

November 2021 Minister's Board Report

Hello Board,

Here's a brief update on where UUCF is at the moment:

1. We continue to maintain awareness of the latest COVID recommendations, and the COVID Safety Task Force is still making those important decisions in response. Some of our congregants have expressed frustration and impatience with continuing to wear masks, etc. while others have questioned whether we are cautious enough. We recognize that this spectrum of feelings contributes to the overall feeling of the church experience at the moment—and that means it's a “complicated” experience for many people.
2. Along with our Office Administrator, I will be participating every other week in a meeting with First Christian's minister and office staff to improve our communication with them so that we can make Sunday more transitions smoother, as well as finding ways to be more collaborative. We will also work to increase building accessibility to those who might need it (Sunday morning set-up crew, etc.). Currently, we have only a very small number of key fobs, but there is a door entry phone app that we could possibly share a little more widely, if First Christian is agreeable.
3. Based on my consultations with colleagues, I do not foresee Sunday morning in-person attendance (currently somewhere between 30-45 people) significantly increasing while COVID requires the protocols that it currently does. I do know that campaigns in other churches to have congregants invite another congregant to “come back” to church have shown some moderate level of success in re-engaging people. Some of our congregants are far out of the communication loop at this point and need a different kind of invitation.
4. Online engagement has remained fairly high. We should continue to see this as part of our ministry and work to expand it; “future church” is here. At the moment, only Calvin Ballard is able to do the Zoom/facebook tech. Another person needs to be brought in to learn this as we have no in-house coverage if Calvin is not available.
5. There is much (understandable) heightened emotion (and varying opinions) around the participation of children and their families at the moment. This is perhaps the most complex aspect of returning to in-person offerings.
6. UUCF will need to consider when it wants to begin actively welcoming in newcomers. (Also very complex.) This will include: signage, vaccination policies, walk-in protocols, etc.

Nothing is particularly easy right now, especially as we recognize rising numbers in California and the sobering implementation of a statewide mask mandate. We recognize that COVID has been most damaging to those in our society who already struggle. Thus, we want to continue to take the most ethical road that we can, and we also recognize the need to adapt to current circumstances in a way that speaks to the needs of the people at UUCF. How can we do all of this? Very carefully—and with your continued thoughtful leadership, dear Board.

In appreciation,

Rev. Jason Cook