

Interim Minister's Report to the Board April 26, 2016

The following "bullet points" in BLACK are recommendations I presented to the Board in my March report, which marked the sixth-month point in this interim ministry. I will provide an update of these points, in blue, as relevant.

- It seems to me that ***"refining" the existing PG model to meet the needs of UUTC will be among the highest Board/Staff/GMAC priorities*** as we continue to prepare for arrival of a new Settled Minister. Specifically, the question I would ask is "What process(es) do we need to adopt in order to ensure that we are working at the "optimal" level of Staff-Volunteer Involvement (and/or any other issues that arise.)

We have done much good work in this area, and I believe this will continue to be an important topic to address during the next Interim Ministry Period.

- We should develop a process for the Board, Staff, GMAC, and Lay Leaders to develop a Long Range Plan for UUTC. This will include refining Values/Mission/and Vision (V/M/V). We may want to consider bringing in a UUA-based consultant to assist in this effort.

Dave Warinner is convening a very fine team to address these issues. We have met twice and the process is moving forward. Since both V/M/V and the Settled Minister Search Team are interested in gathering and presenting the results of this work, I suggested they consider coordinating some of their "survey" efforts so that the congregation does not begin to experience "respondent fatigue." Also, after my departure, it may be helpful for a member of the Board and/or GMAC to work closely with V/M/V to ensure continuity in their process as the "new" Interim Minister acclimates to the surroundings. (This takes a LOT of time and energy.)

- Strengthening Lay and Staff Leadership through enhanced training is also recommended. We should ***discuss the process and content of selecting and funding attendance at the upcoming SUULE Experience*** to be held 7/24 – 29 in Williamsburg, VA. Nominations are due by 3/28/2016. (See www.seduua.org/events.html for more info.)

DONE: I paid \$600 from the Minister's Expense Account for RK Young, UUTC's Administrator, to participate in this training program. To do this, I effectively paid the registration fee of \$200 for RK, President-Elect Gary Kendrick, and next President-Elect, Carol Moore. I believe this is an extremely worthwhile program that will enhance the ability of this superb team of leaders to do some pretty amazing things in the coming years.

- It would be extremely helpful **to identify a President Elect and Secretary of the Board for consideration in the SUULE Experience** nomination process.

DONE: You have recruited FINE Officers of the Board who are truly committed to advancing the mission of UUTC. Although no one could possibly “replace” Peg and Susan, who have done exemplary work during this challenging time of transition, they have met the challenge with gusto and great skill. Special thanks to Karla Maar, as well, who will be completing her term. A million blessings to y’all, and all the remaining members of the Board. I feel confident you are moving in the right direction with Mission-Based Budgeting and laud your considerable efforts. You are certainly beginning to position UUTC as a change agent to bring more light and love to the greater Brevard community.

- Exploring ways to **become a truly “Intergenerational Congregation.”** This may include reviewing worship style(s) and possibly having a “Modern” and “Traditional” service, as well as less formal worship opportunities throughout the week. Of course, this would require concerted effort on the part of the Worship/Music Teams, and anything changes we attempt should be done slowly, and as an “experiment.”

Something to be considered by your next Interim Minister, and your future Settled Minister.

For now, I wanted to share with you the many accomplishments of the Children’s Religious Exploration (CRE) Program. I share below some of the highlights provided by Heather Layton. (As an aside, you may wish to consider bestowing upon her the proper title that corresponds to the level of professionalism she brings to her work. In reality, she functions as your Director of RE, and the DRE title would simply make clearer to the incoming interim minister the exact nature of her role. I am including here highlights from Heather’s report for April:

- 1. Emily Atkinson will be leaving soon. She is willing to work with us as needed because she is so kind, but I think the best last day for her is June 5th, let her have her summer free and clear! The CRE will plan to recognize and honor Emily during the June 5th service. Virginia MacDonald has requested the exit interview. Paula, as Head of Staff, will work with the Personnel Team to ensure that we conduct an exit interview for Emily.

Emily's replacement is Katie Campbell. Katie is returning to Brevard after a few years in VA. She is a licensed teacher, fluent in Spanish, and she has been most recently working at a pre-school. She will participate in the June 24th CPR/First Aid training, then be hired on as our newest RE Educator. Katie will be assisting with both Chalice Camp's this summer, the preschool camp and the elementary

camp. We have her background check form and her application, so we are moving right along. I need to confirm what we will offer to Katie per hourly wage. Emily had not had a raise in her time with us. Given Katie's experience, I would like to offer her fair pay at \$15 per hour.

