeping with the plan, we have added CYRE teachers to the group that now communicate via walkie talkie on Sunday mornings. Over the next two months we will continue training our professional staff and the volunteer groups who have “lead roles” under the response plan.

## **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, Fred Dodson, Kelly Greene, John Herrick, Neal Sigmon and Jim Van Fleet. Fred Dodson is the chair and Kelly and John are the staff liaisons.

The 2018-2019 stewardship drive has now completed its fifth month. Trends of note are 70% of members are responding to the pledge campaign (slightly over last year’s response rate), but existing membership pledges are down by an average of approximately 3%. This loss in pledge income is being off-set by new members who are making generous pledges. To date, we’ve received \$45,976 in new pledges from 17 new members, while existing pledges have decreased by \$26,563. There have been a number of reasons for the latter, with no singular

explanation: some members have moved away, others haven't found community here and others have died.

The total in pledges is currently \$857,729, a \$24,570 increase over last year, though still shy of eradicating our \$76,000 budgeted deficit. The Stewardship Team has been in discussion with the Finance Team and Jay and Doug to consider ways to address this remaining deficit. The Stewardship Team hopes to have good news to share in the coming months.

On February 2, the Stewardship Team hosted a stewardship event at the Goodwill Opportunity Campus on Wilkinson Boulevard. Over 50 members attended and were treated to food and drink and a tour of the campus. Both Fred Dodson and Eve Stevens thanked the assembled for their past and current support as well as encouraged them to be more generous.

### **WORSHIP TEAM**

submitted by Jay Leach, Minister

A somewhat smaller than usual Worship Team—Michael Amy Cira, Mic Elvenstar, Lisa Lackey, Lee Movius, and Judy Weingarten, joined by professional staff members John Herrick, Jay Leach and Eve Stevens—have formed a deeply connected group marked now by profound personal sharing as an important element of team gatherings.

This team recently revised (yet again!) the Welcome script used by Lay Service Leaders in our Sunday services. They continue to explore how best to welcome first-time visitors to our congregation aware that this is the one portion of the service that is not directed at our members or more regular attendees.

The team continues in its review of all Sunday services, using a portion of each meeting to examine opportunities for an improved experience of worship.

Team members are now engaging in an imaginative exercise of reimagining Sunday mornings altogether, asking how we might innovate in order to more adequately embody our ambitious Vision and Mission.

### Attendance Data for January 2019

Attendance Area	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Jan-18
ARESD Offerings	177	162	<b>292</b>	408
Community Building	73	236	<b>153</b>	206
Congregational Team Meetings	112	108	<b>113</b>	105
CYRE	411	392	<b>651</b>	743
Family Ministry	37	n/a	<b>63</b>	n/a
Music	121	142	<b>341</b>	176
Intersectional Justice	53	47	<b>103</b>	86
Visitors	39	108	<b>79</b>	104
Worship	942	1665	<b>1215</b>	1426
<b>Totals</b>	1965	2860	<b>2992</b>	3254