

Highlights from the Last Month:

- #Enough Walk Out on March 14
- Hosting a donated dinner for UUCGT
- Congregational Care activity

Major Considerations/Activities/Goals

Building Small Group Ministry

The 9 AM Program co-lead with Sarah Montgomery-Richards has been well attended. I am also working with a few committees on the idea of micro-outreach to members for specific tasks, rather than asking people to sit on committees. I hope in this way to involve a growing number of members in doing the work of the congregation.

Web Site

Susan is working on setting up Google Analytics so we can learn who is currently using the website. In the mean time I am asking board members to consider these questions from the UUA about websites:

The Best, the Worst, and the Difference

- Think of the best congregational website you've ever experienced.
- Now, think of the worst congregational website you've ever experienced.
- What made the difference between the two?

As we think about design, we are also consider who normally uses a congregational website:

Know our users:

- Active participants
- Prospective participants
- Non-participants with specific needs
- Appreciators and allies
- Reporters and general public

Our Current and Imagined Website

- Is it obvious who you are?
- Do you have an explicit welcome to newcomers?
- Does your navigation offer clear pathways to additional information?
- Do you avoid "insider" language?
- Do you follow basic accessibility rules?
- Does your site work just as well on a small screen?

Sunday Services

We have had successful interesting programming for our Sunday services the last month. I am working with the SSC to consider a newer model for Sunday service planning that involves creating seasonal worship teams for people who might not want to sit on the committee permanently, but who might be willing to contribute to a specific service, a specific skill or a specific theme. There is some resistance to the idea of approaching things in a new way.

Social Witness Intersectionality

UUUCGT took the lead in organizing the community participation in the March 14 School Walkout against gun violence. We had good turnout along Front Street.

We continue to host Indivisible GT and have other groups also considering building use.

Denominational Affairs

I am registered for ministry days and the opening day of the General Assembly in June. I have had some positive interaction with the UUA Compensation Office on behalf of the Staff Resources Committee. They are an impressive office!

I am still unable to attend the western Michigan UUMA cluster meetings so far. They are far, it is snowy and they are only about 2 hours long. I have them on my calendar as we move toward spring. I will be attending the Spring UUMA Midwest Chapter retreat April 14 – 18 in Racine, Wisconsin.

Congregational Care

We have had a tremendous amount of need for congregational care again in the last month. Congregation care is working to consider a new model for our tea ministry: calling on members who may not want to be on a committee but who are happy to be asked for help with specific tasks. (They will all still be required to sign confidentiality agreements.)

We have also begun acknowledging the anniversary of passing of our members in the joys and concerns (on the Sunday nearest the date). This has been met with much appreciation.

Membership

I have begun calling our members who have joined in the last year to say thank you, check in and explore places where they might connect with UUUCGT more with our new model of “micro-outreach.”

Program Council

I began a conversation, along with DLE Sarah, with the Program Council to look at ways our numerous committees might be better able to support each other. We did an exercise which I will show briefly at the board meeting. Tom Darton made an excellent suggestion that we begin with a few committees (rather than all of them) with intersecting work to experiment with how bringing them together might be of mutual benefit.

Doctor of Ministry Work

My thesis proposal is nearly finished. The topic is on how interreligious dialogue enhances the spiritual practice of hospitality.

Request for Board Action

Review website questions