

President's Report
September 17, 2009

Fellow Trustees:

Attached is the Board agenda for next week's meeting. The main topics are rather vague since what we actually do will depend a lot on where we end up at the retreat. Basically, I'm anticipating we will still have more detail to add to what we come up with on Saturday. I also want to see what additional reactions you had to the retreat which may help in planning for the future. One thought I've already had is that we should hold the next yearly retreat in June. We could use the first part to evaluate the past year and then start planning for the coming year. In that way we may be able to accomplish some things over the summer but really start work right away in the fall.

Back to the agenda... I also have added a discussion of what success will look like at the end of this church year. I mean this discussion to cover both the Board's work and the staff's and to lay a basis for our monitoring work. When we did the Board evaluation in June I think we found that we tended to use different "yardsticks" in some cases to measure our accomplishments. I'm hoping this discussion will create a single yardstick for this year. As it relates to the staff we have a responsibility to monitor their work toward our ends and according to Carver to accept a "reasonable" interpretation of what achieving those ends means. To me it makes sense to agree with staff up front on what things we will be looking at come June so that we can at least be talking about the same things and then talk about whether the degree of achievement was reasonable. I'm pretty sure this discussion will continue into the October meeting when I expect we will receive an updated version of staff's work plan for the year.

At the bottom of the agenda is a note about a conference on Multi-Site Churches which Prairie Star District is holding in the Twin Cities on Nov. 7. The topic concerns one model for church expansion which involves creating satellite congregations. It might be good for a couple of us to attend as it might be a model we want to be informed about for the future. I'll be asking if anyone is interested in attending.

Peace,
Barry

**Board of Trustees Meeting
September 17, 2009**

Agenda

- 6:30 Gather
 - Chalice lighting and opening words - Justin
- 6:45 Meeting Preparation
 - Confirm meeting objectives and agenda
- 6:48 Consent Agenda
 - Approve August minutes
 - Approve appointment of Cindy Marsh as Nominating Committee Chair
 - Approve new members
- 6:50 Review the Past
 - Sr. Minister report
 - Financial monitoring report
- 7:15 Create the Future
 - Board retreat
 - Action: Continue 2009-2010 Board Work Plan development
 - Action: Evaluate retreat
 - Evaluation of Success
 - Action: Adopt criteria for 2009-2010 success
- 8:45 Meeting Summary: Decisions review, action items & assignments
- 8:50 Meeting Evaluation: Process Evaluation & Assessment
- 8:55 Closing - Justin
- 9:00 Adjourn

Next meeting: Thursday, October 15

Upcoming Events:

Nov. 7 Multi-Site Church Conference

Report of the Staff Management Team

September 11, 2009

From the Senior Minister

Challenges:

- The biggest challenge has been having both Patti Frazee and Crystal Teachout out of the office for health related issues. They are now back in the office, but only at half time. They should both return to full time toward the end of September.
- Managing expectations. As the Board knows, there are many expectations for this year and the coming years. While there is a lot happening at once, my top priorities this year are Sunday Morning worship, Sermon Based Small Groups, and building a dynamic, strong, staff team.

Successes:

- The Management Team has dug into our yearly Workplan in earnest, updating, adding, and amending. We plan to finish this by the end of September.
- We have received very positive feedback about the changes we're implementing with Sunday morning worship.
- We are reviewing and updating the Employee Handbook.

Opportunities:

- I see the month of October, with the sermon theme of "Money," as an incredible opportunity. I believe that "money" is a deeply religious and spiritual topic, and to explore the many dimensions of money (values, vocation, shame, envy, greed, generosity, etc.) in a faith community is necessary and important. I will address the power and possibilities of creative/generous thinking. Along those lines, I want the Board to know that the Management Team and I have been in conversation about asking church members who currently support NPR to run their support through First Universalist; assuming enough people do this, we're anticipating buying sponsorship spots on NPR (or the Current) for a month or two, possibly beginning in November. We'd have 30 spots a week.
- I have been invited to participate in "Dreaming Big," a continuing education study group for ministers of large church, and ministers of churches on their way to being large. The "Dreaming Big" group meets three times during the year. I will be in Portland Oregon (at First Unitarian) Oct. 10, 11, 12, and 13, All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, OK, Feb 6-9, 2010, and at All Souls in DC, April 10-13, 2010.
- I will be attending "Prairie Group," a study group of Unitarian Universalist Ministers, Nov 2-5, 2009. The theme for "Prairie Group" this year is "Universalism."

