

# Minister's Report to the UUTC Board

## Focusing on Goals and Objectives

### November 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 three Sunday services at UUTC (on the theme of "The Gift of Generosity"). The first Sunday was on "Transformed by Generosity" with Maimonides' list, the second Sunday was on "Detangling Fear and Greed", and the third was a multi-generational "Thanksgiving Bread Sharing Service" co-created with planning by a team of three (me, Midge Hoover, and Kevin Lausch) and with the Krueger and Renner families assisting in the service. Carol Flake led the service when I was away with family after Thanksgiving, on Celtic wisdom.

I note that direct feedback to me has been positive. This is despite the fact that I introduced an unfamiliar hymn to the congregation on one Sunday this month. ;)

##### 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 organized the (first annual?!) "Interfaith Service of Thanks" with various other faith leaders on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. This was well promoted within our congregation. Combined choir was to have had a couple folks from other congregations join us, thanks to John Austin's efforts, though one of the two was out sick on the evening of the event. Invitations went out to several religious leaders, and those who could participate included Episcopal, Methodist, Lutheran, Jewish and Catholic congregations (and UUTC), along with the director of one of our partner agencies (Sharing House) and the Mayor of Brevard. I note that a UUTC member, Donna Reyburn, added a social service aspect by suggesting people bring canned goods to be delivered to Sharing House.

Note that Donna Reyburn coordinated a (first-ever?) UUTC Thanksgiving meal this month, on the day of Thanksgiving, which was well attended! Also Wonderful Wednesday was well attended.

##### Social Justice

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

I have stayed in touch with the Social Action team, though their new meeting choices meant I could not attend due to schedule conflicts. No new justice efforts this past month, but UUTC members continue to be involved as volunteers in our partner agencies.

I note that in keeping with our renewed Welcoming Congregation status we observed the Transgender Day of Remembrance (Nov. 20) during the Nov. 19 service, with a roll call of names.

### **Target Goals**

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

I have included 12th Century Jewish wisdom (Maimonides), Nature-based readings, wisdom from Pema Chödrön (American Tibetan-Buddhist, whose book will be the upcoming focus of Spiritual Explorers), and the pre-thanksgiving service preparation was informed in part by my reflections on Q'uran Sura 28 (i 83) (says the ungrateful never prosper).

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.**

The Social Justice survey is done!

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 October preaching I did weave social justice into sermon themes, perhaps most obviously the one on the Doctrine of Discovery in its systemic multi-century effects.

### **SPECIAL CEREMONIES:**

The Memorial Service for UUTC Member, Susan "River" Freeman was held on October 28 at UUTC. I was away but had provided the scripts for the presenters, along with video portions as previously arranged at Elizabeth Thompson's request.

It was a joy for me to officiate at our son's wedding on October 28 in Ohio. Justin and Lydia were kind enough to include me in this special way.

### **OTHER ITEMS OF NOTE:**

I attended the Southeast UU Ministers' conference at The Mountain, Nov. 13-16. The theme was social justice related: "Detangling our Callings from Capitalism" and was presented by Rev. Megham Robert, PhD student.

I attended the Campus Vision Task Force meetings, and also a Safety Team meeting with Captain Aaron Thompson of the Brevard Police Department.

Ian Cowie and I represented UUTC at the Sharing House General Assembly (representatives of congregations voted on budget and new Board members, and the celebration of their new property purchase).

I participated in the Installation ceremony of the new Lead Minister (The Rev. Dr. Audette Fulbright Fulson) at the UU Congregation in Asheville on November 5.

I am winding down Physical Therapy - I'd been suffering pain when seated for long periods, and the exercises and PT has helped my butt be in better condition.