- 2. We have had four non-Sunday events recently, averaging 2 children for each event, EXCEPT, the Parenting Workshop. There were 23 children in attendance for the workshop. Our average number of children in the Nursery on Sundays, between the two services is 4, sometimes a few more, often less, but the average is 4. The same for the classroom on Sundays. The average number of Youth Group participants for our Spring Youth Group Series was 6. Attendance in Sunday lessons and Youth Group decreases in the spring, especially the closer to summer that we get. We have 30 children scheduled to be in child care for the next Positive Parenting/Discipline class being presented in conjunction with Mountain Sun School.
- 3. I'm trying to encourage UUTC families to attend SUUSI, Southeast Unitarian Universalist of Summer Institute. It is in Cullowhee this summer, July 17-23rd, right in our backyard. This event is great for all ages! I think it would be great for UUTC to be connected to SUUSI, maybe offering homestays to those attendees who are traveling great distances to attend. They often need lodging before and after the event.
- 4. Emily Holshauser is graduating from Brevard High School in June. She will be attending UNC-Wilmington. Emily has attended UUTC since she was a young child, so our longest standing youth. We hope to recognize her at the June 5th service...if she is available.
- 5. The youth groups have been busy creating "low budget stained glass" with UU Themes. We have received positive feedback about the beauty of the work; the engagement of this age group; and the "message" it sends to perspective members with children.
- 6. Something to consider in future planning of building use would be design of Meditation/Reflection room for people of all ages. This is a suggestion appearing on the LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators) website, and it appears that many of our brother and sister congregations are very pleased with the results of having this dedicated space.
- There are also "positive rumblings" among members of the Social Action Team to **keep "Green Sanctuary Guidelines" in mind when planning for current and future building use.**

Something else to consider in the not-too-distant future. At present, I want to lift up a few of the numerous note-worthy Social Action/Social Justice activities that this Team has been undertaking:

- Gathering in front of the Court House to sing peace songs to encourage civility in public discourse.
- Hosting the NAACP. As a result of this meeting, Jim Hardy (and maybe others from UUTC) are meeting with Rev. Barber, a noted Civil Rights speaker, to discuss plans going forward. I believe the upcoming meeting is by invitation only, and will be held at the Lutheran Church.
- Jim Null, Joanna Bliss, I believe Joan Lemire, and maybe others from UUTC traveled to ATL to meet with leaders of the International Refugee Committee to discuss ways our community can assist refugees in need. More to come from that group as they continue on with this most excellent work.
- Finally, it would be helpful for me to ***work with GMAC/Board of Trustees/Committee and Team Leads to develop CONCRETE, Measurable GOALS for myself and the rest of the Professional Staff.***
 - Given the small volunteer and paid staff at UUTC, we have not yet finished developing goals for my Interim Ministry, which is effectively winding down. I am working with all staff members to make sure we have written job descriptions, letters of understanding, and performance reviews in Personnel Files before my departure. **It may be helpful to meet with the new Interim Minister early on to clarify roles, responsibilities, reporting structure and goals for the next Interim Ministry.**

Below is a recounting of additional activities and events at UUTC that occurred since our last Board Meeting:

Administration: RK is doing a great job recruiting volunteers to work as a receptionist at the front desk to free her to do work that requires her full attention. Although her workload is still quite heavy, she is taking wise steps to delegate work to leverage her own contributions as true Church Administrator.

Adult Religious Exploration: Wonderful Wednesday is now being hosted monthly with excellent programming, to foster both fellowship and spiritual growth.

At our Treasurer's request, I am pulling together one final "Day of Mindfulness" before I depart. The event is scheduled for Saturday, May 7. Although we may not net as much as we did in the fall (due to seasonal changes and short lead-time in planning), I have partnered with three other meditation/mindfulness practitioners to co-lead the event. Each has his or her own mailing list of "followers" who will receive an invitation. This will inevitably raise awareness about UUTC's presence in the community, which is typically a very good thing.

