

# *Minister's Report*

SUBMITTED: OCTOBER 9, 2017

## LIST OF REGULAR MEETINGS AND EVENTS ATTENDED

- ☪ Monthly Board Meeting
- ☪ Monthly Executive Committee
- ☪ Monthly Westchester UU Ministers
- ☪ Monthly UUMA Cluster
- ☪ Monthly Committee on Ministry Meeting
- ☪ Monthly Visit with Mentee
- ☪ Weekly Supervision with Intern
- ☪ Weekly Supervision with DRE
- ☪ Weekly Staff Meeting
- ☪ Weekly Check-In with White Plains Minister
- ☪ Weekly Community Coffee

## IRREGULAR MEETINGS, TRAININGS, CONSULTATIONS AND RITES OF PASSAGE

- ☪ LREDA Professional Day
- ☪ Adult Religious Education Class: The Shared Pulpit
- ☪ Memorial Service for Bernard Harris
- ☪ Ministerial Start-Up at Community Unitarian in Ridgewood, NJ
- ☪ County Congregational President/VP Meeting
- ☪ Internship Committee

## WORSHIP

Sunday, September 17:       Allowing Autumn  
Sunday, September 23:       A Theology of Redemption  
Sunday, October 1:         Animal Blessing  
Sunday, October 8:         William in Pulpit

September Theme:    Forgiveness  
October Theme:        Death  
November Theme:     Mindfulness

## INSIDE THE CONGREGATION

I have some concerns about what has become “listening conversations”. On Sunday, three separate people made note of it to me, each parsing a similar response. One said she was going because she “has my back” while another isn’t going because she doesn’t want to “get involved with the negativity” and a third asked me if I wanted him to go so I could have a “voice in the room”. Clearly, something is being communicated about the agenda of these conversations and the result is divisive. I’m sorry we are moving ahead with them. I hope to be wrong, but I suspect that we are creating conflict, at best.

An additional concern I have about these conversations was expressed in the (5 minute) announcement on Sunday. (As an aside, we cannot have this announcement made in this fashion again. It will now be a simple reminder as all the other announcements are.) Paul said that our congregation is unique and our solutions will also be unique. I am saying, yet again, that I disagree with this assessment. Going further than disagreeing, I find it disconcerting that anyone would think that we are unusual in anyway, let alone unique, and would therefore dismiss the wisdom of hundreds of UU congregations, thousands of congregations in other denominations and experts in the field who have solid advice to offer us. Along with that dismissal, I am concerned that we are planning these conversations without giving anyone the benefit of so many experiences. I am sorry we are having these conversations at all and I’m particularly distressed that we are doing it under these circumstances. We are missing rich opportunities because of this misunderstanding about our uniqueness.

Coincidentally, because I am now a Regional Consultant for the UUA, I was just registered for a nationally acclaimed course called Breaking 200. It's \$1,000 but I was registered without charge to us. The course is designed to help congregations break through their current size of 100, 150 or 200. It is very typical for congregations in every denomination to stagnate at these sizes, so they are training me to help other congregations that want to grow. The course is online and I'm doing it with a team of 12 UUA staffers.

As a result of the President/VP meeting, the five UU congregations in the county are planning a joint worship. The date is Sunday, April 22. We will share worship at 10:30 at Maryknoll in Ossining. We can shut our doors with a note to meet us there or we can live stream it to a screen in our Sanctuary. Religious Education will be happening at Maryknoll as well. The service will be an Earth Day celebration.

Our lack of administrative support on site is becoming a source of stress. I find that I am filling in more than I have time for. While none of these things are time consuming on their own, I am spending too many hours each week attending to administrative tasks. Here is a brainstorm of the things that our administrator did, many of which I'm now doing or aren't getting done.

- Throw out dead flowers
- Clean out fridge
- Make mailbox labels
- Make color prints
- Mail cards and notes
- Buy stamps
- Get and sort mail
- Order paper, ink, candles, light bulbs, batteries (and know when they need to be ordered)
- Follow up with things, like a light fixture or fan not working, etc.
- Know where things are, like paperwork
- Plan for and oversee inspections
- Prevent office from becoming a dumping ground
- Find places for things left in office
- Order salt and arrange for snow removal
- Receive packages from UPS
- Arrange for and be on site for regular inspections, maintenance and piano tuning
- Be a point person for Barvinok including follow-up for open windows, etc.

There are also things we should be asking Pam to do but haven't been looping her in like putting things on the calendar and checking the voice mail and updating Icon. We don't have a point person for administrative tasks which means that often I'm the person fielding a myriad of emails. Sue is also receiving an inappropriate amount of email related to administrative tasks, a habit that is unsustainable, if not for her, certainly for future presidents.

One way to address this is to hire a Facilities Manager who is on site a number of predictable hours each week. I am hoping we create a Search Committee that becomes proactive in finding a person for this needed position.

### UPCOMING DATES

<i>Community Coffee:</i>	<i>Every Tuesday at 3:00</i>
<i>The Shared Pulpit:</i>	<i>October 18, November 1</i>
<i>Pulpit Exchange:</i>	<i>Sunday, October 22 (Cindy Davidson will be in our pulpit)</i>
<i>Collegial Conversations:</i>	<i>Tuesday, October 24</i>
<i>New Member Dinner:</i>	<i>Saturday, October 28</i>
<i>Adaptive Leadership Brown Bag:</i>	<i>Sunday, November 12</i>