

February 2023 Minister's Board Report

Dear Board members,

The year is moving by quickly! As a reminder, here are the Board goals laid out for this year for you to consider where we are with them:

Considering and acting upon our commitment to the 8th Principle and its emphasis on dismantling oppression and promoting racial diversity, the Board articulates the following goals for the 2022-23 congregational year:

- 1. Structure and fully populate (with lay leaders) healthily functioning committees throughout our congregational system.*
- 2. Hire a Religious Education Coordinator (one-year position) soon, and set up the permanent DRE search committee.*
- 3. Recruit, ignite, and support five or more people working in Welcoming & Engagement Ministry (Membership).*
- 4. Schedule and lead a minimum of two Program Council Meetings.*
- 5. Set up and support an 8th Principle Accountability Committee.*

As we move into Spring, we have three big items on our agenda: the upcoming “Let’s Get Social” program, which is intended primarily to reignite UUCF social connections (it is *not* primarily intended as a fundraiser); the creation of next year’s budget (which needs to include a properly funded DRE position); and a Stewardship Drive (likely centered around the funding of the RE program).

The Stewardship Drive will need to be a robust one this year, in part because there is no big Spring fundraiser happening. Joyce McCabe is willing to offer leadership and some other people have been named for that task force. My suggestion will be to do something UUCF has chosen not to do (out of sensitivity to the pandemic) in the recent past: share goal numbers with the congregation and give them updates as we make our way toward that goal. If the goal isn’t met, then from the beginning we let people know we might be asking them to increase even their new pledge. We have (intentionally) not run a very driven stewardship campaign for a few years, but I believe the time has come to put more force into this. I think the Board offering testimonials (both during services and on video) and leadership alongside the Stewardship Committee could be very effective.

One of the things we simply do not know at this time is what the entirety of UUCF’s membership looks like these days. In-person Sunday morning attendance is no longer the tool by which we can measure community engagement. I can name twenty households that I connect with on a regular and meaningful basis that are not represented by attendance in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. Whether they watch the services online, read the materials we send out weekly, participate in our programming, or come to me for pastoral advice—we have many individuals and families who choose to participate in “alternative” ways these days—and their activities are sometimes untraceable. Whether that will translate to financial support has yet to be seen—but this is another reason to engage in a robust stewardship campaign, so that we can identify the size and commitment of this community at this unique time.

With that in mind, this month, we are working on taking our Tech team to the next level in getting further volunteers and scheduling. The effort to both technically navigate the live sanctuary space and

offer streaming services has been monumental these past (almost) three years—and the work to offer consistency with our Sunday services, make meetings accessible by Zoom, etc.—this work continues so that we can embrace our entire community, those seen and unseen, known and unknown.

As always, thanks for all you do, especially as we navigate church life in ways that have never been done before.

In gratitude,

Rev. Dr. Jason Cook