

President's Report 2018

What has arisen?

This year our board focused not only on the conducting of the business of the congregation but the manner in which we conduct that business. The bylaws indicate that our board is to meet a minimum of 9 times in the course of a year, the board met 17 times. We focused our efforts beyond the monthly meetings that all are familiar with. We devoted study time into streamlining policy, the ethics of leadership, conflict management and the creation of a covenantal culture. This commitment by your trustees was substantial and caring service. Great gratitude and appreciation go to Tom Darnton, Linda Fletcher, Laura Matchett and Mike McDonald president elect. A special thanks are offered to retiring Don Pyne secretary and Kay Sturgeon treasurer.

This year your board directed and supported our Policy Committee in an expansive process of revision of our Policy Manual separating policy from procedures. Although work remains, this change allows procedures to be adjusted at anytime, as needed without an exhaustive review and board approval. The point of this change is to create flexibility for committees to evolve, quickly if need be without unnecessary oversight. Our goal is for the governance structure of our polity to best enable and support our mission work through committees.

When the board studied the ethics of leadership, we invited all interested congregants. We listened to the collective wisdom of our congregation. As a result of our work, we suggest that the first role of leadership in a democracy is to support and nurture future leadership. Without support, succession becomes a matter of circumstance. The cultivation of leaders and the leadership is the first order of business and the vibrancy of this is a measure of the health of our congregation. (Below are listed the parameters for honing our own leadership as well as those nurturing future leaders).

This year we have a strong slate of leadership candidates offered by the Leadership Development Committee. Our congregation holds this underappreciated committee led by chair Joe Cook in deep gratitude. But we must look further down the path because although we may have great strength we need greater depth. We must find ways to engage new leaders to come forward and volunteer. We must as well, find ways to encourage more volunteers to feel supported and welcomed to leadership positions.

Early in the year we also addressed conflict management. After completing a study session and listening to the wisdom of our congregation, we created a Covenantal Congregation Task Force. If only we could remain covenantal in our relationships with one another we believed, we would manage conflict "upstream". We asked the task force to study the matter further and report back to the board by

the end of June. Included in the purvey of the group is how to encourage covenantal culture. How teach trust of intention and encourage non-violent language?

We hosted a special congregational meeting on October 29th for the purpose of considering adopting a Declaration of Conscience. The Declaration of Conscience was offered by the UUA. The Declaration was considered and subsequently adopted unanimously by voice vote.

Within the context of the monthly and annual business of the congregation and the special topics pursued above, the board focused it's intent on the form of how that work was processed. Our intention was to focus on form as well as content. Toward that end we worked to assure that every voice was heard. All trustees contributed to our discernment. We made our decisions without haste. We sought input from congregants with special topical experience and included those congregants who were involved in special tasks or committee work. We made efforts to resort to executive (closed) session only under special circumstances (maintaining confidentiality with staff regarding evaluations, proposed changes of compensation prior to review with the affected). We intended to be transparent but also took pains to appear transparent (publishing minutes of executive sessions once the content could be shared or at other times at least outlining the items discussed). We did not simply accept comments but solicited the comments of those who attended our meetings.

What awaits?

Our congregation is at a crossroads. We have an amazing heritage but if we are to prosper and grow then an evolution will need to take place. We will need to grow from our roots into something that we have yet to fully imagine.

The UUCGT of the future will be flexible and facile in it's structure allowing it to bend and change relatively quickly. This change will be enabled and supported by its governing structure. Committees may become a part of larger entities that share commonality in broader mission. Membership in committees may exist in multiple levels. Full members of committees may be joined in service by supporting or associate members. Maybe not voting but showing up for special projects and to support in other ways. This model will allow all manner of commitment which may appeal to young families whose members may not be able to make a full time commitment but none the less seek involvement.

The UUCGT of the future may loosen the structure of committees to share work with other committees whose purpose intersects. Work in the future may be easily shared between today's more static committee structure.

The UUCGT of the future will seek alternative funding structure to replace a purely pledge dependent model. We may research various alternatives including grants to allow us to our intentions and missions.

The UUCGT of the future will seek to offer belonging rather than membership. Our community will learn how best to welcome newcomers into our congregation meeting their needs for belonging, community, religious inquiry and expression. We will find what sparks those who wish to join us and encourage connection where THEY fit best. We will allow easier access to committees and groups by encouraging supporting and associate membership.

We will grow our community by keeping our heritage and reaching out to our community in new ways of welcome. We will make our home more solid, trusting and loving so that we can be a greater presence in our larger community as witnesses for righteous social justice for those who need our support.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karl D. Love

Intentional Leadership

As trustees, the Board recognizes that our first responsibility is successful democratic leadership. Successful democratic leadership cultivates and nurtures a climate that encourages new leadership and the process of successful succession. To be a democratic institution requires the cultivation of leaders and the leadership process to be the first order of business and the vibrancy of this is a measure of the health of our congregation.

We accept that the following parameters act as guides as we hone our own leadership and the existing and emerging leadership within our community.

- Those who encourage and inspire trust.
- Those who respond rather than react.
- Those who are committed to honoring their word. Those careful to commit because once committed, treat that commitment as a promise.
- Those who take responsibility for their actions. Leaders who move to correct their missteps, mistakes and misunderstandings.
- Those who create opportunities for disagreement to be open and direct (and depersonalize the process so that discussion is about ideas and not personalities). Depersonalizing conflict.
- Those who have and share a trust in purpose.
- Those who have a strong sense of and commitment to integrity.
- Those who are committed to a consensus of process. This means doing things openly and directly with room for everyone.
- Those who let ideas collide rather than people.
- Those who create opportunities for all involved to be heard.