

Minister's Report to the UUTC Board

Focusing on Goals and Objectives

February 2024

Areas of Focus

Pulpit & Worship

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

Since the January Board meeting I have helped lead three Sunday morning services at UUTC, and attended the guest speaker service on Feb. 18. Service topics continued on the themes of "Liberating Love" (Jan.) and "The Gift of Justice and Equity" (Feb). I coordinated with John Austin, Janice Canon and Kevin Lausch when music and story could add to the cohesion of the day's worship theme.

Sadly, due to our internet, we were unable to stream or record the service on Feb. 4, with the images and comparison of equality, equity, and justice.

Community Building:

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

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

I encouraged attendance to the Antisemitism presentation, and approved UUTC as a co-sponsor of this community event organized by the Brevard Jewish Community. I could not attend but followed up with a leader of the Jewish community, and with various UUTC folks who did attend. UUTC was presented a copy of the presenter's book, *Holocaust Mothers & Daughters: Family, History and Trauma* (by Federica K. Clementi) which will be processed and added to the UUTC library collection.

I offered a "bring your own lunch" gathering at UUTC, advertised in the newsletter, and sent some targeted reminders - but no one attended. I also attended soup-er Sunday and Wonderful Wednesday.

Social Justice:

Challenge the congregation to address social justice issues directly.

I have met with the Social Action team. Social Justice themes were woven into recent sermons, especially Feb. 4.

I advocated for adoption of the 8th Principle at UUTC, and spoke at the forum and the special congregational meeting.

Target Goals

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

I have included Jewish wisdom and referenced Muslim texts and teachings on giving to the poor and disadvantaged. I also referenced Christian texts, and included a story from an Earth Centered (European) writer. February is Black History Month and I had quotes from various Black figures in UU history (I do that other times too).

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.

I continue this work and continue to have individual conversations with people who are volunteering in community, with social service organizations. I note that we've had members who have advocated for access for public servant aspirants to be on the ballot by petition (not a violation of our charitable status, but rather promotion of the democratic process).

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

This goal was addressed previously in April and when I asked last month if it should be dropped I heard clearly that I needed to keep going with it. I talked about the difference of social service (providing boxes to stand on) and social justice (tearing down the structural barriers/curbs/fences) in my sermon on February 4 (related to slides shown).

Pastoral Care: I met with people at the office, and by phone. I have found some appointments this month have been canceled due to congregant stress, health, or schedule conflicts. That is not a good sign! I note that the Caregivers Support Group (volunteer coordinated) has seen a new person or two engage in that circle, and the same for the Grief Support Group.

OTHER ITEM OF NOTE, WITH REQUEST:

I ask the Board to help me (and us all) to more closely review our financial reports, and get more detailed data at regular intervals through the year. Our staff, payroll company and I continue to work to find a solution for errors on my W-2. I also met with the Compensation Team and elaborated on the current and past years of incorrect salary and benefits payments, including not getting my raise, past W-2 issues, and the retirement account issue discovered last year. We are working in good faith, as we have last year and before that - and UUTC has better systems in place (including a bookkeeper, and purchase of a textbook that elaborates on intricacies of church/clergy tax law) - and yet, still, this is recurring and is very stressful for me. I request this be on the agenda at some future Board meetings, to keep us be proactive in 2024.