

**Coordinating Team  
Report to the Board of Trustees  
June 2021**

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

**Movement Back to In-Person Activities**

We've begun in-person activities including the Saturday all congregation social event held a few weeks ago and Wednesday evening choir rehearsals. Sundays now include both "Summer Sing" at 11 a.m. and CYRE on the grounds.

As we continue to wrestle with the complexities of the pandemic, with the reality of both vaccinated and non-vaccinated participants in our community, and with our determination to offer the safest possible ways of gathering, we continue also to consult others who are in similar situations. Most recently this article—<https://religionnews.com/2021/06/08/keep-covid-19-restrictions-during-in-person-worship-ecumenical-guide-suggests/>—was circulated amongst our professional staff and members of our Transition Task Group.

The professional staff will be revisiting this issue in our staff meeting on next Tuesday and will consider then revising our current guidelines for safe gatherings.

**Memorial Endowment Trust**

The Memorial Endowment Trust (MET) of the UCC provides an opportunity for members to contribute financially to the life and well-being of the congregation through legacy gifts, memorial contributions, and other means of celebrating or honoring lives within our community. Members are invited in regular appeals to consider including the MET in their legacy giving. The MET Board is happy to report that total net assets in the Trust exceed one million dollars!

Years of careful cultivation and management by MET trustees have resulted in a balance sufficient to generate significant income. Each year the trustees

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determine the portion of that income available to support and enhance the work of the congregation through grant funding. The Memorial Endowment Trust awards grants for worthy projects that might not fit cleanly into our operating budget, but which support our Community's Vision and Mission. This year, the MET board is pleased to announce that they awarded \$39,000 to six different Grant proposals that have come from the Community, which include:

1. **Outdoor Gathering Area with a Fire Pit located near the Memorial Garden and CYRE Classrooms.** This is sponsored by the Children and Youth Religious Education (CYRE) Team and will cost \$3,000. Tracy Hickman and her husband Scott (who owns a construction company) are donating their labor. Our Middle and High School Youth will now finally have an outdoor space for gathering and hanging out (adults are welcome to use it too!) The firepit will be surrounded by four 12 foot benches and four Adirondack chairs.
  2. **Updating Interior Signs and Banners.** This is sponsored by the Building and Grounds and Communications Teams and will cost \$2,000. This will include the total makeover of interior signage to align with our new name, logo and branding efforts and will include banners that can be used to identify us as a group at various meetings and marches.
  3. **Technology Upgrades to Create Hybrid Meeting/Learning Opportunities.** This is sponsored by the entire Professional Staff and will cost \$15,000. The objective is to convert the three most used spaces (Bernstein Room, Conference Room and Freeman Hall) into areas that functionally blend in-person meetings with the virtual world.
  4. **Updating the Aesthetics of the Worship Experience.** This is sponsored by the Worship Team and will cost \$2,500. This includes the purchase of five faux flower arrangements, three decorative vessels, sculptures or crafts, and refinishing the credenza in the vestibule.
  5. **Upgrades to allow for Internet/Wi-Fi access Throughout the Building.** This is sponsored by the Professional Staff and will cost \$4,700.
  6. **Marketing Grant.** This is sponsored by the Communications, Membership and Stewardship Teams. This grant is a contribution of \$11,800 to aid our marketing efforts which includes hiring a media consultant who will advise us on optimizing our media buys to help us make ourselves known to those in the community who share our vision.
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Four of the six projects should be completed before we reunite in September. The generous contributions of our members to the Memorial Endowment Trust of the UUCC make their grant program possible.

### **Open Door School**

Our preschool, the Open Door School (ODS) Managing Team consists of—Meghan Beverley, Marybeth Foster (FCA chair), David Flynn (chair), Alesia Hutto (UUCC staff liaison), Sheila Locklear (ODS Director), Elaine Peed, Jennifer Taylor and Jim Van Fleet.

The school year has officially ended (Full Day operates year round) and we are happy to report a safe and successful year with no instances of COVID-19 infections or transmissions. End of the year surveys were sent, with approximately 52% of families responding. Parents were pleased with the execution of the safety plan (although some parents felt it was too conservative), and how the teachers interacted with the children and managed their classrooms. Overall parents were pleased that Open Door School reopened so they could be a part of a community again. *All* families indicated they would refer Open Door School to prospective families.

