

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

Two consecutive issues of *Currents* presented members with information regarding our movement back to in-person services. Following that general article, the May 13 issue of *Currents* shared information about the professional staff's return to their offices beginning Monday, May 17 and offered guidelines for small gatherings in the building or on our grounds.

**2021 – 2022 Theme**

In order to continue our efforts to embody our ambitious Vision and Mission, the professional staff has now identified a theme for the coming congregational year. Our services and other programming will be guided by the theme "Beginning Again, Seeing Anew." Intentionally chosen as a frame for our return to in-person activities, we appreciate the hopeful nature of "beginning again" as opposed to language suggesting that we are simply trying to "get back to the way things used to be."

**Recruiting for New Team Members**

All members of our community were given an opportunity to indicate their interest in being included on one of our volunteer teams. While the notion of offering this opportunity is appealing, this approach is not successful in procuring adequate participation to make possible the work of these teams. The professional staff is now actively recruiting for each of the teams by sending personal invitations to identified members.

## **Memorial Endowment Trust**

The Memorial Endowment Trust (MET) of the UUCC 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. Years of careful cultivation and management by MET trustees have resulted in a balance sufficient to generate significant income. Each year the trustees determine the portion of that income available to support and enhance the work of the congregation through grant funding.

As reported in a prior CT report to the Board, the MET announced that \$39,000 will be available for potential grants in the 2021-2022 congregational year. This year's grant process has concluded. Grant applications have been reviewed and the grant awards will be publicly announced at the annual Congregational Conversation on June 6.

## **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 main portion of the school year is coming to a close on May 28 (full day operates year round) and operations continue to run smoothly and safely. ODS continues to adhere to all county and state mandates and the guidelines of their safety plan as the driver for all decisions. Summer camp begins on June 7, which is completely enrolled. Registration for the 2021-2022 school year continues and enrollment is at 98%. 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 May 14, 2021, the

campaign has collected \$4,500. 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.)

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

The Interim Search Group—Craig Harbold, Melissa Schropp, Julie Smith along with ministers Jay Leach and Eve Stevens—has now identified a candidate for our interim position. Both Eve and Jay are in conversation with this candidate in an effort to secure a contract for a mid-to-late summer start.

### **Charting Member Participation**

In April, at least 437 people attended services. Fourteen new people signed up to receive *Currents* and at least 33 visitors attended services. So far in 2021, four visitors indicated they want to become members and have met with the Membership Coordinator but have not yet committed.

The Membership Team invited visitors to an in-person, outdoor session with Eve and Jay, to further encourage them to become members. While those attendees have continued participating in services and some have participated in additional offerings, none have yet indicated they are ready to join.

We anticipate that when we begin meeting and having services in person again, we will see an increase in both new members and participation in existing members.

### **Non-Contributors**

Our Bylaws require an annual financial contribution of record from each member. (As a reminder, anyone whose financial condition renders them unable to contribute may request a waiver.) We review contributions and attempt to make personal contact with those who are not in compliance with this requirement.

This year we had a longer list than usual, one that includes several active participants and even leaders. Some have responded to these contacts with contributions; others have not. Our usual course of action at this point would be to send a letter alerting these non-contributors again to the requirement and asking if they wish to remain members. In light of the pandemic and the challenges some have experienced in participating in a virtual congregation, we are recommending that we suspend the removal of any non-contributors for one year.

### **Proposed Budget for 2021-2022**

The 2021 – 2022 budget is included in the board material for this month.

As the board will recall, a projection in March based on careful analysis of our stewardship results to that point indicated that we would find it necessary to submit a budget with a significant deficit. True to that projection, you will note that, in fact, this year's budget reflects a significant deficit.

There has been one significant change from the draft presentation last month. Our earlier projections regarding the anticipated deficit for the 2021 – 2022 budget reflected the fact that we were in the middle of our search for an Interim Director of Lifespan Education. The Fair Compensation for this position has a very significant range based on “credentialing” and educational status. Because two of the candidates who applied late last fall were credentialed, we necessarily had to allow for the possibility of required compensation at the higher level. We had included that compensation level in the draft. The person with whom we are currently in conversation with is not credentialed and therefore the compensation for this position is reduced. This change accounts for virtually all of the variance between the deficit that was projected in March and the one now being submitted.

The budget being presented was proposed by the Coordinating Team and has been approved by the Finance Team. Both Teams now recommend your vote to approve submitting it to the congregation to be adopted as our 2021 – 2022 budget.

