

Developmental Minister
Report to the Board
October 2, 2019

Observations

- The energy and attendance on Next Steps Weekend meetings were quite positive. The conversation clarified some issues and have set us on a path towards important decision-making. I see my role in this as helping to make sure process is inclusive and positive. I outlined a proposed process in an email that I'll reiterate here:
 - A vision weekend, where there's a determination of, "Who does UUFM want to be as a congregation in five years?"
 - Consult with the architects about what could be done in our current space for no more than million dollars.
 - Congregational vote on whether to stay or go, based on the above input.
 - If the vote is to stay, then embark on a capital campaign in line with the architectural consult.
 - If the vote is to go, then a second vote to determine whether we want to buy the First Christian Church.
 - If that vote is no, then form a committee to search for an appropriate property.
- I am more and more convinced that parking is our limiting factor. Since overflow parking is difficult, that makes it all the more concerning.
- Attendance continues to be lower than we expect in the fall. We had only two visitor sign-ins during the month of September. This is low for any month; for September, it's hard to even believe. We may be seeing the effects of the same factors that are affecting the city, with decreased K-State student enrollment, decreased budget at K-State, and high deployments from Fort Riley.
- Meanwhile, I have spent a good deal of time and energy working with the People's Issues Forum, planned for October 10, at 7 PM, at the Staley Leadership School Town Hall, exciting work because it brings together progressive groups in town and holds candidates accountable to issues raised by the citizens of Manhattan. Additionally, I began supervision of an intern working with MAPJ, focused on the Coalition for Equal Justice, a project that John Exdell has long championed.
- Judy Nickelson is leading the book discussion on "Just Mercy," which began with a dozen folks gathered last week, two of them from outside the congregation. It's good to see the strong interest and the development of new leadership within our congregation.
- We have added a fifth Chalice Circle, led by Elke Lorenz. We are looking for additional members, so please pass suggestions on to Elke.

Plans

- I will attend the Prairie Starr District ministers' meeting October 7-9, so will miss this month's Board meeting.
- I'll conduct training for conveners this month, October 6, following the service. We have made some shifts, with providing slides each week with hymn lyrics, and having Renea select our hymns so we have coherence through the month.
- The group I've been meeting with about discussions on race in our community has selected a theme – Listening to Local Voices – and four areas of concentration for four different sessions over the next two years. This will build on the Race and Reconciliation dialogues that took place a couple of years ago.
- I'm starting to plan for Christmas Eve, as well as continuing planning for services through the fall. It's so helpful to have themes to build services around, and to meet regularly with conveners for the month.

Summary of September Ministerial Activities:

Social action and community presence

- Attended
 - ACLU listening session
 - SAHA (Safe and Affordable Housing Action)
 - Ecumenical book group
 - Common Table
- Led training on religion and domestic violence for Crisis Center
- Racial Reconciliation planning
- MAPJ
 - Led Board meeting
 - People's Issues Forum planning (multiple)
 - Attended Community Organizing Training and Labor Fest
 - Began supervising an intern for MAPJ/Coalition for Equal Justice

Ministerial leadership

- Worship
 - Preached 3 times and convened once (Musical)
 - Led October conveners' meeting
 - Revised Conveners' Manual
 - Conducted memorial (celebration of life) for Doris Mangelsdorf (not a member, but related to members)
- Attended Board meeting and Next Steps weekend meetings
- Attended "Just Mercy" book discussion
- Led other programs
 - Staff meeting

- Racial Justice Team
- Chalice Circle
- Meadowlark UU gathering
- Co-led Tai Chi
- Adult Religious Education – “Religious Freedom on the Margins of Empire”

Growth

- 1 visitor contact
- Social media presence

Other

- Attended UU Ministers Association cluster meeting

Respectfully submitted,
Jonalu Johnstone