

Senior Minister's Report to Board of Trustees April 2017

Our pledge drive is in full swing. While the amount of dollars and units pledging is behind last year the average pledge is up significantly. We are hoping that this will straighten itself out as the campaign proceeds. The stewardship team and the visiting stewards are doing an incredible job. Our thanks to all of them.

There has been a great deal of anxiety in our larger UU world over the resignation of Peter Morales, our President, Harlan Lampert, our Chief Operating Officer and Scott Taylor, Director of Congregational Life. Most of this controversy surrounds the issue of white privilege in hiring for upper management positions in the UUA which remains predominantly white. I believe this is a legitimate concern although I do wish these men had not felt it necessary to resign before we had a chance to transition to a new administration. Those involved with this issue and pushing for systemic change in the UUA are using the term "white supremacy" to describe the dominant culture within Unitarian Universalism. That term while provocative and jarring is a redefinition by people of color to describe the tenacity of existing power dynamics. I will be using the term judiciously and with a great deal of explanation. I have learned from past experience that provocative language, while effective, can also shut down important dialogue. Our General Assembly in New Orleans promises to be hot.

We continue to plan for our transition in our Youth Group following the departure of Cal Wacker. Mary Collins has several dedicated adult volunteers to help run the group through the rest of this church year and into the next. One of the many decisions still to be made is exactly when to hold the youth group and what their role will be in our new regional home in New England.

While I have made some cuts in our programs for the coming year, I want the Board to know these cuts were made judiciously and across many program areas. My goal is to not cut any more in compensation and benefits. Our staff is our greatest asset at this time.

Thank you for completing the ends statements. The staff and I will begin planning our work to meet those ends.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Dr. John T. Morehouse