Audio/Visual: We may have an issue developing with the "second computer" in the A/V room. The system "forced" our A/V Tech to accept an upgrade to Windows 10. Now, **we are having**

trouble using PowerPoint and recording sermons. Kevin Smith and Mark Allison are looking into this issue. Hopefully, they will have it resolved quickly, without additional funding. However, I want the Board to be apprised of this, in case we need to spend money to address this issue.

Building Use Task Force: As a result of the Building Use Task Force, the group is “spawning” an **Aesthetics Task Force** to develop policies regarding the charge of a standing Aesthetics Team. Such a group would likely be charged with studying color palette, materials and décor for FUTURE building use. Members are Jill Roberts, Lisa Sheffield, and Will Sims, with perhaps Emily Atkinson and Ted Heimerdinger coming on soon. This group is obviously in a fledgling state, and met today at 1 pm to initiate dialogue about their roles and responsibilities. The Task Force plans to present a DRAFT of initial policies in time for the Board to review them at the May meeting.

Fellowship: Spirituality on Tap (Biergarten) at Oskar Blues, had very strong attendance last Thursday. The Stewardship Party was a beautiful event with an excellent program. Kudos to the organizers and participants. Game Night is scheduled for Friday, 4/29. If attendance continues to be low, we will not schedule another one until the fall, because most people in Brevard prefer to be in the woods during warmer months.

We hosted another Coffee House last week. Part of me thinks this should be listed under “Fellowship;” part thinks “Community Outreach”; part thinks Stewardship. I believe the Board/Ad Com should weigh in on “where” this program should be “housed” on the organizational chart.

FYI: Gross receipts totaled about \$1000 with a 70/30 “split” at the door. In addition, Paula’s Pantry (I made brownies and beverages which RK helped me sell at Intermission) made some additional money.) We learned more about hosting such an event, which includes the need to develop policies and a clear chain of command for operations. In addition, we will NOT split “Goodie Money” with the artists, since they have the opportunity to sell their CD’s.

We have another Concert scheduled for the coming week, and Jim Hardy has several artists expressing interest in performing in the near future. RK stated that at present, TWO concerts per month may well be the upper limit of the number of concerts we can hold each month – without making some significant changes to building use and staffing (whether paid or volunteer.)

Loving Hearts, Helping Hands: This group of loving volunteers hosted a delightful High Tea which was well-attended. Those who came enjoyed delicious homemade goodies and were entertained by music by Ed Hauschild and John Austin. Kudos to all involved.

Membership: Bob and Mary Bennett signed the book after attending the New Member class, and Will Sims and his partner, Steven Landrigan, were scheduled to sign the book today, but a personal emergency requires that we postpone until a future date. Also, Joyce and Mark Henneberry plan to join and shared with Susan Slocum that they will schedule an appointment soon to “sign the book.”

Music: This team continues to provide beautiful music each Sunday. John Austin has been collaborating with Jean Rowe in directing the choir, and this is a plus – because we need Jean’s voice in the Tenor Section.

Personnel: As noted earlier, I will work with the Personnel Team to ensure that all paid staff have up-to-date job descriptions; letters of understanding; and annual performance reviews completed before my departure.

Stewardship: Under the direction of Gary Kendrick, President Elect, with exceptionally valuable coaching from Development Expert Kristin Leesment, we are making good progress on our Stewardship Campaign. The Team will send follow-up letters to loyal supporters who have not yet contributed. Kudos to Gary, Kristin, Dave Roberts, Carol Moore and Jim Hardy for their ongoing support and contributions at today’s meeting.

Worship: The Worship Team has scheduled speakers through the end of July, with the hope that a new Interim Minister will begin service to UUTC on or about August 1. When the new Interim Minister is hired, the team can meet with her/him to discuss the “starting date” and number of times per month s/he will preach, as well as the format at the Order of Service, etc. It may be important to remember that the role of an Interim Minister is to model his or her own unique style of worship, and that the role of the Worship Team is typically to support the Ordained Minister in this approach to shared ministry. The new Interim Minister may or may not feel the need to develop policies in this area, for approval by the Board.

May 29 will be the date of my final service, with May 31 being my final day of service to UUTC. I plan to completely vacate my office on or before that date, and will be available for consultation during the summer, as feasible, at the request of the Board.

Respectfully submitted,



Rev. Dr. Paula R. Gable