

## Senior Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees

March 2017

Worship attendance continues to remain strong. This is reflective of other Unitarian Universalist Congregations across our Association. With that increase comes an increase in pastoral care. I have been spending about 10% more of my time visiting and managing our pastoral care resources.

Dorothy and I have been working with the staff to budget for the next year. With conservative planning we are reducing budgeted expenses in most program areas by a significant amount. These will include some staff changes which I will explain more fully in executive session. While some of these program cuts are challenging we feel they are necessary.

As you know there is a movement among our members to respond to the assault on our moral values. The organization "Indivisible Fairfield County" includes several hundred members of our church along with several hundred other concerned citizens. David Vita and I have been meeting with the leaders of this group to ensure that the church can be supportive but not partisan. I am attaching their purposes and principles to this report and it is in the Dropbox. We are very clear on what constitutes partisan support and we will not put the church in violation of our non-profit status.

I have completed the rough draft of my rewrite of the book Beyond Fundraising with co-author Wayne Clark. I will have further edits to do but the UUA hopes to have this available for use by late summer. I will be part of a workshop at GA and I am completing a webinar session for the UU Leadership Institute this month. I have also completed a grant proposal to re-write my doctoral thesis into a usable curriculum along the lines of "Beloved Conversations" with a team of writers and educators through the Fahs Collaborative at Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago. I will be making several short trips to Chicago this spring to begin that re-write.

Speaking of "Beloved Conversations", the training held two weeks ago with Dr. Mark Hicks was extraordinary. There are two teams deeply engaged with this work. I hope to find funding to repeat this training next year for a new group leaders.

We had a very successful visiting steward training last Saturday with a makeup session on April 1. We are, I believe, on our way to a successful pledge drive, thanks, in part, to all of you. I want to especially thank the Stewardship Committee and especially Catherine for her co-leadership of this training with me.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Dr. John T. Morehouse