## **UUCC CARES Fund**

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

### **Core Groups**

#### **•Cultural Justice**

The May session was spent reviewing specific examples from past sessions that highlight larger themes in our exploration of U.S. history through the lens of Cultural Justice. We reviewed Iris Marion Young's "The Five Faces of Oppression," which we read for the first session, and reflected on the ways each social group we studied (women, LGBTQ peoples, immigrants and those who have experienced oppression because of their religion) experienced exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

Group members spent time in breakout rooms discussing where they notice, in present day legislation and news headlines, the same patterns of oppression that have been in motion since colonizers first arrived on this soil.

June will be our final session together.

#### **•Economic Justice**

The May session for this group featured stellar presentations by group members on reparations, the economic justice implications of arrest and engagement in the criminal justice system and on the implications of inequity.

Members of this group will be offering presentations for interested members in in-person sessions to be held in Freeman Hall in the coming weeks.

This group will complete its time together with a wrap-up session on the first Tuesday in June.

## 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 May 02 Music Sunday service received particular acclaim and special thanks is due to John Herrick for his imaginative and energetic planning and coordination. The service featured numerous brief reflections from members who attested to the impact of this year's theme "Becoming the Community We Want to Be: Barriers, Boundaries and Belonging." It was gratifying to hear how the services, core groups and adult programming offered this year called our members into deeper engagement with our Vision and Mission.

•Adult Programming We hosted Angelica Acosta Garnett for a very well attended and impactful session on immigration. This was a continuation of an impressive array of offerings created by this year's ARESD Team focused on our theme. Monthly book discussions continue led by members of the team. The team has created a survey for all participants in ARESD offerings to receive feedback on their experiences in our sessions.

On Tuesday, May 11, Ron Spake began leading the professional staff in an eight-week 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 Our Small Group Ministry Steering Team met to review how each Discovery Circle is going, collaborate on content for upcoming sessions, and share suggestions for future facilitators.

Facilitators report that the sessions during the pandemic have felt particularly meaningful and that, with a few outliers, the attendance has been remarkably consistent. One Discovery Circle chose the service project of providing CYRE teacher appreciation gifts to our volunteers. This month, the other two Discovery Circles made and donated 70 lunches to Roof Above as their service project.

•Children, Youth, and Families Our Coordinator of Religious Education for Children and Youth, Lisa Wall and minister, Eve Stevens met with our congregation's graduating seniors and their families to begin planning the annual Bridging ceremony that will be part of the June 6 worship service. Graduating families will also attend a Zoom celebration that creates space for family members to process the momentous transition their family will soon experience. Part of the June 6 service will also include Family Dedications, an opportunity for the congregation to share blessing and a vow of support for children and their parents. Thus far we have three families committed to participating.

Lisa and Eve are in the midst of recruiting teachers and advisors for summer and fall CYRE. We are incredibly grateful for the ongoing commitment of many who have given much time and energy to our children and youth this past year. We are also immensely grateful to those who, after much hard work, are taking a break from teaching this summer.

Our two elementary classes both met in-person for the first time for an Earth Day lesson and seed planting activity. Teachers and family enjoyed the event and are looking forward to more in-person learning opportunities to come this summer during Sunday mornings.

On Saturday, May 15 there will be a UUCC family field trip to Hunter Farm to pick strawberries, share in a picnic and pet farm animals. We were able to offer this opportunity for 25 people and look forward to more such field trips and opportunities for in-person fun for families.

•Community Building The Stewardship Team is sponsoring another member appreciation event, this time an in-person UUCC FUUN Festival for all ages on the grounds of 234. We hope for a large turnout giving our members a chance to gather on the grounds for music, games and dancing.

A number of small group social gatherings have or will be taking place this month. There will be two more member-led museum visits to the Mint Museum Uptown and the Levine Museum of the New South following last month's very well received tours of the Gantt Center and the Bechtler. There will also be a member-led history tour of Charlotte's NoDa neighborhood May 16<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Tom Hanchett, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library Historian-in-Residence, will ride along with the

group to provide historical and cultural background to the area. Another small group opportunity is the Social Suppers on Zoom during which members gather together for conversation and a shared meal.

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

In light of volunteer recruitment now underway, the team discussed the importance of making this coming congregational year a transition year for team members. 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. We hope to bring on a group of volunteers who feel passionately about providing care for others who can bring new perspectives and allow for the current leaders to rotate off next summer.

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 is 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. As previously reported, they are wrapping up the completion of their final major task for this year--installation of the new exterior signs. The contracts have been signed and the process is fully underway and is expected to be completed by June 30. The creation and installation of our exterior signage was made possible by a grant from the Memorial Endowment Trust of the UUCU. The generous contributions of our members to the Memorial Endowment Trust of the UUCU make the funds for their grant program possible.

The Building and Grounds Team will also wrap up their smaller outstanding projects which include the installation of the nosing on the stairs in the vestibule, hearing loops in the Bernstein Room and art donated by our beloved member, Judy Ghoneim.