

Interim Minister's Report September 2020

September (from board meeting in August to board meeting in September)

Committee/Team meetings attended: worship associates, social justice council, coordinating team, transition team, pastoral associates, program council, people-of-color caucus, Widening the Circle book task force, and staff meetings.

Other meetings or church events attended: had one-on-one meetings with 30 church members and leaders as part of my "listening tour," met one-on-one with all UUCB staff members, attended end-of-summer Chalice Circle facilitator celebration, attended all Sunday coffee hours

Worship & Rites: participated in all worship services in August, led 3 of them; led process for making changes to the typical worship liturgy, led changes for responsible use of materials in online worship, adjusted Wednesday Vespers service and cast continuing vision for this time

Other: part of many continuing conversations on Covid pandemic adaptations, on-boarding and getting up to speed on many aspects of the church and its processes

Other than reporting what I've been up to in the past month, I also like to include some thoughts and reflections in my board reports. This past month has been largely consumed with on-boarding and figuring out how things work here (on the level of: how to submit recordings for the worship service, what format they should be in, etc) and my listening tour. The listening tour and a lot of thinking about UUCB has helped me with forming my projects for this year of interim here. By way of explanation for how I've determined by projects, since UUCB has been through an interim time not too long ago and many of the "typical" interim projects were done then, it made more sense to determine my list contextually and based on what I'm seeing and hearing now. I also bring in some of my own strength and specialty areas, and those are included as well.

Here is my current list of projects for this year:

Overall:

- Covid adaptations (mission, future)
- Governance clarity (leadership)
- Inspiring joy whenever possible
- Encouraging Both/And Thinking
- Trust Building

Fall:

- Institutional Racism Audit (leadership) (working with Widening the Circle task force and others)
- Establishing a Conflict Transformation Team (leadership, future) – this will be a huge project
- Newcomers – trying to help things be less complicated for newcomers, establishing some sort of interest sorting for them (connections) – this is a fairly huge project
- Creating a mission & ends implementation/prioritization process for the staff (mission)

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Spring:

- Program & volunteering audit (leadership)
- Job description & performance evaluations & other personnel pieces (housekeeping)

Programs or courses that I plan to lead as well: (not an exhaustive list)

- Intentional Conclusions end of life planning series
- Grief recovery groups
- "In-service" training for pastoral associates and worship associates
- Conflict Transformation for Congregations workshop
- Healthy Congregations workshop

The words in parentheses refer to the five focus areas for interim work, which are listed below. I've included that list below, along with a sixth one for UU interims that is not official but I wouldn't be surprised if it becomes that way soon. Remember that these projects are all in addition to the "typical" work of a minister, the challenges of serving during the Covid-19 pandemic, and a myriad of other change and transition work. Also, not knowing whether I will be here for one or two years yet, I did not include some projects that are better suited for a second year rather than a first year.

Five Areas of Focus for Interims (plus one):

Heritage: reviewing how the congregation has been shaped and formed

Leadership: reviewing the membership needs and its ways of organizing and developing new and effective leadership

Mission: defining and redefining sense of purpose and direction

Connections: discovering all the relationships a faith community builds outside of itself

Future: supporting proactive decision-making for the future

Anti-Racism: discerning and implementing actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in individuals and the congregation, for example those recommended in the *Widening the Circle of Concern* report

In future months, I hope to parse out my reflections by the UUCB ends statements (which is how Rev. Christian had structured his board reports) and by the focuses of interim ministry.

DENOMINATIONAL WORK / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the realm of Professional Development, just before beginning at UUCB, I attended a week-long training, Part 2 of the Interim Ministry Networks training for intentional interim work. The third part of their training is a "field-work" project, essentially one of the projects that I am doing here which I'll reflect on with a group of other interims. Right now, I'm planning for that project to be the institutional racism audit here.

UPCOMING TIME AWAY

None planned.