

# Minister's Report to the UUTC Board

## Focusing on Goals and Objectives

### September 2023

#### **Areas of Focus**

##### Pulpit & Worship

**Provide a meaningful worship experience for a wide variety of congregants.**

Since my last Board meeting I have helped lead four Sunday services at UUTC (with a break on Labor Day weekend with Lauren Agrella-Sevilla speaking). On the last Sunday in August I preached the topic requested by the person who won the bidding at the Auction: "What are your Wishes" about end-of-life issues. In September the Soul Matters theme was "Welcome" and my topics were "Welcome Possibilities" (from our retreat at The Mountain, via internet) including my flute music, "Welcome Wholeness" (from Parker Palmer, and including our shadow), and "Radical Hospitality" (on new member Sunday).

##### Community Building:

**Facilitate and expand the connections which already exist between the UUTC congregants and the larger community.**

I led two of the Thursday Men's Group (in-person) sessions.

I joined the Social Action Team meetings at The Haven as they promote UUTC involvement in the community garden. Their survey to find community connections among congregants is ready to be distributed as soon as the Ministry Review is done.

Christy and I hosted (with thanks to Susan Slocum and Kristin Leesment) a new member reception at our home the afternoon of Sept. 24.

I note that I was involved with the NAACP religious leaders group to discuss the racist/anti-LGBTQ sign posted on a walk signal a few blocks from UUTC, and among several religious leaders in Transylvania County to sign the resulting letter to the Transylvania Times expressing our deep concern.

I have been in contact with the Asheville UU congregation to see about UUTC volunteers being part of the UU tent at Blue Ridge Pride on Sept. 30. As of this moment I do not know that UUTC volunteers have signed up.

##### Social Justice

**Challenge the congregation to address social justice issues directly.**

As above, I have met with the Social Action team regularly. These meetings include the topic to help in engaging the congregation more widely.

My September 24 sermon on "Radical Hospitality" urged us to widen our circles.

Note the “Get out the vote” postcard campaign was happening this past month as well, and I didn’t have to do a thing about that other than saying “yes!”.

## **Target Goals**

Pulpit & Worship: **Draw from other religious traditions in worship services at least twice a month.**

I have included Christian, Middle Eastern, Jewish and secular perspectives, in the services I led. One of those weeks I referred to the concurrent Jewish High Holy days and the related meanings.

Community Building: **The minister will reach out to a variety of congregants to learn about the connections they have already built in the larger community.**

Continuing this process. Social Action Team is ready to go with a survey which will help me with this goal, and also help them learn more about connections that may be relevant to expanded Social Action work.

Note also I facilitated the UUTC retreat, which is related to community building.

Social Justice: **Explore the difference between social justice and social service in sermons and activities.**

I preached on this topic on April 16. It will recur in my services through the year, though the direct comparison was not a part of my September preaching.

## **SPECIAL CEREMONIES:**

Memorial Service for UUTC Member, Timothy James McGann (Nov. 3, 1948 - July 1, 2023) on September 23 at UUTC.

New Member Recognition, Sept. 24 (10 names read, but one or two could not make it).

## **OTHER ITEMS OF NOTE:**

I attended in a welcome lunch for the new senior minister at the Asheville UU congregation, Rev. Dr. Audette Fulbright Fulson. At that lunch with the area UU colleagues we also welcomed Rev. Holly Brown of Clemson UU.

We’ve had success in relaunching “Spiritual Explorers” this season, and a new ARE course by Hilly Bernard. My attempts to reboot the Soul Matters in-person discussions had no takers on either the Sunday or Tuesday we’d announced.

I continue to meet with an ecumenical group of religious leaders weekly.

I completed the AED/CPR training at UUTC.

I’m participating in the Campus Vision Task Force convened by Michael Solomon.