ODS' Annual Summer Camp has officially begun and will run through June 30. Registration for the 2021-2022 school year continues with only a few openings remaining! Most classes are full, with waiting lists.

The ODS Managing Team continues to work with Roger Coates on the campaign for the Sue Riley Scholarship Fund. As you may recall, the ODS Managing Team received a grant from the Memorial Endowment Trust in 2020 for up to \$10,000 in matching funds for the Sue Riley Scholarship Fund. As of June 9, 2021, the campaign has collected \$6000. The campaign concludes on December 31, 2021. If you wish to contribute, please [click here](#). Donations can be mailed to the Open Door School at 234 North Sharon Amity Rd, Charlotte, NC 28211 (please include Sue Riley Scholarship Fund in the memo line.)

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## **Interim Director of Lifespan Religious Education search**

Eve and Jay will update the Board on this process in a report during the meeting.

## **Charting Member Participation**

In May, the average attendance at services declined to 396 or an average of 79 per service. At least 37 visitors attended services. Ten new people signed up to receive Currents. Approximately 30 members attended the UUCC FUUN festival sponsored by the Stewardship Team which was held in our parking lot. Members continue to participate in classes, serve on leadership teams and attend small group gatherings such as Open Mind Book Club and Lotus Path. In-person, outdoor offerings starting in June will provide more opportunities for involvement.

## **UUCC CARES Fund**

**Cares Fund Balance:** \$28,322.21

## **Core Groups**

### **•Cultural Justice**

The final session of the Group began with some fun, playing a game to test how well we've come to know one another through nine months of intense small group and whole group study and conversation. Participants then shared their "key learnings" –general observations as well as facts and details that challenged/intrigued/shifted their perspective most during our time together. A few highlights from participants include: "Marginalized peoples are not monoliths" "We cannot attack only one aspect of oppression (piecemeal) and expect to be successful" and "We need marginalized perspectives to be centered in our national and local leadership before authentic change can happen."

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We finished by examining the Guiding Principles that guide the work of our Engagement Groups. This led to a spirited discussion that included back and forth over the differences between meeting immediate needs in our larger community and working for transformative justice, and debate about how to best utilize these principles as an ideal to strive toward rather than as a barrier to finding meaningful partnerships.

### •Economic Justice

The Group concluded its year together in a session on the first Tuesday in June. We reviewed our learnings, considering the question “What is Economic Justice?” informed by our months of exploration. We reviewed the “Guiding Principles” that are used to help inform the work of our engagement groups and invited any proposed revisions to these guidelines. We are hoping to offer sessions to the congregation this summer that would include some of the presentations offered by group members this year.

### 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 now on our summer schedule, streaming our services at 9:30 a.m. This allows those interested to join in Summer Sing on our grounds at 11:00 a.m. We will begin our summer theme with a kickoff service on Sunday, July 4. Subsequent Sundays will primarily include reflections from members of our community.

Drawing on collegial relationships created over the years, we were fortunate to include both Rabbi Asher Knight and Imam John Ederer in our service on Sunday, June 13. While we continue to regret the limitations imposed by our virtual services, the regular opportunities to include both guest speakers and guest musicians has proven to be one of the real benefits of this format.

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•Adult Programming We're honored to be hosting a session on the city of Charlotte's 2040 plan on Thursday, June 17 at 7p.m. City Council member Braxton Winston and Rev. Greg Jarrell from QC Family Tree will be hosted by Jay Leach in this session.

The last of our book explorations focused on this year's theme will take place this month. This will conclude a very robust array of offerings created by our stellar ARESD Team led by Chair Sharon Baker.

Ron Spake continues to lead the professional staff in a learning opportunity focused on trans inclusion in the UUCC. Using materials created by UU trans ministers, staff is the second group to engage in this experience. We anticipate continuing to offer this opportunity for other groups in the coming year as we strive to become a more informed, accepting and welcoming congregation for people of all gender identities.

•Discovery Circles Each Discovery Circle has or will meet for the last time in June. Facilitators report that the sessions during the pandemic have felt particularly meaningful and that, with a few outliers, the attendance has been remarkably consistent. The Small Group Ministry Steering Team will meet later this month to take stock and review the process ahead for recruiting additional facilitators and preparing for another round of hybrid virtual/in-person Discovery Circles in the fall.

