

Many in our congregation are shocked and saddened by the results of the election. When we fully comprehend what this election means this is no surprise. Beyond partisanship the next president stands against most everything we as a faith believe; equal rights for immigrants, racial equity, gender equality, the rights of women, and justice for the marginalized. Many of us are wondering if we are living in the same country at all. As the civil right activist Hosea Williams once said "we live in a country that doesn't yet exist." While we may find a way to empathize with the anger and fear that elected this man, we must grieve and heal first. My time will be taken up with that task in the months and years ahead.

And then we will need to do the work we are called to do; to stand up for the marginalized and work even harder for justice. It would be easy to retreat into our privilege but I feel compelled to lead us out. I will do my best to keep you informed of what I am planning to do.

I am looking forward to our continuing work on the ends statements. With those statements in draft form we will be better able to decide on monitoring statements and the limitations policies that we need to help us fulfill our mission. I believe this is the most efficient order by which to move to policy governance.

I continue to support our shift to the New England Region (NER). However, in considering this shift we did not fully take into account how this would affect our youth programming. As Cal Wacker our youth coordinator has reported to the staff, the NER does not host programming tailored for youth, but they will work with our religious professionals and lay leaders to support congregationally based youth ministry. We were also assured by the NER that our youth would be able to continue to access the programming through the Central Eastern Region (CERG). Further conversations with the CERG leadership revealed that once we change affiliation we will lose our ability to access CERG youth programming. This would be a significant loss for our youth. I am in contact with the CERG leadership and I am attempting to find a way by which we can be grandfathered into CERG so our youth can continue to enjoy that programming. Frankly, I believe our position to negotiate this special status is compromised by our not being a fair share contributing congregation to the UUA. Eventually, we will need to migrate over to NER and perhaps even lead the way in developing the kind of excellent youth programming we have come to enjoy.

I was asked to report on outcome of our Diana Eck speaking event in October. Compared to the last time this sort of lecture was delivered, this was a success. We had 87 people attending, many of them from the larger community. In addition to the excellent presentation by Dr. Eck and the thoughtful response from the interfaith panel, questions from the audience were insightful. Conversation continued between people for several hours at the reception. Several members of the wider community have thanked us for this event. We came in under our \$5000 budget; besides Dr. Eck's honorarium of \$2500 we had additional expenses for promotional materials, food and extra staff time of \$1304.38. While this was a success, I am inclined to wait until the next church year to host another such lecture. We are simply over programmed at this time.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Dr. John Morehouse