

Interim Minister's Report January 2021

December (from board meeting in November to board meeting in December)

Committee/Team meetings attended: worship associates, social justice council, coordinating team, pastoral associates, program council, Widening the Circle book task force, staff meetings, Reopening task force, governance & board policy manual working group, video production team

Other meetings or church events attended: Local interfaith group call (C5), Interfaith Contra Costa County annual meeting, led Personal Theology the Sunday after the election, was main tech support and zoom host for Bryan Baker & Friends fundraising concert

Worship & Rites: led two Sunday worship services, led three Vespers services, assisted in another Sunday service (leading pieces and recording our guest preacher), worked on lots of planning for December holiday services; this next month I will also be working with Bryan as he plans for his sabbatical Jan thru March 2021

Other: attended the annual conference for the Interim Ministry Network and presented two workshops; one of these, the one on Visitors & Welcoming, I hope to present to UUCB leaders as well

January (from board meeting in December to board meeting in January)

Committee/Team meetings attended: social justice council, coordinating team, pastoral associates, program council, Widening the Circle book task force, staff meetings, Pledge Drive planning team, chalice circle leaders

Other meetings or church events attended: UUCB community ministers group, WOWS, provided hosting and tech support for the Messiah sing-along, attended The White Card play

Worship & Rites: led four Sunday worship services, our Christmas Eve service, and two vespers services, led our Blue Holiday service and coordinating and led the Winter Solstice Service, did pre-planning for vespers services for this spring, support for Bryan's upcoming sabbatical, and coordinating with upcoming guest preachers (I feel like there's something else too, but that looks like enough!)

Other: In addition, I have been working on compiling and modifying an organizational anti-racism audit specifically for congregations and creating a trust assessment for congregational use. I took a week of vacation from Christmas to New Year's Day.

Five Areas of Focus for Interim Times (plus one):

Heritage: reviewing how the congregation has been shaped and formed

There are a lot of elements of the heritage and identity of UUCB that impact and shape her today. One that I think bears current examination is our history and feelings around our building and grounds. While the "bipartisan" study was done and the board did its review and decision based on the study, I feel like it's still something that is lingering in folks' feelings, especially with our not being regularly in the building together due to the pandemic. It bears some thought and reflection for how to address and hold this.

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

There are two significant initiatives related to this area going on at the present moment. One is the pledge drive/stewardship campaign, which is working hard in what may be a challenging year given the ongoing pandemic and economic challenges in our country. The other initiative is a particularly needed one, of trying to identify UUCB members and friends who have been less active or not active in the past year or so. This is more challenging than usual because of the pandemic and virtual church, but that also makes it all the more important. This is a multi-committee effort that seems to have good process and a lot of input. I look forward to seeing how it unfolds.

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Mission: *defining and redefining sense of purpose and direction*

The benchmarking task force will be doing some concentrated work in this area. I look forward to seeing where they take it and what questions and indicators they choose to grapple with.

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

UUCB has a vibrant share-the-plate Good Neighbor program that continually highlights local connections. How the recipients are chosen particularly brings together both community leaders and many members and leaders of UUCB. I particularly liked how the council meeting where the presentations were made was attended by many UUCB members and recorded so that others could see it as well. The voting was widely inclusive as well, and the presentations were engaging and it was apparent that a lot of effort had gone into it. It is one of the more vibrant and committed share-the-plate programs that I have witnessed in congregations.

Future: *supporting proactive decision-making for the future*

I've been participating in the Re/Opening Planning Task Force, which is taking a proactive but careful approach to thinking through various options for possible next steps.

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*

There continues to be a lot of good ARAOMC programming going on here at UUCB. This past month we held a reading of the play *The White Card* with a follow-up conversation in Wows regarding the play. The Widening the Circle task force continues to work its way through the book with some amazing and deep conversation. I hope to be able to work with congregational leaders in the next month or so with engaging in an anti-racism audit/assessment of UUCB, particularly inviting members of the Widening the Circle task force, Board, Transition Team, Social Justice leaders, and staff to participate. Given how active UUCB is with anti-racism and racial justice work, I think this is a good next step for the congregation's work in this area.

DENOMINATIONAL WORK / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This month I am finishing up the fieldwork portion of part 2 of the Interim Ministry Network's core training for interim ministers. I'm also submitting two program proposals for General Assembly this year, one on my own regarding grief and caring for grievers, and the other in collaboration with UUCB's social justice project leaders and social justice council. I hope that at least the latter one is accepted as it would be good positive visibility for UUCB as the congregation goes into a ministerial search of some sort next year.

UUCB's Mission & Vision Statements

The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley is to create loving community, inspire spiritual growth, and encourage lives of integrity, joy, and service.

Vision Statement: The Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley is a welcoming and vibrant congregation. We joyously support spiritual development guided by individual faith, reason, and conscience. We are committed to serving one another, the church community, the community at large, and the global community. We foster a spirit of generosity and trust that encourages care for our church home and affirms diversity and relationships consistent with Unitarian Universalist principles.

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UUCB's Ends Statements

UUCB is a vibrant multicultural, anti-racist, anti-oppressive congregation:

REACHING OUT

We embody and share Unitarian Universalism

Our communities experience UUCB as an active and dynamic partner in pursuing societal and environmental justice

People rely on UUCB in times of need

REACHING IN

We invite people of goodwill to make a spiritual home with us

We celebrate the diversity of our congregation in the fullness of who we are

We reach out to one another across differences to connect in shared purpose

We have fun!

BUILDING UP

We are generous with our time, talent, and treasure

We steward our financial resources responsibly

We are comfortable, open and transparent in discussing both personal and congregational financial matters