•Children, Youth, and Families Eve Stevens hosted a virtual family ritual for graduating families. Each family had the chance to process what will change over the coming months as their high school senior graduates and moves into adulthood. As part of the gathering, parents and siblings read letters they had prepared in advance to each senior expressing what they will miss most about this current phase of life and what they hope for their graduate in the chapter ahead. Seniors also took part in our annual "Bridging" service the first Sunday in June. At that same service, the congregation welcomed the Family Dedication of three families as well.

Summer programming has begun for our Children and Youth Religious Education classes on Sunday mornings. Meeting in-person, outdoors on the UUCC grounds has been well received by our CYRE families.

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On May 30 the Family Ministry Team hosted the first Sunday morning opportunity for families to experience programming together during our regular CYRE time. Participants explored the social, emotional, cultural meanings that white western culture has bestowed on colors (ex. yellow=happy, white=innocence, red=anger, etc.). After looking at the meaning of these same colors in other cultures and questioning the “universality” of the color associations we’ve been taught, participants engaged in an activity to think more creatively and expansively about color. This whole-family approach will take place on the first Sunday of the month as part of our summer programming.

We are encouraging many of our regular CYRE teachers to take a break for the summer. Many of our CYRE teachers have committed to return in the fall (in the same or in a different role) which is a wonderful gift to the program as we look ahead to transitioning more and more toward in-person communal life. In the meantime, Lisa Walls and Eve Stevens are recruiting volunteers to help with summer Sundays. We have condensed Sunday classes into a Younger Elementary (3-year-olds through rising 1<sup>st</sup> grade) and an Older Elementary (rising 2<sup>nd</sup> grade through rising 5<sup>th</sup> grade). Our Middle School and High School youth will gather for virtual and in-person social opportunities outside of Sunday morning this summer.

•Community Building The Stewardship Team’s membership appreciation FUUN Festival took place on the grounds of 234. Our Middle Schoolers created signs expressing gratitude to our members for all the ways you sustain our community, which were displayed at each FUUN station. The turnout was smaller than expected, but those who came had the chance to line-dance, participate in a UUCC-themed scavenger hunt, play group games and mingle with new and familiar faces.

With our summer schedule comes some new and some familiar ways to connect with one another. We will keep Virtual Coffee Hour with a new start time of 9 a.m. in hopes that this remains an engaging and accessible way for people to spend time with one another, including those who would find it difficult, impossible or not-preferable to travel to the UUCC for in-person activities. Now that services will stream from 9:30-10:30 a.m., we will offer a variety of ways to engage on our grounds. Summer Sing, led by our Director of Music, John Herrick along with member musical guests, kicks off June 13 as an opportunity to

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experience singing in community masked and outdoors. Summer Sing will be followed by easy-going opportunities for adults to socialize while simultaneously our children are in CYRE classes. Our hope is that by providing social opportunities on our grounds for all ages on Sunday mornings, we will create unintimidating and enjoyable ways for people to reconnect and have fun throughout the summer in addition to other weekly offerings from the Community Building Team.

- Congregational Care Our Congregational Care Team delivered meals and cards to members in times of crisis and celebration.

The Team will welcome three new members this summer, two of them men. As we continue to explore gender justice as a community, the team discussed the importance of not leaving the tasks of providing meals, cards, visits, etc. for the community, to women alone.

The majority of members of the Care Team have served well beyond the typical three-year commitment providing timely, compassionate and well- organized responses to the needs of our members for years. Bringing on new members this year also allows current leaders to rotate off, some of them this month, others next June.

Our ministers continue to reach out to our members in times of crisis, celebration, and simply to check-in. In addition, all staff continue to check-in with members who we have not seen participating in congregational offerings to see how they are doing.

- Building and Grounds The Building and Grounds Team this year was comprised of Roy Smith (chair), Dick Kistler, Judy Love, Lee Martinec, Tom Moore, Charles Pilkey and Jinny Sullivan with Alesia Hutto serving as staff liaison. Our final meeting of the year was held on Thursday, June 3. We reviewed our year and thanked outgoing members Dick Kistler and Lee Martinec. Beginning July 1, the team welcomes, David Johnson and Dan Maples.

As previously reported, the team is wrapping up the of the final major task for this year--installation of the new exterior signs. The permits have been secured the and signs are under development. We are still on track to have the signs installed by June 30. The creation and installation of our exterior signage was made

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possible by a grant from the Memorial Endowment Trust (MET) of the UUCU. The generous contributions of our members to the MET make the funds for their grant program possible.