Programming

Pastoral Care

Recent progress in the pastoral care area includes: getting more and timelier information to staff about our members in crisis and transition, sending staff-signed cards to those members, experimenting with a new cycle of life liturgy in our worship services, and increasing the ways information gets out through printed versions.

Plans underway include: having pastoral lay leaders carry a church cell phone (taking turns on a rotating basis) which our members can use in pastoral emergencies, offering a "listening and visiting how-to's" training in October, and commissioning pastoral visitors in the Nov. 8 Sunday service. In addition, Kate Tucker will be taking some advanced one-day courses this year from the Pastoral Care Institute at United Theological Seminary, to learn recent thinking on crisis referrals and narrative therapy.

Faith in Action

Unity Leadership had a successful summer and graduated 29 youth from the program. Presence at the graduation banquet exceeded 140 people. Beyond their individual 200 hour commitment the interns have put in over 800 hours of volunteer time at their site. We are completing our placement site evaluation visits in September and have already started planning and fundraising for the 2010 program.

Green Sanctuary will officially be kicked off as a congregation-wide initiative to gain UUA certification in September. The committee has worked all summer and has beginning plans for the 12 actions we committed to in our application to the UUA. You will definitely be hearing more from this group. The emphasis on Ethical Eating brought about from the GA Study Action issue is also being coordinated by the Green Sanctuary Group.

The collaboration with Greater Friendship Missionary Baptist Church is moving along as well. You might remember this group as the one who sponsored "America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline" gatherings this spring. The group met over the summer and hosted two meetings of the Juvenile Detention Steering Committee of Hennepin County. While we are still learning about all the factors that lead to the over-incarceration of youth of color in the juvenile justice system, we are getting closer to making a decision about the direction we will head into long term. Our work has already yielded multiple success and new relationships.

Chairs of the various Faith in Action groups met with Justin at the end of August to discuss communication, challenges, opportunities, and vision.

Congregational Life

We've hired two new staff people. Marsha Partington (Children's Program Coordinator) and Lily Franz (Program Assistant and Childcare Coordinator). We've still not hired a Children's Music Coordinator/Choir Director. We anticipate making an offer to our final candidate after September 20.

RE teaching teams are full, or very nearly there. We have continuing space issues. We have been working hard at creating collegial relationships with Emily Grey staff and teachers.

We are ready to launch six sermon-based small groups in the beginning of October. We are training facilitators, developing content, and recruiting participants successfully. The membership committee is working hard to make Sign-Up Sunday on September 27 a success, where congregants can be connected to the activities of the church.

Finance and Administration

Finance

As noted earlier, it has been challenging to have Patti and Chrystal out on medical leave. Some financial reporting has fallen behind, but is now getting caught up. Patti and Paige Winebarger have finalized the year-end closing for 08-09 and will be getting back to you with a formalized report. We did end the fiscal year in the black!

The net proceeds from the raffle are in the neighborhood of \$11,500. The church still needs to pay the gambling tax so a final number is forthcoming. The work for our next fundraising event, the annual Auction (November 14), has begun!

As of August 31, pledge income (pledges paid) is at \$143,489.57. Last year at this time, our pledge income was at \$130,154.42.

Administration

We are providing more customer service to our members and friends by coordinating office volunteers to answer the phones. The new website is in the final stages and will be launched in the coming months. The photo directory looks fabulous and will be distributed by the time of the board meeting. We are introducing organic recycling to the building this fall in conjunction with the work of Green Sanctuary. Justin is working with the Administrative team to improve systems.

This fall, Patti is taking a class in Nonprofit Finance at the University of St. Thomas. Chrystal (Facilities Coordinator) and Mike (Custodian) are studying for the test to get boiler's licenses. Kevin (Communications Coordinator) is taking an editing class at the U of M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Justin Schroeder, Senior Minister

Rev. Kate Tucker, Associate Minister

Patti Frazee, Director of Administration

Heidi Mastrud, Director of Congregational Life

Debra Rodgers, Director of Faith in Action

NOTES, FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
3 September 2009

Present: Dan Berg, Paige Winebarger, Nancy Gaschott

Unable to attend but participating via written comments prior to the meeting: Jill Andersen, Jim Santelli

1. THE COMMITTEE. We talked generally about what each of us brought to the committee and noted Jim and Jill's written contributions to the discussion. Collectively, the committee represents a wide and deep level of financial expertise, with a possible weakness in the area of investments. We briefly discussed the make-up of the committee but did not come to a conclusion about whether we should suggest adding members.

