

## **2016 – 17 October Executive Report draft**

### **Ends Statements 2016 – 2021:**

The people of First Unitarian Church, of all ages and backgrounds, connect in a transformative, authentic, liberal religious experience. We:

- Grow spiritually, emotionally, socially and ethically.
- Explore and experience what it means to be human.
- Cultivate compassion toward ourselves and others.
- Foster personal connections to life, nature and/or the divine.
- Seek, embrace and share experiences of wonder.
- Develop our Unitarian Universalist identities.

### **Offer and invite the congregation to small group opportunities and classes towards meeting the first tier of ends:**

- Soul Matters final registration ended with 56 participants
- Wellspring has 27 participants in 4 different groups
- All advertised Adult RE classes are happening with vibrant participation
- Wednesday evening programming for all ages has begun, with very full classes
- Sunday morning RE has begun with new hired teachers this year (Volunteers are also a part of the teaching teams)
- Our Whole Lives facilitator Training is being planned for the weekend of October 28 – 30 for Elementary Age and Young Adult/Adult
- High School Youth group has been meeting regularly and is planning a District-Wide CON for the weekend of November 4-6
- A new Soul Matters group for individuals living in the Indianola area has been formed. Six people have joined the new group; it's a good opportunity for those who would otherwise have a hard time making it in to Des Moines for a weekday evening meeting.

The people of First Unitarian Church connect in community to support one another and honor the web of life. We:

- Ask for and receive loving presence from one another, especially in times of joy, sorrow and transition.
- Respectfully connect across differences for understanding.
- Intentionally invite and engage others to grow in community with us.
- Generously share our time, talent and treasure.
- Maintain a facility and grounds appropriate for our needs and aligned with our values.

**Caring Ministry:** Continue to improve the functioning of our Caring Ministry approach toward the end of nurturing a caring and compassionate community for one another in which we ask for and receive loving presence from one another.

- In the month of September, Caring Ministry provided services to 5 church members. Two of those are through Caring Associates who are providing long term assistance.
- We have added a new council member, Becky Evans, who will work on ride assistance. The Council continues to work on PR. We have been featuring how CM works and how to ask for assistance.
- Performance objectives for the Caring Ministry Coordinator position have been updated to reflect our return to a “council” model (of leaders in various caring areas who consult volunteer lists when recruiting help) and expected improvements in communication between the coordinator and volunteers going forward.

**Nurture Generosity and Stewardship:** Invite and encourage broader participation in the ministry of generosity toward growth of the financial and spiritual health of our congregation.

- The Next Steps Weekend with consultant Mark Ewert was held from September 16-18 with a written report having been received and distributed to staff, Councilors and Board members.
- We will hire Mark Ewert as a consultant to assist the congregation in organizing and executing the 2017-18 Annual Budget Drive. The arrangement includes up to 32 hours of consultation, from October 2016-April 2017, including an in-person visit in advance of the drive. A conference call to begin our work has been set for Tuesday October 11.
- The Endowment Disbursements Committee is planning an event in January that will focus on recognition and acknowledgement as well as information dissemination about the Endowment Fund.
- The Endowment Investment Committee is reviewing performance data and fees for the UU Common Endowment Fund over the past 5 years.

**Re-vision Our Approach to New Member Welcoming and Integration:** Towards Intentionally inviting and engaging others to grow in community with us.

- Fourteen people are currently enrolled in Pathways, which runs 9/18 – 10/23.
- A member approached the Membership Coordinator about restarting the “Face 2 Face” gatherings and she has offered to help as well as provided some names of others who might be interested in helping. Membership Coordinator will explore some of these leads to see if there is enough energy for a congregation-led reboot of this program.

The people of First Unitarian Church nurture justice in the world. We:

- Build authentic partnerships, responding to needs our partners articulate.
- Show up with passion and enthusiasm to grow our values in the world.
- Share our talent and resources to support groups with whom we share values.
- Provide leadership and space for civil discourse.

- Welcome and accept transformation that comes through authentic relationships within and beyond our church.

**Goals in this area will be determined following Rev. Erin's return from maternity leave. For now, this portion of the report will be devoted to updates on our current work and partnerships.**

### **Family Promise**

- 54 people provided the 77 items needed for hosting on the "Giving Tree"
- Over 75 volunteer positions have been filled for hosting
- 2 of 3 volunteer training sessions have been held

### **Death With Dignity**

- Kay Becker spoke with UU's in Marshalltown on Sunday, Sept. 25.
- Kay Becker, Gwen Harvey and Karen Nicholson initiated elevator speech training so we can become more comfortable speaking on DWD.

### **Restorative Justice**

- Linda Bacon and Harvey Harrison started a 7-week skill building class on Restorative Justice Circles for church members who took the training last spring.

No reports from ARC, Energy and Justice or FEDS.

## **UPDATES**

### **Transitions:**

- Denise Forney has been hired as the Children's Choir Director. Denise has had many years of experience working with children, as both a church choir director over the past five years and as a guitar/piano instructor for the past 30 years. Her first rehearsal with the choirs was October 5. We are grateful to member Barb Klubal for serving as interim director for two weeks as a volunteer.
- Karen Kraemer, who has been serving as a volunteer interim choir director since the departure of Moira Leu in the winter of 2016, has been hired to be the Director of Choirs (vocal and bell) effective October 1. Her duties will be directing the adult choir and our bell choirs and supervising the Children's Choir Director. This will be on average an 8-hour a week position. Volunteers will continue to arrange for "special music" on the Sundays when the choirs are not performing. We are grateful to Karen for serving us an interim and are pleased to officially welcome her to the staff.

### **New Developments:**

- Rev. Erin Gingrich has returned from maternity leave on a part-time basis through December 12. She returns to the pulpit on October 16.

**Operations:**

- We are navigating some challenges with childcare being short-staffed and a recurring problem of no-shows after child care staff have been scheduled. Membership Coordinator is re-engaging the Child Care Council and exploring some app/software solutions for parents to request child care and receive reminders.
- Wednesday evening programming has returned. The program staff is investigating ways to provide more of a staff presence and to empower Wednesday stakeholders to help with hospitality, program assistance, and transitions.
- The Grounds Council is planning a Woods Burn on either November 12, 19 or December 3.

**Other:**

-