

MST Report to the Board – Oct. 12, 2020

The work of the MST since our last monthly report includes:

1 - completing the extensive packet of documents that will be reviewed and sent to the UUA where it will be available to ministers in search. This project involved work by all members of the team who researched, wrote, discussed, edited, and enhanced with photos, the many included documents.

2 – completing and making available the congregational survey to UUCGT members and then collecting the data. The very time-consuming work, done by Chris & Jim, continues as the results are collated and interpreted to be shared with the congregation. This is an important resource for informing us as to the dreams and requirements of the congregation.

3 – planning Cottage Conversations and Focus Groups. Tentative dates for Cottage Conversations are Nov. 1 and 8. They will be held in breakout rooms after Sunday Services. . . yet another important resource for our work. Questions for conversation are: Three years from now, looking back, how would you describe a successful ministry? What do you see as the most important role of a minister for our congregation? What are your goals in our congregation and how can a minister help you achieve those goals?

4 - Targeted Focus Groups are currently being scheduled for further, important input. The main question to be discussed is “What can a minister do to advance the work of this group?”

5 – improvements to UUCGT.org website. This work is taking longer than we would like due to the lack, so far, of a webmaster. Charles Brackett has done beautiful work to visually enhance the website and we are hopeful about getting it posted there soon because our website will be, in fact it already is, available to ministers in search as well as anyone else who is interested in our church.

6 – confirmed Neutral Pulpits for Feb. and March.

We are delighted that the Negotiating Team has met and begun its work.

Please excuse the cup graphic that I couldn't easily get rid of. Just enjoy it : )

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Zerbel

Minister's Notes  
October 14, 2020

Dear Board Members,

Alison and I completed our Tuesday evening 6-week Reading and Writing Whiteness class, and will complete our Friday group in two days. Many in both groups are wanting to continue, so after a brief break, we will begin working with Ibram X. Kendi's book, *How to Be an Anti-Racist*. It has been a powerful experience to share this journey with the participants as we all wrestled with a difficult issue. We learned from one another and supported one another. We have a second group set to start up in late October. We are planning to offer a similar class in January to the wider community. Alison is already recruiting folks.

Alison will also be facilitating a middle-school age workshop using a book called *This Book is Anti-Racist*. Someone said it was in the paper, but I didn't find it.

We have two Soul Matters Small Groups meeting, and a facilitator meeting once a month. If there is a need, we can add another group. Sunday Services has adopted the Soul Matters monthly themes, and RE is also utilizing the resources. This is the ideal format for the theme to run throughout the life of the congregation in worship, small groups, messages in the Beacon and the Flash, and in our religious education classes. This month's theme is Deep Listening and November's theme is Healing, a timely theme following the Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> election. Ministers are preparing to respond to the outcome and aftermath no matter what happens.

Vespers started up again on September 11 by request, probably due to pandemic fatigue and election anxiety. After seven months of isolation and pushing hard to make things work, I think we are all tired. Because of the Board Retreat, there will be no Vespers this Friday, but I'm trying to recruit someone who might be a backup when I'm not available.

I attended the usual committee meetings this past month, including the Program Council meeting last Friday. Since I moved my study day from Friday to Thursday, I've been feeling less stressed. My office hours are from 11:30-1:30 on Wednesdays. Drop ins visits from congregants has been lighter this fall than last spring when the pandemic forced us to move to virtual.

Mark Bernstein and I met to discuss the Board Retreat on September 21, and I am looking forward to working with him this weekend. Mark has suggested that we might be able to finish at 2 pm on Saturday, but if there is something more you would like to add to the Agenda, he is fine with ending at 3 pm. Please take a moment to look it over before the meeting tonight.

I was able to attend the memorial service for Barbara McClellan on September 15<sup>th</sup> and also attended the walk to honor Justice Ginsberg on Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> and had three one-on-one pastoral care Zoom meetings.

L, Cathy

UUCGT Website (under the *About Us* tab to appear below *A Green Sanctuary*), and to Ministerial Search Team Congregational Record  
THIRD DRAFT 9/30/20

### **UUCGT Healthy Congregations Team (HTC): Resources and Policies**

UUCGT strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, together with love and support for each other. Sometimes in the course of our congregational life conflict arises. It's normal and common. At other times, especially in times of change, anxiety may rise in individuals and groups and play out in unhealthy ways. Our Healthy Congregations Team is here as a resource for conflict resolution and proactive learning about ways to develop and maintain healthy social and emotional relationships at church.

Members of the HCT this year are Susan Lio, Barb Termaat, Mary Anne Rivers, Jim Linsell, and Cathy Harrington. (could insert a Zoom screen shot photo of our team here)

Last year, we developed the Healthy Congregation Policy for our team and the congregation at large. This policy, accepted by our Board in May 2020, provides concrete steps to help those in conflict to focus on mature thinking and keep emotions in check. Click here for the policy and the steps. (add link) (<https://www.uucgt.org/about-us/our-governance>)

*"Less judgment, more curiosity."* That's the motto of the UUCGT Healthy Congregations Team. We hope to inspire *your* curiosity, too, about how to bring our best to our relationships at church.

#### HTC Plans for 2020-2021

1. We'll provide ongoing offers to participate in small group learning about how we can grow as individuals and a congregation. Our first opportunity in this area will be a book and discussion group using the resource, *Growing Ourselves Up* by Jenny Brown.
2. Members of our team will make brief periodic presentations during Sunday services.

#### Healthy Congregation Team Covenant

Our shared purpose is to educate ourselves and others such that, together, we continuously nurture creation of Beloved Community. We base our work on systems thinking and developing healthy responses to anxiety and change. By developing self-awareness around the balance between our principles and the relationships we value, we can create healthier, deeper, and clearer communication skills.