2. TOPICS. We discussed the memo I'd sent out before the meeting.

A. Monitoring.

The committee member's views on the monitoring schedule varied but those present agreed that, as a practical matter, given (a) Patti's surgery/recovery, and the resulting slower-than-usual pace of month closings, (b) a new senior minister, and (c) a new treasurer, a thorough review following the end of the 1st quarter would be appropriate for now, rather than the detailed monthly monitoring in the schedule.

Method? As Jill had been conducting the monitoring the committee hoped that she might be able to perform this first quarterly monitoring/verification.

Regarding the use of outside experts/auditors the committee did not come to a conclusion but discussed how audits can be useful but can also not be, and that, until we have our house in better order (see discussion on Clean-up, below) a normal certified audit would not be a good use of resources.

B. Reporting.

The committee agreed that we could help refine the reports for the board so that they are more accessible. Paige, in particular, has "lots of ideas about reports." We discussed the importance of tracking and being informed about a few critical identified budget issues. (This came from a suggestion that Barry Johnson offered.) We thought, for our current year, our critical issues are:

- Existing pledge income
- New pledge income
- Investment portfolio performance
- Significant (10%) deviations from budget

We discussed limiting the printing of long financial reports for the board. Perhaps the detailed reports could be e-mailed to everyone but a summary only printed.

C. Clean-up.

The committee expressed its appreciation to Paige for the expert work she's done to date, and in particular, for the memo she prepared a year ago summarizing the work the church needed to do in order to clean up our overall accounting practices and systems.

We agreed that the committee would take responsibility for addressing the recommendations in this 9/1/08 memo.

First step: Paige, who expressed confidence that it would be possible to accomplish every item in the memo this year, will prioritize the items and create a proposed timeline for our review prior to our next meeting.

D. Long Term

The committee generally agreed that we should assist staff and board as the church grapples with major financial issues: our mortgage and balloon payment, our dependence on rental income, long-term building and parking needs.

3. REGULAR MEETING TIME. We decided to set a regular committee meeting time for 5:30 at the church on the 1st Thursday of the month. We know that this was not an ideal time for Jim, but very much hope that he can make it work as it was a good or preferred time for the other members of the committee.

Our next meeting, then will be Thursday, October 1 at 5:30
p.m. at church.

**First Universalist Church
Statistical Report
August 20, 2009**

MEMORIAL SERVICES: 0

MARRIAGES/SERVICES OF COMMITMENT: 0

MEMBERS FOR APPROVAL:

MEMBERS REINSTATED: 0

MEMBERS FOR REMOVAL: 1

Chip TenBensel – Relationship change
June Blanchard - deceased

	To Date	End of Year Totals			
MEMBERS	2009-10	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06
(Fiscal Year)	0	72	41	63	92
TOTAL MEMBERS:	836	840	824	845	885
1					

TOTAL MEMBERS AS OF THE LAST MEETING: 838

To be added: 0

To be removed: 2

TOTAL MEMBERS: 836

FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH										
ATTENDANCE REPORT										
August										
2009				Corresponding Sunday in:						
Adults	10:00		2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	
First Week	159		161	164	184	450	202	184	159	
Second Week	175		217	Lake Harriet	453	192	295	220	206	
Third Week	146		Lake Harriet Service*	300	203	223	164	192	230	
Fourth Week	Lake Harriet Service*		139	223	168	248	225	360	215	
Fifth Week	309		136				180	184		
Monthly Total	789		653	687	1008	1113	1066	1140	810	
Avg. for Month	197		163	229	252	278	213	228	203	
Church School										
First Week			26	15	37	37	48	49	38	
Second Week			30	Lake Harriet	0	32	31	42	40	
Third Week			Lake Harriet	18	37	25	27	41	62	
Fourth Week			20	19	30		36	47	39	
Fifth Week			NO RE				34			
Monthly Total			76		104	94	176	179	179	
Avg. for Month			25		35	31	35	45	45	
Total										
First Week			187	179	221	487	250	233	197	
Second Week			247		453	224	326	262	246	
Third Week			Lake Harriet Service	318	240	248	191	233	292	
Fourth Week			159	242	198	248	261	407	254	
Fifth Week			136			0	214	184	0	
Monthly Total			729	739	1112	1207	1242	1319	989	
Avg. for Month			182	246	278	302	248	264	247	