

Senior Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees

December 2015

The installation service was a resounding success. Many of my colleagues commented on the beauty of the service and our attention to detail. Kristen Leddy and her team deserve our deepest thanks for putting on such a tremendous event. We shined brightly as the flagship UU church in Fairfield County.

My choice of speakers and their parts in the service was intentional. I sought to bring the larger TUCW community together. I think we were largely successful. As Debra Haffner pointed out in her charge to the congregation, we had past ministers and religious educators present, some of whom we hadn't seen in years. It was especially fitting that Frank Hall had such a prominent part in the service. The installation reminds us of the great stream of ministry we are in.

Besides worship and pastoral care, I have been involved in re-invigorating our various ministry teams. The Pastoral Care Associates have completed their orientation for those interested in this ministry and we will have three or four new PCAs joining the team for training in January, February and March. The Worship Associates team will have its first rotation this winter. Those stepping down will be replaced by three new members who will also benefit from training this winter. Once these new trainings are complete, we will commission these associates in worship services this spring. I will continue to urge our ministry teams to take advantage of other denominational trainings.

In policy work, we are close to having a completed Building and Grounds policy. We will begin work on our Stewardship policies soon. I am grateful to Mary Money and David Smith for stepping up as co-chairs of the Stewardship Committee.

David Vita and I are finishing our review of social justice programs and their effectiveness. There is an effort by some in the Westport religious community to help settle a refugee family in our community. David and I think our efforts are better focused on supporting those organizations that already work with refugee families here now.

We have two new staff members, our new RE assistant, Carly Allen and our new lead sexton, Anthony Vazina. Carly comes to us with experience working for Americorp and in Congregationalist church settings and Tony has HVAC training, plumbing skills and also drives commercially when he is not working for us. Please welcome these new staff members to the team.

Amidst all the trouble in our world, I am heartened by the warmth and commitment of this church community. Thanks to all of you for making our corner of the world a little brighter.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Dr. John T. Morehouse